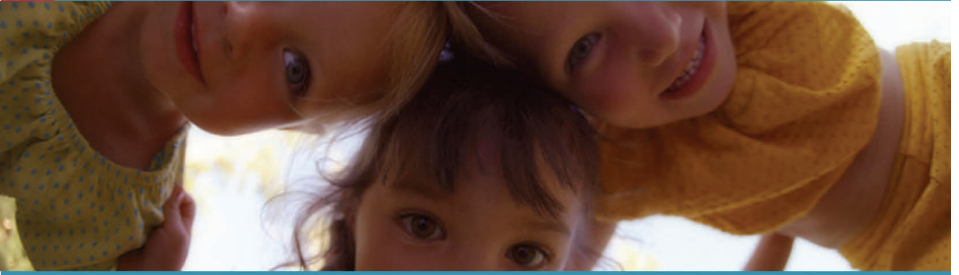


2009-2010
parent handbook



highlands
preschool



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Welcome

The 2009-2010 school year celebrates Highlands Preschool's **56th year!** We look forward with great enthusiasm to another successful year and will enjoy sharing this preschool experience with you and your child.

Our History

Highlands Preschool Association was organized in 1953 and originally leased space in Highlands Community Church. In 1967, we were awarded our nonprofit 501c3 status. The school moved in 1973 to share space with St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, where we enjoyed another 30 years. In 2003, we settled into our current location at the Renton Community of Christ church, which has warmly welcomed our shared use of their facility.

Our Preschool Today

Highlands Preschool is a unique organization unlike any other preschool in the area. We are both an independent private school, and also a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing a quality education at an affordable price.

This is a unique combination for a preschool—independent of any parent organization, with education as our primary focus rather than profit. This allows us to dedicate ourselves to giving preschoolers of all backgrounds a positive first learning experience to prepare them for kindergarten.

Nondiscrimination Notice

As a nonprofit, Highlands Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, pro-

grams, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, hardship fund and other school-administered programs.

Our Staff

Our staff consists of six teachers, two teacher assistants and two part-time administrative positions. All staff must pass both national and state patrol background checks. Teachers must be certified in CPR and first aid. While not required, every staff member has had children attend Highlands Preschool in years past.

Linda Helt has been with Highlands Preschool for 22 years, has a Bachelor degree in Education from Central Washington University, and brings us a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Connie White has been with us for 17 years and holds an AA degree in Early Childhood Education from Bellevue Community College. Connie also came to us with previous teaching experience.

Hillary Morris joined our teaching staff 8 years ago. Hillary has taken applicable coursework at Bellevue Community College and came to us after two years of experience teaching at Kindercare.

Shannon MacGillivray, also known as "Mrs. Mac," has a Bachelor degree in Humanities & Liberal Studies from Western Washington University, trained with us, and has now taught here for 7 years.

Kathee Baylis will join us again in her 3rd year of teaching. Kathee came to us with child care experience and trained with us. Kathee is teaching one class and acting as our teacher assistant for all other class sessions.

Melanie Gallagher joins our staff this year after serving previously as President and Vice President of our Board of Directors. Melanie has a Bachelor degree in Elementary Education and an endorsement in Early Childhood Education. She previously taught kindergarten for the Issaquah School District.

Karen Short is our Registrar. Karen holds a Bachelor degree in Business Administration from the University of Washington. As our administrative positions are part-time, Karen is also regional Communications Coordinator for an international non-profit organization. This is Karen's 9th year with Highlands Preschool.

Elizabeth Dompier is in her 2nd year as our Bookkeeper. Elizabeth has a Bachelor degree in Business Administration with a Finance Specialization and Economics minor from Central Washington University. Elizabeth is also our teacher assistant when Kathee Baylis is teaching her class.

Our Board of Directors

Parents and guardians of enrolled children are automatically members of the Association. Government of the Association is conducted by our Board of Directors, which is similar to a PTA. The Board is made up of parents of preschool children who perform various volunteer tasks, set policies and financial goals.

Curriculum

Preschool Philosophy

"A Child Learns By Doing"—Our philosophy of education centers around play. Play is the most complete educational process of the

mind. This allows the development of the "whole" child—intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically—and facilitates the natural unfolding of each child's potential. In return, the child experiences a growing sense of self-worth and a personal joy in learning.

Young children learn in a different manner than do older children. Young children learn by actual contact with real objects, events, and people. (That's why field trips, outdoor play and other exciting activities are so important.) Young children learn by involving themselves in exploring, discovering, repeating and continually adapting what they see into their daily lives.

Young children are not yet prepared to learn by words alone. They do not learn by explanations or descriptions of things that are far off in time or space. Just because young children can repeat words easily, does not necessarily mean they understand and grasp the meaning behind the words. It is only through varied, first-person real life experience that words are filled with meaning for the young child.

Preschool is a time to begin learning independence, while developing trust and respect for others. An important part of this program is social adjustment, sharing and cooperating with others. Our goal is for them to "want" to come to school by stressing that "learning is fun."

