STEPPING STONES

at Ezell-Harding

STEPPING STONES HANDBOOK

Welcome to Stepping Stones at Ezell Harding. We are happy to have your child as an integral part of our family. We are a preschool serving children ages 18 months- PreKindergarten. The staff as a whole functions under the supervision of our Board of Directors, the EHCS President, and the Director of Stepping Stones. The following information are the policies and procedures set forth by the preschool in conjunction with our licensure through the Tennessee Department of Education.

Our philosophy is that each child will be in a safe, Christian environment with carefully trained and qualified teachers and caregivers. Each class will focus on building the social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual development of each child. We will partner closely with parents to ensure we are meeting the developmental needs of each child. Our goal is for each child to be fully prepared when entering Kindergarten.

Enrollment Requirements:
Each child must have a completed application, developmental form, health history including current immunizations signed by their physician, and a referral from their current daycare/preschool if applicable. A testing date, or "playdate", will be set up for your child once the application has been received. The child will be recommended/not recommended for enrollment based off of the testing, and other information received. Placement will be considered based on each child's individual developmental needs, not necessarily birthdate.

If, after spending time with your child in the classroom setting, our teachers and Stepping Stones administrators feel that additional support is needed, parents will be expected to comply with our recommendations for testing through the appropriate school system, TEIS, or private resources. Failure to comply and follow through with the recommendations could result in an inability for us to best meet the needs of your child and could result in dismissal from our preschool.

In order for a child to enter the three year old class, the child must be completely toilet trained. A child is considered completely toilet trained when they can verbally communicate the need to use the restroom, can manage their own clothing, clean themselves independently, and wear underwear, not pullups.

Bottles are not permitted at our preschool. Children are not able to lie down at rest time with a sippy cup. Please make sure they have already separated from doing this before sending the child to school.

Program Hours and Holidays:
We follow the same calendar set for the entire school year at EHCS. You can find our calendar at www.ezellharding.org and we will hand one out at the parent meeting. Our school day runs from 7:30am-2:30pm. Anyone arriving early between 6:45-7:30am will go to Before-school care.

If not picked up by 2:45 in the afternoon, your child will attend the Extended Care program. Extended Care ends at 6:00pm.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:
Our school day begins ***promptly*** at 7:45. Tardiness after this time is disruptive and interferes with the learning that is already taking place in your child's classroom. If your child is going to be late, please email your child's teacher. Arrival after 10:00am will not be permitted without a doctor's note. At that point, a preschooler has already missed the majority of the learning and play for the school day.

Upon arrival, all Stepping Stones parents must park in the lower lot and walk their child up to the building, even if you also have a Lower School student. **Do not park in front of the building along the sidewalk and leave your car unattended. These are our fire lanes, as well as designated handicap parking, and must be kept clear.** A Stepping Stones child **must never** be dropped off in the car line. Come in to the **LEFT SIDE FRONT DOORS** of the Lower School and walk your child down to their classroom. The left side door is the entrance and exit for Stepping Stones. This is to help with the flow of people entering and exiting our building. An adult ***must sign*** your child in each day using the Brightwheel app. There are QR codes located at the classroom doors and in the Stepping Stones hallway. Have your child place all of their belongings into their designated spaces.

For dismissal at 2:30pm, you must park in the lower parking lot and walk up to the front Lower School doors. The doors will be locked and you will be let in. You will sign your child out using the Brightwheel app. Anyone dropping off or picking up your child must also have access to your child's account on the app. Please notify your child's teacher if you are planning to send someone else to pick up your child. Also, siblings cannot sign out preschoolers. It absolutley must be an adult.

If picking up a child in K-6th as well, you can pull into the car line, walk in at 2:30 to get your child, then return to the car to get your older student at their dismissal time.

If you arrive between the times of 2:45-3:00, you will still have to park in the lower lot and walk in to sign out your child. A preschooler will ***never*** be dismissed through the carline. Also, please use the crosswalk when leaving during car line dismissal. It is dangerous to walk across the parking lot when teachers are loading/moving cars. Always hold your child's hand when in the parking lots.

Tuition and Payments:

Tuition: Full tuition breakdown can be found on the Ezell Harding website.

Full Time annual- $13,460

Part Time annual (M,W,F)- $9,000

Tuition for Stepping Stones students includes a daily lunch and snack. Extended Care, Summer camp and Holiday camps are separate fees and run by the Extended Care Director and staff.

