

Welcome!

Welcome to Heritage Early Learning Center, a Christian early learning experience! We are very pleased to have your child enrolled in our program. Please take the time to read the handbook from beginning to end. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Early Childhood Education Director, Ms. Amanda Hahn.

Program Philosophy

Our goal at Heritage is simple: to create a nurturing and safe Christ-centered environment for your little one to grow. Our program is designed assist you in the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of your children. All Heritage Early Learning Center staff members meet the minimum state of Michigan Childcare licensing requirements and most Heritage staff members exceed these requirements in both training and experience.

We currently utilize the Pinnacle Faith Based curriculum for all classrooms Infants to School Age. Our program is designed for the child to have the freedom to learn and play at his/her own speed. A variety of educational and developmental activities will be available to your child. Outdoor and indoor playtime will promote physical development. These activities are intended to supplement each child's development and to promote success in experiencing the joy of learning.

Our staff members will teach biblical truth as described in the doctrinal statement of Heritage Baptist Church. The children will be offered a bible story daily and will be encouraged to participate in praise/worship and prayer. The children will also be encouraged to learn scripture verses that are age appropriate in length and content.

Hours of Operation

Heritage Early Learning Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. We are closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Any changes to the center schedule will be announced with as much notice as possible.

Eligibility for Program

Heritage Early Learning Center will accept all children 6 weeks through school age, including those with special needs, as long as our program can meet the needs of the child and space is available in the appropriate classroom. All children who are registered for the program may attend on the days that they were signed up for. No child will be denied admission because of race, creed, or national origin. The staff will make every effort to help all children adjust to the program, but we also reserve the right to remove a child who fails to adjust.

Forms and Admission

The following is required in order to register your child with our program.

- Non-refundable annual registration fee (Prekindergarten and school age children may also have summer activity fee.)
- Daily schedule for infants
- Birth Certificate
- Registration form

- Emergency Card
- Immunization record
- Health appraisal filled out and signed by a physician (due within 30 days of enrollment)
- Lunch agreement form for all children
- Handbook acknowledgement form/Media Release
- First weeks tuition
- Financial Contract
- Child Information Form or Infant Toddler form
- Infant/ Toddler food agreement (if applicable)

Withdrawal Policy

HELC requires that you give at least a two week written notice should you choose to withdraw your child from our program. Should you choose not to give this notice, you will still be responsible for paying for these two weeks of care.

Tuition

Tuition is due and payable weekly the Friday before services are rendered. Any tuition accounts not paid by 11:00 am on Friday will result in a late fee of \$5.00 a day. When dropping of your child, if your tuition is not paid, your child may be refused.

Upon enrollment you will be able to choose the attendance plan that suits your needs (from 1 to 5 days a week.) If you need to alter this plan at any time, you must submit written notice to the center director at least 1 week ahead of time. **Any changes in your attendance plan must be approved by the center director.** If your situation does not allow you to sign up for a fixed attendance plan, you may be able to sign up for a variable schedule. All variable schedules must be approved by the center director prior to enrollment.

Bounced Check Policy

- A. If you write a bounced check, you will be required to pay that particular bill with a money order. You will also be required to pay an additional \$35
- B. If you write a second bounced check within a six month period, you will be required to follow step A listed above, and you will also be required to pay for services by money order for the next six months of service.
- C. A third bounced check may result in discontinuation of child care services.

If you have any billing questions, please contact the Site Director immediately

VIP Days

Each child (excluding school age children) is assigned a number of VIP Days (vacation, illness, personal) they can use per year, according to their attendance plan.

If your child attends 1 Day a week = 3 VIP Days

If your child attends 2 Days a week = 6 VIP Days

If your child attends 3 Days a week = 9 VIP Days

If your child attends 4 Days a week = 12 VIP Days

If your child attends 5 Days a week = 15 VIP Days

VIP Days will run from September 1 to August 31. When using a VIP day, you will not be charged tuition for that day. You must still notify the center when your child will not be attending. If no notification is given, you will be charged for the day, regardless of how many VIP days you have left.

Once you have used your VIP Days, you will be charged for any day your child is not in attendance, regardless the reason.

Infant Room

An individual record of each baby's daily eating, sleeping, and changing routines will be kept on file. There is one staff member for every four infants. We ask that you bring the following:

- Formula or other liquids placed in pre-assembled bottles that were prepared at home **(glass bottles will not be accepted)**
- Sufficient lunch and snack foods (jar baby food, baby cereal, finger foods) must be provided to meet the minimum dietary needs of each infant
- Disposable diapers and diaper wipes
- 2-3 feeding dishes and spoons that are microwave safe
- Extra clothing and bibs
- Two sets of sheets
- As your infant begins to walk, please make sure that you provide your child with a safe, non-skid pair of shoes.