There are many skill levels and unit topics covered during a school year, and we try to make all of it fun and interesting. Included in these units are numerous projects and many forms of art for enhancement. Most important is the child learning to see themselves as an individual who is unique, with qualities unlike any other.

Preschool 3 Curriculum (Early Threes)

Activities

This is usually the first school experience for the Early Threes. It is a time for the child to develop independence, learn and expand social skills, and build a sense of himself/herself as a problem-solving and reasoning individual. Our program includes story time, a daily art project, movement to music, and group activities which will allow the child to develop a curiosity for life and a way to express his or her individuality.

Skill Areas Covered

1. Motor Skills
 - a. Large motor movement
 - (1) Running
 - (2) Jumping
 - (3) Climbing
 - (4) Learning movement to music
 - b. Small motor movement
 - (1) Crayons, markers
 - (2) Paints
 - (3) Glue
 - (4) Manipulative games
 - (5) Puzzles
 - (6) Learning finger plays
 - (7) Building with blocks
2. Language Development
 - a. Circle time
 - b. Singing songs
 - c. Reciting finger plays
 - d. Reading stories

- e. Feeling comfortable expressing ideas
- f. Question of the week
- g. Name recognition

3. Social Skills

- a. Learning to share & play well with others
- b. Learning personal space and boundaries
- c. Learning to respect the property of others
- d. Learning to respect the feelings of others
- e. Manners

4. Math Development

- a. Counting numbers 1 through 10
- b. Introducing shapes and colors
- c. Color mixing

Unit Topics

1. Colors
2. Shapes
3. Dinosaurs
4. Space
5. Animals
6. Insects
7. Sea life
8. Plants
9. Holidays
10. Seasons

Preschool 2 Curriculum (Threes)

Activities

The three year old needs to build a sense of themselves as a problem-solving, reasoning individual, while developing trust and independence. This is accomplished through many play experiences. Play is a key mode to development. This program includes daily art pro-

jects, skill builders, circle time and group activities, allowing the child to gain a greater awareness of individuality.

Skill Areas Covered

1. Motor

a. Large motor movement

- (1) Running
- (2) Jumping
- (3) Climbing
- (4) Learning movement to music

b. Small motor movement

- (1) Crayons, markers
- (2) Paints
- (3) Glue
- (4) Manipulative games
- (5) Puzzles
- (6) Learning finger plays
- (7) Building with blocks

2. Language Development

- a. Singing songs
- b. Reciting finger plays
- c. Speaking in complete sentences
- d. Feeling comfortable expressing ideas
- e. Introducing lower case letters
- f. Question of the week
- g. Name recognition

3. Social Skills

- a. Learning to share and play well with others
- b. Learning to respect the property of others
- c. Learning to respect the feelings of others
- d. Manners

4. Math Development

- a. Counting Numbers 1 through 20
- b. Sequencing
- c. Graphing

Unit Topics

1. Colors
2. Shapes
3. Dinosaurs
4. Space
5. Animals
6. Insects
7. Sea Life
8. Plants
9. Holidays
10. Seasons

Preschool 1 Curriculum (Fours)

Activities

The four year old program will help your child gain the skills and personal readiness necessary for kindergarten. This program includes daily art projects, skill builders, circle time and group activities, allowing the child to gain a greater awareness of his/her individuality. Letters and their relation to sound will be introduced. We will emphasize understanding of number concepts as opposed to learning to count by memorization. Your child will create his/her own art work and will be proud of his/her own creation. Good development of fine and gross motor skills must occur before your child is ready for prolonged "seat work."

Skill Areas Covered

1. Motor Skills

a. Large motor movement

- (1) Jumping, running
- (2) Rolling and throwing a ball
- (3) Distinguishing right and left hands
- (4) Rhythmic movement to music and clapping

b. Small motor movement

- (1) Control with crayons, markers, paint
- (2) Using paste and glue
- (3) Doing finger plays
- (4) Writing first name when read
- (5) Scissors

2. Language Development

- a. Expressing ideas
- b. Speaking clearly
- c. Speaking in complete sentences
- d. Singing and reciting songs and finger plays
- e. Speaking in front of peers

3. Reading and Math

- a. Introduce upper and lower case letters
- b. Introduce left and right
- c. Introduce top and bottom
- d. Classify objects
- e. Dictate stories
- f. Days of the week
- g. Patterning
- h. Sequencing
- i. Estimating
- j. Identifying basic shapes
- k. Beginning number concepts
- l. Counting

4. Science

- a. The five senses
- b. Nutrition
- c. Weather
- d. Animals
- e. Seasons

5. Social Studies

- a. Myself, my friends, my school
- b. Community helpers
- c. Transportation

6. Art

- a. Basic colors
- b. Crafts
- c. Painting

7. Music

- a. Singing and moving to music
- b. Following directions from songs
- c. Rhythmic clapping

8. Social Skills

- a. Working and playing with others
- b. Self-control
- c. Respecting property of others
- d. Recognizing and accepting responsibility

Unit Topics

- 1. Dinosaurs
- 2. Space, Stars, Planets
- 3. Sea life
- 4. Insects
- 5. Farm Animals

