

**Mary C. Washington Howe  
Pre-Kindergarten  
Family Handbook  
2019-2020**



**Class of 2033**

**1020 Meares Street  
Wilmington, NC 28401**

**(910) 251-6195**

[www.nhcs.net/howe](http://www.nhcs.net/howe)

**Parent Orientation Notes**

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Dear Howe Pre-K Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year and to our wonderful school. We are so happy you have taken the time to apply for your child to participate in this amazing experience. Pre-K plays a vital role in preparing students for success. At Howe Pre-K Center, we are building upon the foundation that you have started at home and strive to instill a love of learning in all of our students. Through play, we focus on teaching children content in reading and math while also working on cognitive development in language, social/ emotional, and physical capabilities. As a Pre-K center we want all of our students to have an advantage as they enter into Kindergarten next year.

Our school is unique in that we are a North Carolina Pre-K Center but we are also proud to be a New Hanover County School. As your child's principal I want you to know that your child's safety is my top priority followed by high quality instruction. I take pride in our five star rating as a licensed child care center. This is reflective of a staff who are committed to providing the very best experience for all children who enter our program and our building. The policies and procedures you find in this handbook are aligned to the laws, requirements, and regulations set forth by the following agencies. Please understand that we are required to follow the most stringent guidelines at all times.

NC Division of Child Development and Early Education  
North Carolina Health and Sanitation  
New Hanover County Schools Board Of Education  
NC Pre-K Requirements

<http://ncchildcare.nc.gov>  
<http://ehs.ncpublichealth.com>  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/>  
<http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us>

The Pre-K Program is proud of its dedicated and professional staff. Staff members have been chosen for the position because of their special talents and their commitment to the special needs of your children. All of our teachers are certified with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and each class has a teacher and a teacher assistant. In addition, staff members receive training in early childhood topics during the school year at workshops, conferences, and professional meetings. Teachers have also received training in CPR, First Aid, and in educational technology workshops. When a staff member is absent, a qualified substitute replaces the teacher and/or teacher assistant in the classroom.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child. We are committed to partnering with you to benefit your child. Please communicate with your child's teacher regularly and allow us to be a team. Together we will work in service to all of the children at Howe Pre-K. I encourage you to become active and involved in our school. This is a brief stop on your long journey through parenting, school, and life. We are here to make this a spectacular experience for everyone.

I am so excited for you and your child.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Christianne May  
Principal, Howe Pre-K Center  
[christianne.may@nhcs.net](mailto:christianne.may@nhcs.net)

## **NEW HANOVER COUNTY SCHOOLS PRE-K PROGRAM**

The New Hanover County Pre-Kindergarten program is committed to creating a strong foundation that prepares all students for academic, social and emotional success as they enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **NEW HANOVER COUNTY SCHOOLS MISSION**

The mission of New Hanover County Schools, in collaboration with our parents and the community, is to strive to provide children an excellent education in a safe and positive learning environment where they are prepared with the critical skills to reach their full potential for a world yet to be imagined. “Reach, Equip, Achieve”

**“Reaching children and equipping them to achieve their full potential.”**

### **NEW HANOVER COUNTY SCHOOLS PRE-K PROGRAM MISSION**

The New Hanover County Pre-Kindergarten program is committed to establishing a foundation of learning by inspiring, guiding, and teaching the children in our program while serving their families and the community. We believe that all children have individual worth and can succeed in the future when given a positive foundation of learning.

### **OUR BELIEFS ABOUT CHILDREN AND LEARNING**

We believe that children need nurturing caregivers in the home and school setting.

We believe that children learn through active involvement with developmentally appropriate materials, and that play is an important vehicle for learning to occur.

We believe that children need to be able to identify and communicate their feelings, needs and desires in positive ways in a preschool setting.

We believe that children must learn to make decisions and accept responsibility for those decisions and learn to solve real-life problems, not just find the “right” answers.

We believe that a child’s development and learning is greatly enhanced through a partnership between the school and the child’s family.

We believe that your child is in the best possible place with the best staff.

# COMMUNICATION

**School Telephone Number**  
**(910) 251-6195**

you in case of emergencies. Please be sure to include both cell and main phone numbers.

## School Hours

**Student hours:** 7:15 am - 1:45 pm

**Front office hours:** 7:00 am - 3:00 pm

All students must be picked up by 2:00pm

After school care is not provided on site.

Teachers are not permitted to receive direct phone calls between 7:15 am and 1:45 pm. If you have time sensitive information to share, please contact the front office.

## Parent / Teacher Communication

The home/ school communication connection is very important. All teachers have county-provided email addresses and are expected to check their email daily. However, while students are in the building, teachers have limited access to email. Email addresses of all teachers can be found on our school's website and can also be provided by our front office secretaries. All students are given

Parents are expected to do the following daily:

1. Read and sign papers in the blue folder
2. Most communication can be handled through written notes and emails to the teacher. Send any notes to the teacher when necessary.
3. Call the teacher when you have a question or a concern. Please remember teachers are unable to take phone calls during instructional time, but our front office staff will take the message and have the teacher return your phone call. Teachers are required to return all calls within 48 hours.
4. Messages regarding changes in transportation should not be sent via email, text or phone. The request must be in writing and can be sent to the teacher in the blue folder.

