

# Highland Plaza United Methodist Preschool

2011-2012  
...FAMILY HANDBOOK...



4226 Norcross Road  
Hixson, TN 37343  
(423)877-1544

[www.highlandplazapreschool.org](http://www.highlandplazapreschool.org)

## A Word of Welcome from Our Director

Dear Families,

It is a sincere pleasure to welcome your family into our family. It is the highest honor to be trusted with your precious child.

The past several months have brought many changes to our school, introduced new opportunities, and expanded the possibilities of what we can offer to the children. Now that the merger between Highland Plaza United Methodist Church and Hixson United Methodist Church is complete, we are benefiting from inclusion in the ministries of a much larger congregation. The leadership of Hixson UMC has affirmed and supported our passion for delivering the highest quality early educational experience for your child at every turn.

As this school year begins, we look forward to sharing with you the amazing transformation of the wooded hill behind the playground into a natural playscape. This wonderland of delightful Chattanooga-inspired elements includes The RiverPark (an expanded picnic area with wooden picnic tables complete with umbrellas), Lookout Mountain (a tire climbing wall), two Alpine Slides (embankment slides), The Tennessee River (our own installed creek). The Walnut Street Bridge (a footbridge at the top of the creek), the Nature Center (a chainsaw sculpted tree trunk with native Tennessee animals), the Coolidge Park Fountain (cement animals to climb on), Ruby Falls Cave, and the Carousel (pony tire swings).

The next phase will be the installation of the RiverBend Festival (a small amphitheater) and an accompanying sound garden for music-making. An outdoor atelier (studio space) will develop where the current sand and water area is located. We'll add a colorful art piece inspired by the Rainbow window at the Creative Discovery Museum. Finally, triangular shade sails will provide a covered area for rainy days and call to mind the roof line of the Aquarium.

Another major change that is currently underway is the renovation of the former sanctuary into a multi-use room. Once completed, this room will function as a gym space for the preschool and a meeting and conference room for the church.

As you can tell, our school, is abuzz with ideas to invite your child's interest, provoke her wonder, spark his curiosity, and promote learning in a rich environment supported by teachers who, themselves, are still curious and full of wonder. We believe this is the model of early education through which all children have the right to learn. We cherish every opportunity to provide children with enriching and educational experiences every day, honoring their strengths and potential.

We look forward to partnering with you this school year as we provide the best possible preschool experience we can design, with your child foremost in mind. We invite you to join us on the journey as we continue to be Chattanooga's only Reggio-inspired preschool program!

Sincerely,

Vicky Flessner  
Preschool Director  
August 15, 2011

You can learn more about the schools of Reggio Emilia on the internet using Google and entering Reggio Children. I also have many books and articles that I would be happy to share with you.

**“Do nothing without joy.”**

Loris Malaguzzi, Founder of the Schools of Reggio Emilia

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## **A LITTLE ABOUT US**

Our Preschool Program began as an outreach program of the Highland Plaza United Methodist Church and, as of June 2010, is a ministry of Hixson United Methodist Church. It is the oldest Chattanooga licensed morning preschool program north of the river, having been established in 1965. We hold a 3-star license from the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services. Our school serves children ages 2, 3, 4 and 5. Our program is overseen by the Preschool Board of Hixson United Methodist Church. The committee is made up of elected church members and preschool parents who meet on a routine basis to discuss the plans, activities and programs of the Preschool. Our foremost goal is to provide a loving atmosphere and safe environment based on Christian principles, so that, working together with you, we can nurture and support your child in his/her social, emotional, mental, physical and spiritual development. Children of all faiths and nationalities are welcome and accepted.

Our staff members are qualified and dedicated professionals and belong to a variety of professional organizations, such as the Chattanooga Area Association for the Education Young Children, the Southern Early Childhood Association, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance. Staff members participate in a continuous program of in-service training and professional study to keep abreast of the latest happenings in the field of early childhood. Teachers are required to attain a minimum of 18 clock hours of training each year. Daily, weekly, and monthly planning meetings frame our classroom work with the children.