6. Holidays
7. Seasons
8. Alphabet
9. Rhyming

Example Daily Schedule *(varies by class)*

<u>AM Classes</u>	<u>PM Classes</u>	<u>Activity</u>
9:00-9:45	11:30-12:15	Welcome to class and art project
9:45-10:15	12:15-12:45	Big Room time
10:15-10:30	12:45-1:00	Snack time
10:30-10:50	1:00-1:20	Circle time
10:50-11:10	1:20-1:40	Outside time
11:15	1:45	Dismiss

Program Goals

By the time your child completes their experience at Highlands Pre-school, our goal is for them to be ready for kindergarten in a variety of ways. Here are some of the things we strive for your child to accomplish:

Colors and Shapes

- Recognizes and names primary colors.
- Recognizes circles.
- Recognizes rectangles.
- Matches shapes or objects based on shape.
- Copies shapes.

Numbers

- Counts orally through 10 (minimum).
- Counts objects in one-to-one correspondence.
- Understands empty and full.
- Understands more and less.

Reading Readiness

- Remembers objects from a given picture.
- Knows what a letter is.
- Has been read to frequently.
- Looks at books and magazines.
- Recognizes some nursery rhymes.
- Identifies parts of the body.
- Knows common farm and zoo animals.
- Pronounces own first and last name.
- Expresses self verbally.
- Identifies children by name.
- Tells the meaning of simple words.
- Repeats a sentence of 6-8 words.
- Has own books.
- Understands that print carries a message.
- Pretends to read.
- Uses left-to-right progression.
- Answers questions about a short story.
- Tells the meaning of words heard in story.
- Looks at pictures and tells a story.
- Prints own first name.

Position and Direction

- Understands up and down.
- Understands in and out.
- Understands front and back.
- Understands over and under.
- Understands top, bottom, middle.
- Understands beside, next to.
- Understands hot and cold.
- Understands fast and slow.

Listening and Sequencing

- Follows simple directions.
- Listens to a short story.
- Listens carefully.
- Recognizes common sounds.
- Repeats a sequence of sounds
- Repeats a sequence of orally given numbers.
- Retells simple stories in sequence.

Motor Skills

- Is able to run.
- Is able to walk a straight line
- Is able to jump and hop.
- Is able to alternate feet walking down stairs.
- Is able to march.
- Is able to stand on one foot for 5-10 seconds.
- Is able to walk backwards for five feet.
- Is able to throw a ball.
- Pastes objects.
- Claps hands.
- Matches simple objects.
- Touches fingers.
- Builds with blocks.
- Completes simple puzzles.
- Draws and colors beyond a simple scribble.
- Able to zip a zipper and button a button.
- Controls pencil and crayon well.
- Cuts simple shapes.
- Handles scissors well.
- Able to copy simple shapes.

Social-Emotional Development

- Can be away from parents or primary care givers for 2-3 hours without being upset.
- Feels good about self.
- Is not afraid to go to school.
- Cares for own belongings.
- Maintains self-control.
- Gets along well with other children.
- Plays with other children.
- Recognizes authority.
- Shares with others.
- Talks easily.
- Puts away toys.
- Able to stay on task.
- Able to work independently.

Coming to Preschool

Please use only the front door for both arrival and pick-up. For safety reasons, all other doors will remain locked and are equipped with safety crash bars for easy emergency exit.

Teachers will open the classrooms at 9:00 am or 11:30 am (11:15 for Preschool 3). It is important that you and your child not arrive more than **five minutes** before class is to begin. Should you arrive earlier, please wait outside of your child's classroom. The downstairs waiting area can get crowded, and waiting in the Big Room is acceptable. Please remember, however, to keep a close eye on your child and **leave the Big Room exactly as you found it**—be sure to pick up any and all toys your child plays with.

All children must be walked to, and picked up from, their classroom. **DO NOT** drop your child off by the front door of the building,

unless previously arranged with a teacher or assistant to meet them there. Children must be with an adult at all times in the building, playground and parking areas.

Attendance

We do not take attendance at preschool. For most short absences, you do not need to call the school. If your child will be gone for an extended period, such as with a major illness or family trip, please notify your child's teacher or the Registrar.

Separation Anxiety

Whether preschool is a new experience for your child, or whether this is just a new class and new teacher, change can be difficult for a preschooler—and no change more difficult than separation from you. Some degree of separation anxiety is a sign that the preschooler has developed healthy attachments to loved ones.

Parents who recognize the signs of separation anxiety and work to prepare their child will reap the rewards for years to come. When children feel secure, they will have an easier time developing friendships, separating from parents and others, and carrying out their tasks with confidence.

Ahead of Time

- **Prepare yourself.** Read and understand these guidelines, and be prepared to separate from your child. If you are not ready for the separation, they will not be either. Know what you will do and say when the time comes. Try role-playing with your child to rehearse the separation.
- **Prepare your child.** Tell your child what to expect. Bring them to Open House to meet the teacher and see the classroom. Some

children enjoy taking pictures to show grandparents and other special people. Read books about going to preschool. Make shopping for a preschool lunchbox a special event. Pick out a "lovey" from home—a stuffed animal, blanket or other special item they can bring to class which will help them feel secure.