We are partners with you in the education of your child; therefore, it is important to share information regularly.

## CHANGE OF INFORMATION

If you change your address, phone number or persons listed as emergency contacts, please send the information to your child's teacher immediately. It is important that this information be accurate at all times so we are able to reach

## CHANGES IN HOME LIFE

If your family relationships change, please share this information with your child's teacher. It will be kept in strict confidence. Family changes often affect your child at school.

## CONNECT 5

New Hanover County Schools has established a county-wide email and telephone calling system that will notify groups of people of events or cancellations. We use this system to notify parents of daily attendance, including tardies, parent meetings, school closings and other family events. Please update the office when your phone number changes. The Connect 5 Replay Call number is 1-855-473-7529.

## CUSTODY

If there are special custody agreements for a child, the parent(s) must notify the child's teacher and the school principal. Court documentation must be provided that addresses the custody agreement. Without court documentation that says otherwise, both parents listed on a child's birth certificate will have equal access to the child.

## HOME VISITS AND CONFERENCES

NC Pre-K requires that teachers and parents meet at least four times each year to discuss each child's progress and needs. Two home visits are required and are built in to the Pre-K calendar. There are also two required parent/teachers conferences. Home Visits and Parent Teacher Conferences are valuable in building relationships with families and working together to support every student at Howe Pre-K.

First Meeting: Getting to Know You Home Visit

Second Meeting: Fall Conference

Third Meeting: Home Visit on child's progress according to developmental progressions

Fourth Meeting: Spring Conference & Transition to Kindergarten

## NEWSLETTERS

Each teacher will send home a newsletter to inform you of events that are happening in your child's class, upcoming celebration, and what your child is learning.

## WEBPAGES

Every teacher has a webpage that is accessible from the Howe Pre-K website. Please check this webpage for additional information about your child's classroom activities and what they're learning. Parent resources will also be made available through this webpage.

## CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES

Any time you have a concern regarding your child, your child's classroom teacher should be your first point of

contact. The teacher knows your child best in the school setting and will be able to speak to your concerns. If you have a concern that is not adequately handled by the classroom teacher, please contact the front office to request a meeting with an administrator. An administrator will contact you to schedule a meeting. The NHCS Grievance Policy will be followed regarding any complaints related to educational services.

## TERMINATION FROM PROGRAM

When a family does not abide by the policies of the Pre-K Program, they will be called for a conference with the principal and Early Childhood Department representatives. At the conference, a plan will be developed to address concerns. If the situation does not improve, your child may be in jeopardy of being excused from the program.

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## ATTENDANCE

### Mary W. Howe Pre-K Center serves children:

- who qualify for NC Pre-K
- AND turned 4 by August 31
- OR
- who qualify for the Exceptional Children's Program
- AND are at least 3 years of age

## CALENDAR

Howe Pre-K will follow the approved Pre-K school calendar for New Hanover County Schools. The Pre-K calendar varies slightly from the Traditional K-12 school calendar. Note that Pre-K students DO NOT attend school when traditional schools have half days or a delayed start time!

In the event of severe weather, please listen to the radio or television for an announcement of school closings. Any school closings will also be announced through the system-wide CONNECT 5 telephone messaging network. If New Hanover County Schools are closed, Howe Pre-K is closed. If New Hanover County Schools are going to have a delayed opening, Howe Pre-K will be closed.

## SCHOOL READINESS

Attendance is very important for success in our program. Parents have the responsibility to ensure regular school attendance. Regular attendance is necessary for your child to get the greatest benefit from this learning opportunity.

Anytime children are absent from school, they fall out of their routine. They also miss out on key opportunities to learn, build lasting friendships, and develop the skills and attitudes needed to become good citizens. There is a clear connection between student attendance and student performance in school. In order for your child to meet the goals of our program and to be ready for kindergarten, she/he needs to attend a full day of school each day, which means arriving on time every day.

What can parents do at home?

- Establish consistent routines:
  - This gives your child security.
  - This helps build a relationship between home and school,
  - This establishes the value of school and learning.

Why does this matter?

- Failure to maintain adequate attendance can jeopardize your child's placement at Howe Pre-K.
- We want your child to establish good habits in Pre-K.

- *Chronic absenteeism (truancy) is linked to repeating grade levels and drop out rates.*

## ABSENCES

We recognize that there will be days when your child is sick or unable to come to school.

**Unexcused Absences:** missing the bus, oversleeping, bad weather, car trouble

**Excused Absences:** illness, religious holidays, death in immediate family, medical appointment note, quarantine, education opportunities with prior approval, court or administrative proceedings.