## **OUR BELIEFS**

- We believe in a strengths-based approach to education where we are committed to see the competency of every child.
- We believe that each day should be filled with joy in learning, wonder, curiosity, and engaged investigation.
- We believe children need time to acquire play skills so that they can learn to investigate, invent, and problem-solve with complexity.
- We believe children need to develop the positive approaches to learning of enthusiasm (interest, pleasure, and motivation to learn) and engagement (focused attention, persistence, flexibility, and self-regulation). Positive approaches to learning are supported by attentive, intentional teachers.
- We believe that the whole child, - body, soul, and mind, - should be nurtured and challenged.

## **OUR MISSION**

- To provide an early educational experience where children come to believe in themselves, their worth, and their ability to have an impact on the world around them.
- To enable children to see that they are creative, able, critical thinkers.
- For the classroom environment to honor learning styles.
- For the teachers to use a variety of strategies to engage the learner.
- For teachers and families to work together in partnership for the good of all children.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH**

Our philosophical approach is supported by the theories of Maslow and Erickson, which show that children must have their physiological and psychological needs met in order to feel safe, to feel a sense of belonging, to have respect for themselves and to feel respect for others. We use a variety of resources from CSEFEL (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) to bolster children's developing relationships and growing competence in social interactions.

Our philosophical approach is supported by research that shows play is a critical resource for learning and has a strong relationship to future academic success. Teacher-supported play builds many foundational skills and complex cognitive activities such as memory, self-regulation, oral language abilities, symbolic generalization, successful school adjustment, and better social skills (Bordrova and Leong). Functional, constructive, and dramatic play engage children's senses encourage active exploration; require creativity, imagination, reasoning, negotiation, and motivation (Smilansky). Play is an essential learning tool for young children.

Our philosophical approach is supported by the theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner) - that children come to us wired for ways of learning (linguistic/verbal, logical/mathematical, musical/rhythmic, spatial/visual, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist) and it is our goal to strengthen all ways of learning through encouragement, enrichment, and support.

Our philosophical approach is supported by the theory of social constructionism - that children are active constructors of their own knowledge and that knowledge is constructed through curiosity, investigation, and experimentation (Piaget). Individual knowledge is constructed, deconstructed, and consolidated as a result of exchange with and in relation to others. Children learn best when supported and challenged by a community of likewise enthusiastic learners (Vygotsky).

## OUR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

We are inspired by the work of the educators of Reggio Emilia, Italy. In Reggio, children are viewed as rich, strong and powerful. Children are seen as possessing great potential - potential it is the privilege of the teacher to perceive and empower. We strive to be co-researchers with children and to develop beautiful, nurturing and stimulating environments in which to research. We hold the belief that children come to us capable and full of potential; that their understandings should be made visible to them, their families and their communities, that knowledge is built through inquiry and that ample time needs to be devoted in order for it to fully develop. We agree with Loris Malaguzzi, the founder of the schools of Reggio Emilia, that we should “do nothing without joy.”

While learning standards and developmental sequences serve as a guide, they are not used as a checklist of “must-sees” to evaluate a child’s worth. Children are already competent, ready to explore, create, question and build.

We use Learning Together with Young Children - a Curriculum Framework for Reflective Teachers, by Margie Carter and Deb Curtis, as a guide for planning curriculum and for building our relationships with children and families. To quote from the book, “We find value in curriculum models that are environmentally based, see children as active learners, offer children choices, encourage teachers to build curriculum from children’s interests, and use ongoing observations with a focus on strengths for assessment. We believe curriculum should strengthen children’s identities as thinkers and responsible citizens as well as creators of a life-sustaining culture. Curriculum should be developed in conjunction with children’s families and communities and be respectful of their culture and home language.” Our goal is to “offer a way to think about the teaching and learning process that is emotionally and intellectually engaging for teachers and children.” (p. 7, 8)

## GENERAL ROUTINES AND INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL

### CLASS NAMES

“**The Twinklers**” are our children who are two years old, soon to be three.