- **Make sure your child gets enough sleep and is healthy.** Most preschool children need about 11 hours of sleep a night. If your child is tired or not feeling well, it may be better to keep them at home that day.
- **Establish a ritual.** You might develop a short and simple routine to follow when it's time to part, such as hanging up their coat, dropping off their lunch box, giving each other a big bear hug and a kiss, saying, "I love you" and waving good-bye.

Time to Part!

- **Focus on the positive.** Remind them they are loved, they will be safe, and they will have fun—*not* that mommy will miss them.
- **Always tell your child that you will come back, and always arrive on time for pick-up.** This builds trust, both in you and the teacher.
- **Smile and follow through.** Even if you are hesitant yourself, put on a brave face and tell your child you must leave—and then leave. Don't linger too long, as this only adds more anxiety to the situation. Our teachers are much more effective at calming down your child once you are gone. Your child needs the opportunity to develop trust in their teacher to take care of them while you are away.
- **Don't sneak off.** If you disappear, it makes the separation worse and undermines trust. Say goodbye and go.

After you Part

- **Don't berate yourself.** Distress is simply one sign of your child's attachment to you. On the other hand, don't be concerned if your child doesn't show distress; it's not a sign of a lack of attachment, just the outcome of a different personality.
- **Don't berate your child.** Never criticize your child's separation distress or scold them for it. Tell them that you understand their feelings, but don't let them dwell on their fears.
- **Know the crying will stop.** Most crying episodes last less than 10 minutes once you leave, and stop altogether by the end of the second week. Your child will learn through consistent experience that each goodbye is soon followed by your happy return. It won't be long before "I don't want to go to preschool" turns into "I'm not ready to leave!"
- **Expect lapses.** Children from three to five years of age may show distress seemingly out of the blue. Possible causes include difficulties at home or breaks in routine, such as returning from a vacation or illness.

What to Bring to Preschool

We do not ask you to donate classroom supplies; your tuition and registration/supply fee cover these expenses. There are a few things, however, to make sure your child has each day:

Appropriate Clothing

Dress your child in clothing that is okay to get paint on! Due to the various play and art activities, we cannot be responsible for damage to clothing, so *please* send your child in washable play clothes and non-slippery shoes. Picture days are considered "dress-

up" days; the teachers will curtail messy activities for that day so that you may dress your child as you see fit.

To avoid confusion and loss of articles, please **label** all items that come to preschool with your child's name. Each year, we donate to charity many unclaimed items that cannot be identified.

Show and Tell Items

Please consult your child's teacher about their policy regarding show and tell *before* sending toys or any other personal items to preschool with your child. These can be very distracting in class.

Lunchbox and Snacks

There is a 15-minute snack time during each class. We ask that each child bring a lunchbox each day. Please include a nutritious snack for morning classes and a mini-lunch for afternoon classes. Children may also bring a small, no-drip container of **water** only. Please *do not send* the following:

- **Sweets.** Please refrain from sending candy, cookies, donuts, or anything else with a high-sugar content.
- **Messy foods** such as yogurt or pudding. These are difficult to clean off the carpeting.
- **Juice, milk or any drinks besides water**—again, due to the carpeting in the building.
- **Any food containing peanuts.** Due to the increasing number of children who are highly allergic to peanut products, **Highlands Preschool is a peanut-free school.**

Please remember that while our teachers remind children not to share food with classmates and try very hard to be vigilant at snack

time, they cannot absolutely guarantee that your child will not come into contact with food items to which they may be allergic. If your child has a severe allergy, please be sure to discuss it with your child's teacher.

Dismissal from Preschool

Class ends at 11:15 am or 1:45 pm (11:00 or 1:15 for Preschool 3).

We ask that you do not arrive more than **five minutes** before class dismisses. Please do not arrive earlier; parents cannot legally come in contact with other preschoolers during class hours without a background check, and siblings are not covered by our insurance. Please also try not to peek into the classroom through the windows in the doors, as this also can distract the children and make it difficult to get them packed up.

Your child's safety is important to us. Teachers will only release your child to you or another person listed in the Pick-up Authorization section of your Registration Form. If anyone else will be picking up your child (including another child's parent), you must notify the teacher in writing. ***Teachers will not release a student to an unauthorized person.***

We ask that you exit the building immediately after picking up your child. Please do not allow any children to play in the Big Room after pick-up. This is not only an inconvenience to our teachers who are trying to leave, but it is a violation of our insurance requirements.

Late Pick-up Policy

It is important that you be prompt in picking up your child. Not only does your child need the assurance that you will be on time, but our

teachers are only paid until the end of class time. Our insurance requires that two adults be present with a child, so if you are late, two teachers must actually stay late. If a child is picked up late, a fee of two dollars (\$2.00) per minute per child will be assessed, and a statement mailed to you from our bookkeeper. The fee goes directly to the two teachers to reimburse them for their time. However, exceptions may occasionally be made in emergency situations. ***Please call the classroom line and inform your child's teacher if you are going to be late picking up your child.*** Be sure to keep the classroom phone number with you at all times!