Any bottles that were not used during the day will be sent home.

Tiny Tots and Above

The Department of Human Services requires that your child have a washable blanket and/or sheet of appropriate size (Infants may not have blankets per state licensing). All clothing and bedding must be taken home and washed as it becomes soiled and/or on the last day of the week your child attends our program.

Please label every item that you bring from home from bottles and pacifiers to pillows and blankets. Please check the items frequently to make sure that your child's initials or name is still clearly noticeable.

Cups, spoons, bowls, etc. must be taken home daily to be properly sanitized.

Diapers and Wipes

We do our very best to notify you in advance if your child is running low on diapers and wipes. However; it is your responsibility to make sure your child has diapers and wipes at the center everyday. If your child is out of diapers and wipes and we have extra on hand at the

center, a charge of \$1 per diaper change will be applied to your account to help cover the cost of maintaining extra diapers and wipes. If we do not have any extra diapers/wipes at the center, you will be required to bring them in for your child, even if this means leaving work. Failure to follow this policy could result in your child's removal from the program. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter!

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to stop in at our center any time during regular operating hours. We always welcome parents' suggestions and ideas. Please inform us of any concerns that may arise. Please note that HELC requires a criminal history check on all of our employees and volunteers. At all times, volunteers are under staff supervision. If you think that you may want to help out in your child's class you must fill out a central registry clearance request and an abuse and neglect check list. Please stop by the office to get these forms.

We follow all rules and regulations stated from the
 State of Michigan
 Department of Human Resources
 Lansing
 To ACT 116, Public Acts 1973

Babysitting

In an effort to maintain the professional status of HELC and prevent any potential conflict of interest, babysitting by center staff for center children is strongly discouraged by Heritage Early Learning Center. However, if you choose to have one of our staff members care your child on your own, services must be outside the center premises and with the understanding that such arrangement and payment for services are solely between you and the person who is caring for your child. The arrangements are not sanctioned and no liability is assumed by the center, the client sponsor, or Heritage Learning Center.

Procedures For Signing In and Out

Parents must accompany their child into the classroom to sign them in. They also must sign their child out. Please initial the drop off and pick up times.

Staff will not release children to persons that are not on the information card or to persons who do not have proof of identification!

Lunch, Snacks, & Breakfast

Two nutritious snacks will be provided to child care children only, one in the morning around 9:00 am and one in the afternoon around 3:00 pm.

At this time, we are not offering a hot lunch service. You will be required to provide your child with a nutritious lunch daily. Microwaves will be available to heat up food. We ask that you place a cold pack in your child's lunch, as they will not be provided with a refrigerator.

All children are welcome to eat breakfast at our site. Breakfast must be brought from home. Please provide spoons, napkins, forks, and anything else they may need to eat their breakfast.

Illness

Please do not send sick children to our program. Any child with a fever and/or diarrhea or any other symptoms that impair him/her from participating in the program will be sent home. You must pick your child up within one hour after you receive a call from the center. If you are unable to pick your child up within that hour, someone from the emergency card must pick your child up. Your child will not be able to return to our center until one full day after they have been sent home.

Medications and Special Information

If your child is on any kind of medication, even if he/she doesn't take it while in our care, we must have a medical form filled out. In the event of emergency treatment, we must know if the child is on any medication. Medications can only be given if in original container (with doctor's instruction label). Also, if your child is troubled or has gone through a difficult period such as divorce, death in the family, separation, etc., we should know about it so that if he/she is acting out of the ordinary, we will know why and be able to handle the child properly.

Clothing and Toys

Please dress your child according to weather conditions. Dress children in casual clothes that can be easily cleaned. All children should bring a complete change of clothes, including underwear and socks, with their name printed clearly on the bag and on their clothing. Weather permitting all children will go outside everyday for walks and or to play. Please make sure your children have warm coats, snow pants, a hat, mittens/gloves and boots. Please label clothing clearly! We are not responsible for lost items. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IN PAJAMAS UNLESS IT IS PAJAMA DAY!**

We encourage children to leave their toys at home. All of our programs are equipped with plenty of toys and equipment for the children to play with. **We are not responsible for any lost, stolen, or broken toys.**

Biting

Please note that biting is a part of normal development for some toddlers. We will take every precaution to insure a safe environment for every child. However, please be patient with us if your child is bitten. We will take appropriate action with the family of the biter to help that child through this trying developmental stage. Children who are bitten will be treated and cared for appropriately. If a child bites repeatedly and does not respond to our procedures, he/she could face temporary removal from the program.

Children's Conduct

Please review with your child/children our expectations of them to make their time in our program a safe and pleasurable experience.

- Children must remain in their designated area.
- Children are to respect the rights and property of others.
- Children are to act courteously and appropriately, be cooperative and follow the instructions of the staff.
- Appropriate and acceptable language is expected.
- Children are expected to be responsible for their actions.
- Material and equipment are to be treated properly and returned to their proper place when done.