“**The Moonbeams**” are our children who are three, soon to be four.

“**The Sunshine Gang**” are our four and five-year-olds.

“**The Rainbow Kids**” are our M-F four and five-year-olds.

### SCHOOL HOURS

Doors open at 9:05.

The Twinklers, the Moonbeams, the Sunshine Gang: 9:15-12:15, MWF or TTH

The Rainbow Kids: 9:15-12:30, Monday through Friday.

### SCHOOL RULE

Never hurt anyone on the inside or the outside.

### SCHOOL MOTTO

“Where Kids Reach for the Sky”

### ARRIVAL PROCEDURES FOR PRESCHOOL

Please walk your child into the building each morning. The Twinklers, Moonbeams, and Sunshine Gang use the entrance to the main preschool wing. The Rainbow Kids use the front door of the building. We request that the Rainbow Kids use the parking lot on Highland Way side of the building to help lessen parking congestion. **Sign in** your child upon arrival using the clipboard provided at your child’s classroom using your full name. We ask that you **be prompt** and arrive between 9:05 and 9:20. The doors will be locked at 9:25. If your child is tardy, s/he will miss out on the activities that set the tone for the day, which in turn makes it more difficult for your child to separate from you and find a place in the group.

We make these requests when arriving:

- 1) **DO NOT** leave siblings in the car in the parking lot. (You may ask a friend to stay with your car and child until you return.)
- 2) You are invited into our classrooms to help your child transition from home to school.
- 3) Everyone washes hands upon arrival and you are encouraged to help your child complete this task.
- 4) When it is time for you to leave please give your child a **quick**, cheerful good-bye. We have lots of experience handling separation tears. Please trust us to get the day started well.

5) NEVER leave your valuables in your car or your car unlocked.

### **DEPARTURE PROCEDURES FOR TWINKLERS, MOONBEAMS AND SUNSHINE GANG**

Parents park and come into the building to pick up children. Twinklers, Moonbeams, and Sunshine Gang classes dismiss at 12:15. Take advantage of this opportunity to see the children "in action" and keep in contact with your child's teacher. All changes in the usual pick-up person must be relayed to us in WRITTEN form. All children must be **signed out** using your **full name** at departure. Always hold hands with your child in the parking lot for safety's sake.

### **DEPARTURE PROCEDURES FOR THE RAINBOW KIDS**

Park in the Highland Way parking lot. You will pick up your child at their interior classroom door at 12:30 and **sign them out** using your **full name**. We will load Rainbow Kids who stay for Stay Day into cars at 2:15 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Cars should line up outside the door leading to the main preschool area of the building. All changes in the usual pick-up person must be relayed to us in WRITTEN form. Always hold hands with your child in the parking lot for safety's sake.

### **CAR SEAT**

A car seat is available for emergency use. If you have forgotten to trade out the car seat with your pick-up person or need to send someone on the spur of the moment to pick up your child, who does not have a car seat, please ask to borrow ours. State law requires that children under the age of 4 who weigh less than 40 pounds must use an approved car seat. Children between the ages of 4 and 8, who weigh between 40 and 80 pounds or are less than 4'9" in height, must use an approved booster seat. Children between the ages of 4 and 8, who weigh more than 80 pounds or are more than 4'9" in height, must use an approved seat belt, as well as any child between the ages of 8 and 15.

### **AUTHORIZED TRANSPORT PERSONS**

We require written notice from you in the event of any changes from the usual pick-up person for your child. If your plans change during the morning, you may verbally inform us of the change by phone. Our telephone answering machine is on at all times. If the office is unattended when you call, please know that the answering machine is monitored very frequently. We also have caller ID to help ensure the identity of persons calling the school.