The teachers will follow these procedures when a child is not picked up:

1. Attempt to contact the parent(s) and/or guardians on home and cell numbers;
2. Attempt to contact any and all other persons listed as emergency contacts;
3. Dial 9-1-1 to alert authorities if more than 60 minutes has passed and no contact has been made with parents/guardians or anyone listed as an emergency contact.

Parking and Parking Lot

Please safely park your car for arrival and pick-up. We understand that the parking lot can get full at times; however, ***do NOT park illegally or leave your car running.*** Please park only in **marked parking spaces**—not at the end of a row or by the entrance; this blocks the driveway and makes it more difficult to see children. If the lot is full, on-street parking is legal and you may park across the street at the Renton Technical College.

No child should be left unattended or unsupervised in the parking lot. If you have a sleeping baby, please arrange for another parent to walk your preschooler in/pick up your preschooler, or stay with your baby. *Do not leave them alone in the car!*

Please make sure all children are safely inside your vehicle before striking up a conversation with another parent or any other delay in the parking lot. **Please do not allow your child to play in the parking lot or climb the trees.**

Please remember to drive slowly and carefully in the parking lot and around the preschool at all times.

Health Policies

Your child's health is important to us. At preschool, we practice diligent hand sanitizing and washing, and we learn other good health practices as part of our curriculum. It is equally as important that you fill out your child's Health History information on the registration form completely, make sure your child's teacher is aware of any special situations that concern your child, and keep them home when ill.

Immunizations

Washington State law requires student immunization forms to be completed and on file *before* attending preschool. Your child's immunizations must be up-to-date, or you must sign a Certificate of Exemption. No exceptions can be made.

Hand Sanitizing and Washing

According to research performed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are consid-

ered as effective at killing germs as washing hands—and more so if hands are not vigorously washed in warm water for at least 20 seconds and dried thoroughly.

Therefore, our teachers assist each child with hand sanitizing prior to snacks, and have the children wash hands when visibly soiled, such as with paint or dirt from the playground. Please be aware, however, that if your child's class is scheduled to be on the playground just before class dismisses, you will need to assume responsibility for hand washing at that time. Please let your child's teacher know if your child cannot use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

Attendance and Illnesses

It is extremely important that your child be in good health when you send him/her to preschool. As the spread of H1N1 ("swine") flu has become of particular concern over the last year, we monitor local health department notifications and will keep you updated with important information. We ask that you do your part by following three important guidelines:

1. **Keep your child at home**, or they may be sent home, if any symptoms of illness are present.
2. **Do not bring your child back** to preschool until they have been symptom-free for at least a full **24 hours**. If your child has a fever *and* a sore throat or cough, King County Public Health now asks that you keep them home for at least **7 days**.
3. **Notify the school immediately** if your child has the flu, Pink Eye, Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, Head Lice or any other highly contagious condition. We will notify other parents if warranted.

Symptoms of illness for which you should keep your child at home:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Rash
- Drainage from the eye (Pink Eye)
- Appearance/Behavior - unusually tired, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused, irritable
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Fever
- Nasal discharge (especially if yellow or greenish)
- Scabies, head-lice or other infestation - children may not return to school until they are free of lice and nits (eggs)
- Strep throat
- Chicken pox

As we do not take attendance, you do not need to notify the pre-school if your child is sick; simply keep them home.

No medications will be given by our teachers unless arranged with the teacher and authorized in writing by the parent.

Safety Policies

Accidents and Injuries

Minor bumps and scrapes are an everyday part of your child exploring and learning through experience. Minor injuries sustained at preschool are reported to parents on an "Ouch Report," of which you will receive a copy.

If a child requires immediate attention, we will notify you and get them the medical attention they need. If the parent, guardian and

emergency contact cannot be reached and an emergency exists, the teacher will seek medical care as needed.

Contact Information

The preschool must have on file at all times a correct phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. If your phone number and/or address change during the preschool year, please contact your teacher or the Registrar to ensure that we always have accurate information.

Insurance Coverage

While on preschool premises, *enrolled students* are covered by an accident insurance plan during regular school hours. Enrolled students are also covered after-hours or off-site during school-sponsored activities (i.e., Big Night, field trips). **Siblings and all others are not covered.** If you need to make a claim, please contact the Registrar, and you will be provided with the necessary forms.

Emergency Procedures

Our teachers and children will practice fire and earthquake drills in conjunction with their regular routines. Emergency supplies are kept on site.

Emergency Weather

Prior to the start of the preschool day, we follow the Renton School District's emergency weather schedule.

**If the Renton School District is late or closed,
Highlands Preschool will be closed.**

To determine if the Renton School District is late or closed, you may check any local news agency, call the Renton School District at 425-204-2300, or visit www.schoolreport.org. This website has a service where you may sign up to be notified automatically at up to three email addresses and mobile phone numbers if the Renton School District is late or closed.