Admission Fees:

- Re-enrollment Fee Rolling
- New Student Application Fee ($75.00) per student
- New Student Enrollment Fee ($125.00) per family
- Technology Fee ($100.00) per student

Note: The fees listed above are non refundable. We recognize that some families have several children enrolled in the school, there is a tuition discount available for each child in the family after the first child. Refer to the current tuition schedule on the website.

Tuition charges are to be paid in advance on a monthly basis. Tuition payments will be autodrafted on the 1st or 10th of each month and is considered delinquent after the 15th of the month. A late fee is assessed on tuition and any general charges after the 2nd time a payment has returned at the rate of 1.75%. Access to RenWeb is disabled after an account balance is delinquent.

A student may not be permitted to attend classes (Preschool 2 – Grade 12) if the family account balance is **30** days past due. In order for a student to remain in school and attend classes, the family account balance must be made current within a specified time frame with cash, cashier's check, money order or credit card. No personal checks or debit cards will be accepted on past due accounts due to bank processing time. It is school policy that the report card is withheld and no transcripts or records will be released unless all accounts are paid in full, according to the terms of the Enrollment Contract. Family account balances must be paid in full for report cards (Preschool – 5th grade), same methods of payment apply. Also, the family account balance must be paid in full at the end of each semester if the student is to be enrolled at EHCS for the next semester. If a student withdraws from EHCS, the family will be responsible for tuition for the days that they attended plus an additional 30 days.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES

The first week of each month, a credit card convenience fee equal to 2.95% of total payments made with debit/credit card the previous month will be posted to the family account balance. This percentage is equal to the amount charged to EHCS by the merchant bank.

RETURNED CHECK POLICY

Any family account experiencing a returned check payment (insufficient funds) for tuition, or general charges, including online transactions, will result in the need for those payments to be paid with cash, cashier's check, money order or credit card. If a second return check payment is made, all future payments must be made by cash, cashier's check, money order, or credit card. An NSF handling fee of $30.00 will be assessed to the family account balance for each returned item regardless of method of payment.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Ezell-Harding Christian School offers a limited amount of financial aid for students and families. All recipients are determined based upon need, as determined by FACTS, a third party evaluator. Financial Aid is allowed for student athletes under Division II based on the same stipulation of need. Any athlete receiving aid above the allowable amount must have on file a signed waiver stating he/she will not participate in TSSAA Varsity Sports. All families seeking financial aid must first apply through FACTS. Applications can only be completed on-line at

http://online.fact.mgt.com/aid. Any family awarded financial aid is not eligible for any other discounts.

Part Time Students:

We do have a part time option available for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday only. If you choose for your child to be here part time, they will not be able to make up days due to illness, school closings, or holidays. Occasionally, the Director will ask if you want to switch out a day in order to not miss a class party, performance, or special event.

Dress Code:

We try to get outside to play as often as possible. Make sure your child is wearing tennis shoes or strap on shoes. No crocs, sandals, or open toed shoes. Please label all jackets and hats with your child's name. Each child should be dressed in appropriate clothing for the weather and temperature. You are responsible for sending a change of clothes with your child to stay at school for accidents. If it is soiled and sent home, please return another set of clothes the next day.

PS2 and PS3 students wear clothing suitable for diaper changes, toilet training, and unassisted toileting. No onsies or tights, please. We try to get outside to play as often as possible. Make sure your child is wearing tennis shoes or strap on shoes. Shoes with velcro at this age are preferred as laces become untied often and are a tripping hazard.

Pre-Kindergarten students are required to wear school uniforms. You can purchase school uniforms and outerwear at the Eagle Landing Store located on our campus.

- Required Boys and Girls shirts: EH Pique Knit or EH Dri Fit Polo (SS) in Gray, Black or Crimson- these can only be purchased at the Eagle Landing store.
- Miscellaneous items: Khaki or Black pants, shorts, skirts or skorts. The plaid skort can be purchased from the Eagle Landing store.
- Socks and leggings must be solid black, white, or gray.
- Approved shoes must be predominately black, white, gray, brown, red, or crimson. No additional decorations may be on shoes: such as lights, glitter, charms, characters.

Food:

A lunch calendar will be sent out at the beginning of each month for you to see what your child will be eating for lunch. It typically consists of a protein, vegetable, fruit, bread, and milk. If your child will not eat what is being served that day, we ask that you send a complete lunch from home. We do not heat up lunches from home, so if it needs to be hot, please send it in a thermos. Our lunches are prepared daily by our cafeteria staff. If we find that after trying a particular meal several times, and your child refuses it, we will let you know and ask you to provide lunch from home on that day. Soft drinks and candy will be prohibited for lunch. Classrooms with nut allergies will be deemed a NUT FREE ROOM.