We will provide you with a directory of students in our school, which may be used for arranging car pools and social visits. This list is not to be used for solicitation purposes. When working out car pools, please keep in mind Tennessee's child safety laws with regard to seat belts and car safety seats. Pick-up persons we have not previously seen will be asked to show a driver's license for identification. We card everyone with whom we are not familiar. **We are required by state law to not release your child to ANYONE we feel might endanger the child.**

### **TOTE BAGS**

Tote bags are provided for each preschool child attending our program. Returning children will re-use their bag from the previous year and will receive a school t-shirt in lieu of a new tote bag. These are our link to home, and we put all artwork, notes, newsletters, etc. in them to get them to you. Please send these to school **each day** with your child. Also check them each night for current information. It is best to clean them out each evening so you know what is new. We appreciate them being free of toys and personal belongings so we can use them for their intended purpose. *If you must pack for an overnight stay with your pick up person, please do so in a separate bag.*

### **CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please mark all outer clothing, extra clothing and personal belongings with your child's name. Dress your child comfortably for school activities. Remember that we go outside daily and work with paint and glue and other messy substances on a regular basis. Ask yourself if what you are dressing your child in can get ruined. If not, don't send them to school in it.

- Please dress children in clothes that are easy to remove. This assists teachers when changing diapers and makes it easier for children to manage their own needs at bathroom time. Suspenders, belts and loops severely complicate this process.
- Footwear such as cowboy boots (unsafe on climbers) and sandals, flip-flops, and crocs are inappropriate at school. NO high heeled shoes. Sturdy, closed-toe shoes are best.
- Outerwear is kept on hooks outside the classrooms labeled with your child's name.
- Some hair accessories and jewelry are choke hazards. Please leave these items at home.

### **OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

A period of outdoor play occurs each day, weather permitting. Children who are not well enough to fully participate in our activities should not be sent to school. Special accommodations cannot be provided.

A word about playground surfacing. Our playground resilient surfacing is composed of rubber mulch. This surface is rated as one of the safest to use on playgrounds. It has many advantages over sand, pea gravel, and wood chips. Among its disadvantages are: 1) It will travel home with you. Dump out shoes and clear out pockets. It has not been shown to clog washing machines and it will not melt in clothes dryers. 2) It can be dirty. So is sand and pea gravel and wood mulch. Children love to roll in the rubber mulch precisely because it is so spongy and bouncy. Be happy they are coming home happy and exercised and not with broken bones. 3). It is expensive. We have spent about \$10,000 on the mulch on our playground. We want your children to be safe regardless of the cost.

Our beautiful natural playscape affords your child the opportunity to interact with nature on a daily basis There are grass, mulch, dirt, sand, water, wood, and stones all around. These exciting elements draw children to touch, mix and investigate. Your child will likely get messy in the process. Please expect this and dress your child accordingly. Sturdy shoes are a necessity (think hiking!).

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

It is your responsibility to notify us in writing of any medical conditions or allergies your child has or of any medications taken regularly. A plan for children with allergies or chronic medical conditions requiring special accommodations must be agreed upon with your child's teacher and the director. We will ask you to complete a form detailing the steps to take in case of emergency and planning for any needed accommodations in the classroom.

An up-to-date immunization record must be signed by your health care provider and submitted to us upon enrollment. If your child receives further immunizations during the year, please provide us with that information so our records remain current. No child may attend school without a health record on file.

For the protection of all our children, and our staff, no child may be brought to school when showing symptoms of illness (including fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.). Your child should be fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medicines), vomit or diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness. You will be asked to pick up your child if signs of illness occur at school. It is important that we, or the emergency contact person listed on the Application, know where to reach you during school hours, in case of emergency. If you have a cell phone or pager, please be sure we have the numbers and leave it turned on while your child is in our care.

Please notify us if your child has a communicable illness such as chicken pox, mumps, strep, etc. so that we may in turn make other parents aware that their child has been exposed.

### **CURRICULUM SUPPORT FROM HOME**

Frequent communication from your child's teacher will inform you of topics and ideas under study. If your child would like to share appropriate books or materials from home, they will provide guidance for your selections.

Teachers will often request your support and input as questions to investigate emerge. You may have just the right materials at home or resources available. Also, you can let us know what your child is talking about at home and what he/she is currently finding interesting.