If the teachers decide that preschool should close **while school is already in session** (such as with a sudden snowstorm), parents or guardians will be called. A teacher will stay until every child has been picked up.

Parent Pledge

Highlands Preschool is committed to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for your child. In an effort to protect your child and ensure their development in a positive way, we ask you as parents to make the following pledge:

- "I will strive to follow all preschool policies and procedures as set forth in this handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies in this handbook, and to follow them to the best of my ability. I understand that preschool personnel cannot always monitor, or be responsible for, my family's compliance with these policies and procedures.
- "I will strive to support the preschool in the way I communicate with the children, the staff of the preschool and other parents. I will not be discourteous to, threaten or use inappropriate language or actions towards any child, teacher, administrator, parent, guardian or any person acting on behalf of the preschool, either on or near preschool property, or when attending preschool-related functions.

- "I will not approach any child other than my own to obtain confirmation, clarification or "their view" on preschool-related issues, disputes, or disagreements between children at preschool. Such matters or concerns must be brought to the Teacher's or Registrar's attention.
- "I will take any questions or suggestions to the Teacher or Registrar directly, or use the suggestion box. I understand that spreading rumors and complaining among parents can be destructive and not in the best interest of my child's experience and education at preschool.
- "I understand that Highlands Preschool is a private school, with full rights to refuse admission. Should I violate this pledge, I understand that my child's enrollment may be terminated."

You formally agree to this pledge — and all handbook policies — by continuing your child's enrollment.

Discipline is Learning

Most preschool-age children do not have perfect social skills. An important part of our curriculum involves teaching appropriate personal and social behavior. Minor incidents like pushing, scratching or pinching others can be expected as part of this learning process and are not unusual for many children.

We view discipline as a learning opportunity. When an incident occurs, we take appropriate steps to protect other children and teach proper behavior. We begin with such techniques as redirecting (*"Since the tower keeps falling, let's play with the dinosaurs instead"*) and offering positive alternatives (*"When you want a turn with the toy, you may ask your friend instead of hitting him"*). As inappropriate behavior continues or escalates, we may use additional

teaching methods such as time outs. If we feel that the safety of other students is in jeopardy, we may call parents to pick up the child or issue a short-term suspension.

Anytime disciplinary action is required, other than for minor incidents such as a simple redirection, you will receive a **Disciplinary Learning Report**. The purposes of this report are to keep you aware of what is happening at preschool, keep the lines of communication open, and give you the option of continuing the same methods at home for consistency.

As our primary concern must be with the safety and welfare of the children, we may in extreme and rare cases terminate a child's enrollment if it is determined that they pose an immediate and continuing danger to themselves, other students, or school personnel, or an immediate and continuing threat of substantial disruption to the educational process.

Tuition Policies

Registration

Fees due at registration include a \$75.00 non-refundable registration/supply fee and first month's tuition. If your child registers after the school year has begun in September, tuition for the first month will be due in full if your child's first day is on or before the 15th of the month. If your child's first day is after the 15th of the month, tuition for that month is half the monthly tuition.

Rates

Monthly tuition rates are as follows: **2 days/week (Th/F) classes are \$110, 3 days/week (M/T/W) classes are \$135, 5 days/**

week (M-F) classes are \$185, and the Early Threes (Th/F) classes are \$120. Monthly discounts of \$5.00 per child are made for families with two or more children enrolled.

We are often asked why tuition is the same for months that are shorter or longer, including September. Tuition is based on the total number of days school is in session for the year, and then divided by the number of months in the school year (September to May). This allows for easier *equal tuition payments* each month.

Due Dates

Tuition is due the *first of each month*. You may pay online via PayPal from our website at www.highlandspreschool.com, or write a check or money order. Please make checks payable to **Highlands Preschool** and *include your monthly payment coupon, or your child's first and last name on the check*. You may place your payment in the indoor collection box, the outdoor locking mailbox, or mail to: **Highlands Preschool, 701 Monroe Avenue NE, Renton, WA 98056**. Please do not pay in cash, so we can be sure each payment is properly credited.

Absences & Tuition

A spot in the class is reserved for your child. Therefore, even if your child is to be absent from preschool *for any reason* (including family vacation or illness), tuition will still be due. If your child attends class one day in a month, full tuition is due. If your child is going to miss an entire month, half of that month's tuition will be due if you wish to hold your child's spot. If you know your child will be absent for an extended period, please be sure to notify your child's teacher, the Registrar or Bookkeeper.

Other Charges

A late charge of **\$10.00** will be added to any tuition not received by the 15th of the month. A late notice will be sent after the 15th of any month if payment is not received. If payment is outstanding by the end of the month, your child will not be allowed to attend preschool unless other payment arrangements have been made with the Bookkeeper. If payment is still not received in full or payment arrangements made by the end of the second month, your account will be referred to our collection agency. You will be responsible for any additional collection fees.

A fee of **\$30.00** will be assessed for any checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

We want to work with you if you are having difficulty paying tuition or do not understand our policies. *Please* contact the Bookkeeper to discuss payment options or ask questions.

Hardship Fund

Tuition assistance may be available for any currently-enrolled student whose family is experiencing a financial hardship. Please contact the Bookkeeper for more information or to apply.