Parent Communication:

Teachers will communicate daily through the Brightwheel App. Parents will be required to set up a Brightwheel account at the beginning of the school year. All communication (daily report, messages, diapering/pottying, food, accident reports, photos/videos) will be uploaded daily on the app. Daily work and art will come home in your child's folder. Please clean it out each day in order to keep up with your child's progress. If you need to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, please email the teacher to set it up. Teachers cannot be expected to have an impromptu conference in the hallway during drop off or dismissal. In the Fall semester, teachers will set up a conference time with each family. This is a great time to get to really know your child's teacher, hear all the great things your child is learning, and discuss how they are adjusting to school. Parents will also receive a weekly update and occasional email from the Director of Stepping Stones and other school Administrators. Please be sure to read every email sent so you do not miss out on important information. PS2 and PS3 will receive an Academic and Developmental Assessment at the end of each semester. PreK will receive a Report Card at the end of each semester.

Accident Reports:

If your child were to have an accident at school or sustain an injury, teachers will treat the wound first and care for your child. Depending on the seriousness of the accident/injury, a phone call may be made to the parent. Otherwise, parents will be notified through an accident report on the Brightwheel App. Teachers do fill out and file an accident report.

Rest Time:

Your child will have a rest time each day from 12:00-2:00pm. We ask for you to send a nap mat for your child. We require a specific type of nap mat ordered from Amazon. It is the rollup type with an attached blanket and pillow. This will be shown to you at our Meet the Teacher night when we send home parent packets. Sleep aids, such as one small stuffie or blanket are welcomed, but must be kept in backpacks until nap time. Nap mats will be sent home each Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.

Illness:

A child must be free from fever (without the use of medication), diarrhea, and vomiting for at least 48 hours from the time of the last incident before returning to school. If your child shows signs of illness while at school, you will need to pick up your child within 1 hour from the time you are notified. Any medications for your child must be turned in to the office. You will be given a medication form to complete and have on file for your child. Medicine will not be given without written permission and instructions. Please make sure it is labeled with your child's name.

Stepping Stones Discipline Policy:

A very important part of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along in

the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the direction of an adult other than their parents. We believe in establishing consistent, easy-to-understand limits and in having teachers who respond to inappropriate behavior with insight, sensitivity, and skill. When clear, consistent, age appropriate limits are present; children increasingly become responsible for themselves. When out-of-bounds behaviors do occur, we believe it is important for children to understand why the behavior is inappropriate and how to modify it. A caring and positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline. The teachers will focus on the positive behaviors of the children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible. Our goal is to help the children develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies:

-Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child (Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes).

-Redirecting behavior when this seems potentially effective.

-Separating a child from the group (Time-Out) – one minute away for each year of age.

-Counseling children individually about their behaviors.

-Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns (Incident Report through binder/email/or phone call).

Under no circumstances is corporal punishment permitted. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.

In the event that a child does not respond, we will notify the parents and work closely with them to develop a plan to help the child gain self-control and a positive attitude toward their peers and teachers. Should the child's continued negative behavior put themselves, their peers or their teachers at risk for physical harm or, if the child damages school property, we reserve the right to ask the parent to pick up their child from school early, or potentially be asked to withdraw the child from the school. While we understand the developmental tendencies of children to experiment with inappropriate language to shock others, withdrawal may also be requested for those children who are verbally abusive, including the repeated use of inappropriate language which other families consider offensive.

Biting Policy:

Biting is a common behavior among children from birth to three years of age. Some children communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. We understand that biting, though unfortunate, can be part of a preschool experience. Our goal is to help identify what is causing this behavior and find ways to resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. State regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the child who was bitten both be contacted. Names of children will not be shared with either parent.

If biting occurs, redirection and time out will be used and the child bitten will be responded to immediately. Accident reports will be written and provided to both parents. Classroom staff will

meet with the director for advice, support, and strategy planning. Staff will work with the parents of both the biting child and the child bitten to keep all informed and develop a strategy for change. If biting continues, the parents of the biting child will be prepared for the possibility that the child may be suspended from preschool until biting subsides.

Smoking Policy:

EHCS is a smoke-free campus (including vaping) for all EHCS events.

Children's Protective Services:

We are required by law to report any knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. Also, as part of Child Protective Services and the Tennessee Standards for School-administered Childcare, personal safety curriculum will be taught to preschoolers ages 3-5 years old.

For additional information, please also read through the Ezell-Harding Christian School Student/Parent book.