"Science" discoveries such as shells, leaves, seeds, etc. are always welcome for sharing. Toys should be left at home unless specifically requested by the teacher. Some pets may be allowed to visit, but only with prior approval from the teacher. Some classes have "Show and Tell." Your child's teacher will let you know if this applies to your child.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**We close for inclement weather as follows:** If Hamilton County Schools are closed, so are we. If Hamilton County Schools are delayed 1 hour or less, our schedule remains the same. If Hamilton County Schools are **delayed more than 1 hour**, then we are **closed**. Make-up of inclement weather days will be at the discretion of the Director.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Fire drills are practiced once a month and severe weather drills are practiced once or twice a school year. Emergency name tags are placed on all children at each drill. These contain their name, date of birth, your contact information, and any allergy or medical condition notes. The name tags would hopefully provide emergency personnel with the most urgent facts they would need to appropriately care for your child.

Should evacuation of the building become necessary, we will go to 1412 Highland Way (the home of a church member). We will, of course, make contact with you at the soonest opportunity.

### **PAYMENTS**

Tuition payments are made on June 15, on Visitation Days August 18 or 19, and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month September through April (total of 10 payments). You may assume that all checks written to school (for tuition, stay day, book club orders, etc.) may be made out to Highland Plaza United Methodist Preschool unless otherwise noted at the time (for

example, school portrait payments are made to Tucker Photography). There is a fee of \$10.00 for checks returned non-sufficient funds.

### **MESSAGES**

We can only accept messages from a child's custodial parent, and prefer that they be in writing. Verbal messages from your child cannot be accepted.

### **TELEPHONE ANSWERING MACHINE**

We keep our answering machine on during the day. If you leave a message, please be assured that it is checked every 10-15 minutes.

### **BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAY PARTIES**

We celebrate birthdays and special days (those with summer birthdays) by forming "birthday committees"; these small groups of children work together to make a gift to bestow on the honoree during a special ceremony. Each class has a unique gift to make and give. As your child moves through all of our classes, these gifts will be a lasting and meaningful treasure.

We prefer to put the emphasis on each individual child and not on food – especially in this time of sky-rocketing obesity rates. Therefore we are requesting that you not send special treats or trinkets. You are welcome to attend the gift-giving ceremony.

We are also moving away from food-related holiday parties and are replacing these with a seasonal festivity which will commemorate the changing seasons and reflect on the emerging interests and learning going on in your child's class. Sometimes these will be class-specific and sometimes these will be school-wide. Stay tuned for more details in your monthly newsletters. We anticipate that this policy will provide a more natural classroom rhythm, be more child-centered, and will avoid the disruption that many stand-alone party days infuse.

### **NUTRITION**

We serve fruit juice and a snack such as Nilla wafers, Cheezits, or similar cracker. Parents are welcome to send snacks to be shared by the class, but please check with the teacher in advance about what you plan to send and when. Please remember classroom allergies. Your child will often have an opportunity to cook or otherwise prepare a special food for snack time.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Physical punishment is not used at school. If there is a problem in the classroom, we use it as an opportunity to reinforce relationship skills, verbal skills, problem solving skills, and compassion for one's neighbor. If there is a persistent problem, we will work with you on further courses of action to help your child regain control of his/her behavior. Our focus is on positive behavior and strengths, praise and encouragement of appropriate behavior, and redirecting the child's attention to alternative activities.

We use a "**Conflict Resolution Code**" as often as possible to teach children to think through their problems and verbally solve them. The steps are as follows:

1. What is the problem?
2. What are the possible solutions? (accept all answers)
3. Are they good or bad choices?
4. What's the best one to try?
5. Let's do it!

We use the CSEFEL (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) pyramid and other resources to strengthen social-emotional development. See <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/> for more detailed information.