Withdrawal

If you intend to withdraw your child from the preschool at any time, *please notify your child's teacher or the Registrar as soon as possible. **Please do not just stop attending.***

If your child's last day is on or before the 15th of any month, tuition for that month is half the monthly tuition. Tuition will be due in full if your child's last day is after the 15th of the month.

Refunds

The \$75 registration fee is non-refundable. Tuition will not be refunded due to cancellation of classes (such as bad weather).

If you pay a full month of tuition and withdraw your child before the 15th of the month, you can request a refund for half that month's tuition if the request is also made before the 15th of that month. To request a refund, you must submit a **Withdrawal Form**. The form can be obtained either from your child's teacher or the Registrar. You may return it to your child's teacher, the indoor collection box, the outdoor locking mailbox, or by mail. *Please allow up to three (3) weeks to process refunds.*

Special Collections

During the year, the preschool will collect orders or money for various activities. *Please do not hand orders or money to your child's teacher.* To help the teachers and ensure your money is secure, please deposit all orders and money in the preschool collection box or mailbox, preferably in a sealed envelope which lists on the outside:

1. Child's full name (first and last);
2. Teacher's name;
3. Activity (ID Tags, fundraisers, etc.);
4. Payment Coupon (if tuition).

Fund Raisers and Donations

As a registered nonprofit organization, we set our tuition rates to cover operating costs. Any extra expenses or programs must come from additional funding. These include things such as all-school performances and purchasing or replacing playground equipment, Big Room or classroom toys, and safety equipment.

In order to raise these additional funds, we periodically hold fundraisers. While we would love to have 100% participation on every fundraiser, you always have the choice. We do not require participation.

In addition, the teachers welcome donations for classroom projects at any time such as glitter, sequins, beads, paper, lids, trim, lace, fur, yarn, shells, ribbon, feathers, silk flowers and more. All contributions are appreciated and may be tax deductible.

T-Shirt Orders

T-shirts with the Highlands Preschool logo on them are sold at the start of the school year. Order forms will be included in your First Day Packet. If you wish to order a t-shirt, please return your order form and payment by the due date indicated.

Picture Orders

Your child's individual pictures will be taken in the fall, and class pictures will be taken in the spring. These pictures will be available for sale on a prepaid basis only. Picture package and price information will be sent home prior to each picture day.

Calendar and Special Events

The yearly preschool calendar usually runs from the first full week after Labor Day, to the last full week before Memorial Day.

Make-up Days

If there are three or more school days canceled during the year, such as due to snow closures or power outages, the school year will be extended one week. Fewer than three missed days will not be made up.

Holidays

To help our families with scheduling, we follow the Renton School District's holiday and vacation schedule as much as possible. These dates will be listed on your Yearly Calendar and posted on the web site. We do not take Learning Improvement or Teacher In-service days off.

Celebrations

We have a number of special celebrations throughout the year during normal classroom hours, such as our Halloween Party in October, our Winter Holiday Party in December, the Valentines Party in February, and Spring Fling in April.

Because any change in routine, such as a celebration, can be stressful for children, we have put together the following guidelines to keep our celebrations low-key and stress-free, but fun:

- Each celebration will take place during the last **half hour** of class. The teacher will do special stories, games and activities.
- **Sign-up sheets** will be placed outside of the classroom doors prior to each celebration to bring treats, water, decorated plates, napkins, and anything else that might be needed.
- Treats should consist of easy-to-eat items such as cookies, donuts or donut holes, and brownies. Please **no cupcakes, cake or juice!** These are messy, more difficult to eat, and stain the carpeting. Also remember, **no treats containing peanuts.**
- You are also welcome to bring **treat bags** for each child if you wish. Please put them in easy-to-carry, fully-closing containers (like Ziplock bags) instead of bags that are open at the top.

- Due to safety and allergy concerns, we ask that **no balloons** be brought to preschool.
- Please **no parents or guests** during the celebrations. Our classrooms are too small to accommodate extra people, and it is also a distraction to the children. Please drop off any items you are contributing at the beginning of class time.

We try to be inclusive of all religions and beliefs. If you do not wish for your child to participate in any type of celebration, please let your child's teacher know.

Birthdays and Unbirthdays

If you would like your child to celebrate a birthday or 'unbirthday' (a celebration for children whose birthdays don't fall within the preschool year), please contact your teacher one week in advance so the teacher can plan class time accordingly. All celebration guidelines previously listed should apply.

We encourage children to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Accordingly, we ask parents not to distribute birthday or other party invitations at preschool, especially when all children in a class are not included. Your preschool directory may be used to help with sending invitations from home.

Field Trips

Your child's class will be taking trips occasionally. When a trip is scheduled, it will be noted in the monthly email newsletter. Due to our large enrollment, some classes may have trips scheduled on different days.

Due to state law regarding car seats and booster seats at pre-school age, *every child must be driven to the field trip site by their parent or guardian, or in a privately-arranged carpool.* Younger siblings may usually accompany you on the field trip, but must pay any required fee if participating.