Discipline Policy

FIVE BASIC EXPECTATIONS

In order for the child care center to function in a safe manner where all children feel accepted and respected, these are the five basic expectations of children's behavior:

1. All children are expected to follow directions.
2. All children are expected to keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
3. All children are expected to use polite language. No teasing, swearing, or name-calling.
4. All children are expected to use inside voices.
5. All children are expected to walk while in the building.

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

Heritage Learning Center follows an assertive discipline philosophy, which is progressive in nature and intended to help children learn to behave appropriately. When a child's behavior fails to meet with any one of the expectations outline above, disciplinary consequences will result.

CONSEQUENCES

1. Redirection
2. Positive Reinforcement
3. Removal from the situation
4. Written notice describing misbehavior will be sent to parent.
5. Additional written notices for repeated misbehavior will result in suspension. A meeting between the parent and administrator may result.

SUSPENSION

Additional written warnings will result in suspension from the center for the number of days indicated below.

2nd Written Warning: 1-day suspension from Child Care

3rd Written Warning: 3-day suspension from Child Care.

4th Written Warning: 5-day suspension from Child Care. A meeting with the parent, caregivers, and director will be scheduled.

5th Written Warning: Withdrawal from Child Care. Return to the center is contingent upon a re-admission plan developed by director and parent.

*While the majority of situations will follow the above steps, HELC reserves the right to remove a child from our program if he/she is being a hindrance to the safety or development of the other children enrolled in the program.

Dismissal From Program

The following circumstances may also result in your child being dismissed from our program:

1. Failure to pay for services in a timely manner.
2. Returned Checks.
3. Dropping off a child prior to the program's designated starting time and leaving them in an unsupervised situation.
4. Chronic disregard for the 6:30 p.m. closing time.
5. Any behavior that does not adjust to the behavioral recommendation of students preschool through grade 5.

Parent Responsibilities

- Fill out all registration forms completely, sign them, and keep the information current.
- Read all communications on the parent board frequently. Also be sure to read newsletters completely.
- Pay all fees on time along with handing in your weekly schedule on time.
- Make alternate arrangements if your child is ill. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children.
- Parents must sign their child in and out of the program.
- Keep the staff informed of any changes or incidents in the home that may result in a change in your child's behavior or attitude.
- Listen to concerns of the staff regarding your child and work with the staff on an agreeable solution.
- Parents should feel free to discuss any concerns with the staff and or directors.
- Please label all of your child's belongings.
- Parents are responsible to notify the program of any changes in their child's attendance schedule.

Child Custody

Unless our centers are given a copy of a court order granting custody to only one parent, and/or restraining the other parent from contact with the child, the employees in the Heritage Early Learning Center do not have legal authority to withhold the child from the legal parents. If a parent who does not have legal custody arrives to pick up a child, the center can refuse to release the child, relying on the court order in the files.

Emergency

Every precaution has been taken to ensure a safe, comfortable environment for the children. However, if a child is injured the following steps will be taken:

1. Basic first aid will be performed. Cuts will be washed and bandaged. Bumps will have ice applied to them.
2. In the event of serious injury, the parents will be notified. If the parents are not available, the person listed on the emergency card will be called. If that person cannot be reached, the doctor designated on the emergency card will be called.

911 will be called if needed. PLEASE KEEP EMERGENCY CARDS UPDATED AND COMPLETE!

Severe Weather

Tornado: In the event of a tornado, the children will be taken to a designated room in the building that does not have windows and which we consider the safest.

Emergency Closing: In the event that school should close during the day, parents will be notified to come and pick-up their child. If parents cannot be reached, a person on the child's emergency card will be called to pick-up the child.

The policies outlined above may be modified from time to time as situations arise or regulations or needs change.

If you would like to view the Department of Human Service's rules and regulations, or if you would like to view our Health Care Service plan, they are both located on the wall outside of the HELC office.

Heritage Early Learning Center

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Revised February 2010

I have received a copy of the Heritage Early Learning Center handbook and read it. I understand that my child will be expected to comply with the procedures and policies listed.

CHILD(REN)'S NAME(S)

LOCATION

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE

DATE

Please sign and return the handbook acknowledgment form within five days of registration.

Media Release

Recording of various school and classroom activities with photography and video equipment is done by Heritage Early Learning Center and local press throughout the year. The recording might circulate to other students or classrooms, be used in publications, or be shown on local cable channels. Please fill out a media release form for our records giving your permission for your child/children to participate in the media information.

Please check one.

I give my permission to have my child photographed or video recorded. _____

I do not give my permission for my child to be photographed or video recorded. _____

Child(ren)'s Name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____