### **PERSONAL SAFETY AND CHILD ABUSE**

Licensing requirements mandate us to provide lessons in personal safety as part of our curriculum. Required components of this curriculum must include lessons on self-esteem, feelings, body parts, and safe and unsafe touches. We have written our own curriculum incorporating the components, which is taught in a Bible-based approach during our weekly Bible Storytime. This curriculum will be our study for most of the first semester. You are welcome to look it over, if interested. We also have a few videos you are welcome to borrow, on teaching your child about stranger awareness and sexual molestation. State law mandates anyone - whether parents, child care personnel, or others - to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

### **STAY DAY**

Stay Day is provided on Tuesdays and Wednesdays each week. The cost is \$10.00 for one child and an additional \$5.00 for each sibling. You may reserve space for your children with the form provided to you with your monthly newsletter. You

may pay up to a month of Stay Days at one time. You may apply unused, paid Stay Days to the next month. However, refunds cannot be issued.

Children must be potty trained and 30 months old before being allowed participation in Stay Day.

Each participating child needs to bring a nutritional lunch and drink on his/her Stay Day. Please do not send carbonated drinks (they explode even when placed in a different container) or food or beverages in glass containers. A list of USDA-suggested lunch ideas will be sent home with your first Stay Day reservation form.

We will accept up to 16 children in Stay Day from Twinklers, Moonbeams and Sunshine Gang. Drop-ins may be accepted if you call that morning and check with the Director regarding space. Generally, drop-ins are not a problem, but you must have approval. Please don't send your child with a lunch and no reservation. We need to plan appropriately for staff and space to ensure each child's safety. We do not limit the number of Rainbow Kids who may stay, but you will still need to make a reservation for your child in order for us to plan for staff.

Stay Day closes at 2:00 PM for the Twinklers, Moonbeams, and Sunshine Gang and at 2:15 PM for Rainbow Kids. We will bring your child to your car. Cars should line up outside the main door leading to the preschool area of the building. If the line backs up to the street, please pull into the lot and make a double line. You will be assigned a car number to help teachers identify whom you are picking up. You need to display your number on the visor on the passenger side of your car or in the passenger side window. Please arrive on time. If you will be late picking up your child, please call and alert us, if possible. If a child is picked up late twice, you will be put on notice. Three late pick-ups will result in the loss of Stay Day privileges.

We prefer that you drive through to pick up your child from Stay Day. Parking and walking to the door makes it confusing for the teachers releasing children. It also makes the parking lot hazardous with folks both driving through and walking across the drive-through line.

### **CAR NUMBERS**

**Any child** who stays for **Stay Day** will need a car number. The number cards that you will receive should be kept in your car (or the car of the person who will be picking up your child routinely or on a particular day). At pick-up time you will need to display the number card so that teachers can read it from the door (mounting it on the passenger side visor so that it shows when the visor is lowered is a good method). We will have a master list of numbers in the building for referral. This method will help us load children more efficiently when it is rainy or difficult to see into your car. Possession of a car number card is not sufficient identification to pick up a child. The person picking up must be on your transportation list. If we do not know them, we need to have your prior permission for them to come and they will be required to show identification.

Car numbers will be assigned as requested in the office.

### **ART, MUSIC, BIBLE STORIES, AND SERVICE PROJECTS**

Our **Atelierista** (studio teacher) is on site Monday through Thursday. She moves among the classrooms introducing new materials such as clay or watercolors. Small groups of children, work with her in the Atelier making their ideas and research take shape through a variety of artistic media and "languages".

Our **music teacher** hosts individual class groups on Thursday and Fridays in our Music Studio. She delivers a variety of musical experiences in which the children take part. Children are exposed to pitch, tone, beat, and rhythm, as well as different instruments and sign language.

Our teachers teach **Bible stories** once a week. These stories simply and beautifully relate favorite stories and parables from the Old and New Testaments or are values-related. During the first semester Bible Storytime is used to teach personal safety from a Christian viewpoint. You are welcome to join us anytime. All children in our program participate in Bible Storytime.