Since you will be transporting your child, we do not require written permission to attend field trips. If you would prefer that your child not go on the field trip, simply keep them at home.

All-School Performances

We periodically have fun performers or presenters come to Highlands Preschool. When a performer is scheduled, it is usually the only event that day. We usually ask that you stay, as ending times may vary. If you need to leave, please check with your child's teacher. It is important that parents staying for the performance ***PLEASE refrain from talking*** during the performance. Siblings accompanied by a parent are welcome at these events.

Spirit Days

We will schedule some fun "Spirit Days" during the year, such as Pajama Day and other fun themes. Preschool hours and routine are not affected, and your child does not have to participate if they are uncomfortable doing so.

Open House and Big Night

In addition to the Open Houses prior to the start of school, we hold evening Open Houses at the preschool each fall as part of our "Big Night," which also includes our Scholastic Book Fair. We encourage you to take this opportunity, along with working parents,

siblings, other family members and friends, to meet your child's teacher, see the classroom, and view some of the great projects on which your child has been working.

Registration

Prior to official registration dates, registration forms will be distributed through your child's teacher for parents who wish to re-enroll their children for the following school year. Parents who currently have a child in the preschool, or have had previously, will be given the first opportunity to register. Registration is then conducted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Picnic

An all-school picnic is scheduled at the end of the school year in a local park. Parents need to stay with their children at this event; siblings are welcome to attend. Bring a blanket and lunch.

Communications

We strive to keep parents up-to-date and thoroughly informed about preschool events, classroom events and curriculum, safety issues, Board decisions, contact information, and much more. At the same time, we try to be environmentally responsible by limiting the amount of paper copies we distribute.

E-Newsletters

Email is our primary means of communication with you. A monthly newsletter and calendar will be distributed via email at the beginning of each month. This will list and explain all upcoming school-wide activities, changes in class times, classroom projects your

child will experience and more. All email communications are automatically posted to our website.

We also post a printed copy of our monthly newsletter on the upstairs bulletin board and will have a limited supply of paper copies available on the bulletin board for distribution; paper copies will not automatically go home with your child. If you wish to have your name added or deleted from our email list, please email kshort@highlandspreschool.com.

Web Site — www.highlandspreschool.com

The Highlands Preschool web site is designed to both inform the public about our preschool and provide you with current preschool information. On the site, you will find the monthly e-newsletter, information on special events, and this handbook.

We may occasionally post a picture on the web site including children. However, we have adopted the following privacy/security policies to protect your children:

1. No picture including an identifiable child's face will be used without parental permission;
2. No picture containing a child will be labeled with any part of that child's name.

Languages

Highlands Preschool has a diverse population, with children from many different backgrounds. We understand that English may not be read in every home. We recommend that you simply use an online translator, such as www.online-translator.com to view our website and email communications.

Preschool Directory

By November, a preschool directory with the names and contact information of all enrolled children will be compiled and distributed to aid in setting up play dates and party invitations. If you prefer that your child's information not be listed, please indicate so on the Registration Form. Directories will only be distributed to children whose information is listed.

Suggestion Box

We welcome your input at any time. We provide paper next to our collection box; please feel free to use this paper, or your own, to make suggestions or comments. Each and every submittal is addressed in a timely manner, either by the staff or at a Board of Directors meeting. You may submit your comments anonymously, or include your name if you would like feedback.

Telephone

As described previously, our part-time Registrar and Bookkeeper work elsewhere during the school day and are not usually on-site. Because the only on-site staff are our teachers, it is important to keep phone calls and other distractions to a minimum. Therefore, the preschool has two phone lines:

- **425-255-9422** — This main line connects directly to a message service. Use this line to leave a message whenever you have registration, tuition, or other administrative questions.
- **425-255-3833** — This classroom line connects directly to the teachers. Use this line only when you need to speak to your child's teacher regarding pick-up, drop-off, illness, etc. *Please do not interrupt the teachers with administrative questions.*

A wallet-size card with these phone numbers is included in your First Day Packet. Please keep this card with you so that you have the classroom line handy if you need to reach us in an emergency.

2009-2010 Staff Members

Teachers:

Kathee Baylis

Preschool 1 Teacher/TA
kbaylis@highlandspreschool.com

Melanie Gallagher

Preschool 3 Teacher
mgallagher@highlandspreschool.com

Linda Helt

Preschool 1 Teacher
lhelt@highlandspreschool.com

Shannon MacGillivray

Preschool 2 & 3 Teacher
smac@highlandspreschool.com

Hillary Morris

Preschool 1 Teacher
hmmorris@highlandspreschool.com

Connie White

Preschool 2 Teacher
cwhite@highlandspreschool.com

Administration:

Elizabeth Dompier

Bookkeeper/TA
edompier@highlandspreschool.com

Karen Short

Registrar/Communications
kshort@highlandspreschool.com

2009-2010 Volunteer Board Officers

Jennifer Browning

President
jbrowning@highlandspreschool.com

Kathy Galliano

Vice President
kgalliano@highlandspreschool.com

highlands preschool



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