Your child will be blessed by several opportunities during the school year to participate in **service projects**. Small as they are children benefit by learning to help others. We collect books for needy children, pet food for the animal shelter; raise funds for a selected mission, and host a Trike-A-Thon for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Look for ways you can be involved.

### **EVALUATION AND SPECIAL SERVICES**

Our intention is to be in close communication with you and for the healthy development of your child. If we have concerns about your child's development we will discuss our observations with you. We are not experts in diagnosing problems, but we are sensitive to emerging concerns. We can help you search for answers and guide you to appropriate specialists should either of us see a need. We always want to partner with you for the good of your child.

## **NEW STAFF**

We hope to not have changes in staff during a school year. However, if a change becomes necessary we will make the transition as smooth as possible by allowing the children to say good-bye and by bringing in the new teacher before the one leaving goes (if possible). You will also be informed in writing as soon as possible.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If you are dissatisfied with any part of the Highland Plaza United Methodist Preschool operations, you should take the following steps to make your grievance(s) known:

1. Discuss your concern with your child's teacher.
2. File a written statement of concern with your child's teacher.
3. Schedule a conference to discuss the concern with the teacher, and try to solve or correct the problem.
4. If the decision reached is not satisfactory to you, submit the written concern and a summary of the conference held to the director of the Preschool.

Upon receipt of the written concern, the Director, Parent Advisory Committee, and Preschool Board will make a prompt investigation of the issues and will set a date for a conference with the parties involved no later than five (5) days after receiving the formal notice.

The conference may include the Director, Parent Advisory Committee members, Preschool Board members, the teaching staff involved and you. The Director, along with the church Preschool Board, will make the final decision and it will be mailed to you. It is in the best interest of all the parties for problems to be solved at the lowest level possible.

## **HOW FAMILY MEMBERS MAY CHOOSE TO BE INVOLVED**

**Programs** We have several programs during the year to which you will be invited. Among them are 'Partnering with Parents' meetings, special holiday festivities, StudioPendous, and the Closing Program in May.

**Volunteer Forms** At the beginning of the school year we will ask you to fill out a questionnaire revealing your special talents and abilities. We will look forward to using your expertise to complement our program. If other family members would like to volunteer, we will also welcome them.

## **HOW WE KEEP PARENTS INFORMED**

**Newsletters** Each month you will receive a newsletter telling of the special activities going on at school that month.

**Classroom Bulletin Board** Emerging curricular investigation topics and other items of special interest will be posted on a bulletin board outside each classroom. Hallway documentation panels and dialog will allow you to "see" what is going on in our classrooms.

**Parent Bulletin Board** This bulletin board is located in the main preschool hallway. Articles and items of special interest to parents will be posted on this bulletin board. Certain general information may be posted by parents or included in the newsletter. Please check with the Director regarding any requests. You will also find a current newsletter posted here and reminders of special dates of the month.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences** We offer optional fall conferences and set spring conferences where the teachers will talk with you personally to keep you abreast of your child's progress. You will be notified in advance of the date and time of the conferences (usually October and the first of February). Please do not feel you have to wait until conference time to discuss something with the teacher. We will be glad to schedule a conference with you any time you feel one is needed. Our teachers, too, will ask to have a special meeting with you, if one is indicated.

**Lending Library** Our school has a Lending Library for parents. You are welcome and encouraged to check out these books. You may borrow them for a two-week period.

## **WAYS YOU CAN HELP US HELP YOUR CHILD**

- Help your child attend regularly and **on time**, except when ill.
- Teach self-reliance and independence by encouraging students to do things for themselves: to put on, take off, hang up wraps, put away toys, eat regularly and properly, and get plenty of rest.
- Confer with teachers, but not in the child's presence.
- Take time to listen to daily experiences.
- Read to your child everyday.
- Take an interest in the school and in the work your youngster brings home.
- Help your child become aware of and care for the world we live in.
- Don't be afraid to say "no."
- Volunteer to help with special activities.
- Be honest about the way you feel about the school. If there is a problem or something you don't like or understand, please talk with the teachers or director.

***Let's work together to create the best program and memories for your child!***