In order to code an absence as excused, Howe is required to have a note from home which meets the following:

1. Date(s) of absence(s) included
2. Specific reasons for absence
3. A parent/guardian signature must be provided.
4. The note for the absence must be received within 3 days of the child's return to school if the absence is to be coded as excused.
5. A written note from a parent does not automatically result in an excused absence. The reason for the absence must be one of those determined by Public School Law.

After three consecutive absences:

- The parent will be contacted by the teacher, assistant, or social worker.
- A doctor's note may be required.
- If the school is unable to reach the parent, the Early Childhood Department will be contacted. Your child's placement at Howe Pre-K may be terminated due to frequent absences.

## CLOTHING AND DRESS CODE

According to NHCS School Board Policy 8520, a student's appearance, mode of dress, or condition of personal hygiene will not be permitted to disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to the health or safety of others.

In the Pre-K setting, clothing should encourage movement and play. Be sure your child's clothing is comfortable, washable and allows for **self dressing** as we encourage children to be independent when using the bathroom.

NC Child Care Licensing Laws require us to provide 60 minutes of outdoor play **every day**, so please dress for fluctuating temperatures. Tennis shoe must have no open backs or spike heels. Flip flops and/or sandals without straps

are not safe for pre-K and should not be worn. During the cooler months students will need a coat.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

All school supplies that your child will need will be provided by the school. Paper, scissors, glue, crayons, and markers are supplies that you may want to have at home to give your child an opportunity to write, draw, and cut. These activities will support what your child is learning at school and enhance his or her pre-academic skills.

## WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

1. An extra set of clothes (underwear, socks, shorts/pants, and shirt)
2. A full size book bag (no wheels)
3. A blanket for rest time

\*If a child's clothes are sent home soiled, please send clean, dry clothes the next day to ensure that your child always has a change of clothes. As the weather changes, be mindful of the clothes you have sent to school. Your teacher will remind you when warmer or cooler clothes are needed.

### Your child is welcome to bring and share:

1. A book.
2. An interesting nature item to display. (please be sure it is in a Ziploc bag)
3. Something (arts and crafts) they have made at home.

## WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

1. Toys
2. Money (unless it is in a sealed envelope with the purpose for the money written on the outside of the envelope)
3. Due to regulations by the NC Department of Health and Human Services (Child Care Licensure) children are not permitted to bring any of the following:
  - animals or rodents to visit classrooms.
  - Candy; outside food/snacks
  - Any type of lotion, hand sanitizer, soap, etc.
  - All balloons
  - Anything in an aerosol container

**Please check with your child's teacher before sending anything not assigned or requested.**



# TRANSPORTATION

## ARRIVAL

The school building opens at 7:15 am. Morning drop off for parents is 7:15 am - 7:45 am.

For your convenience we offer carpool drop off from 7:15 - 7:35 am. Due to NC Child Care Licensing Laws we must stop carpool drop off at 7:35 am to move staff into classroom to ensure the appropriate child to staff ratio.

**Parents and children will not be permitted to enter the building until 7:15 am unless there is a scheduled meeting with your child's teacher.**

Students arriving after 7:35 will need to be walked into the building by a parent. We operate by hand-to-hand delivery. This means that all children must be handed off from one adult to another. Child care licensing laws dictate that children are not permitted to be dropped off at the door to walk to their classrooms alone at any time.

The bell rings at 7:45. All students are expected to be in their classrooms to start the school day at that time.

Students arriving between 7:45 am and 8:15 am are considered tardy and will need to sign in at the front office and will be escorted to the classroom by a staff member or parent. Excessive tardiness disrupts your child's routine and can jeopardize your child's placement in the Pre-K program.

**Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. will not be admitted into the center without documentation from a medical appointment.**

Late arrivals will only be permitted with a note indicating a medical or educational appointment. In these instances, the child must arrive by 11:00 to be admitted for the remainder of the day.

## AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE GUIDELINES

All students must be picked up by the parent/ guardian or someone who has been authorized by the parent/ guardian and is listed on the appropriate Transportation Authorization and Authorization for Pick Up forms that are included in the orientation packet. Please inform the individuals listed that they will be required to show their identification prior to taking the child from campus. It is the parent's responsibility to update the names of individuals who are authorized to pick up your child.

Students will only be released to an adult, 18 years of age or older, who is authorized by the parent. All parents and authorized adults are REQUIRED by law to show a photo ID when picking up a student.

Bus drivers are also required to verify the identification of an adult before releasing a student to get off the school bus.

We **WILL NOT** release your child to any person who:

- 1) is not listed on the Transportation Authorization Form or Authorization for Pick Up Form **AND**
- 2) cannot produce a government-issued photo ID.

## AFTERNOON TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Parents must communicate **in writing** to the teacher or front office **all** transportation changes. All transportation changes must be received in writing by 1:15 pm. Transportation changes sent by fax must include contact information and photo ID. **We do not accept changes over the phone, email or texts.**

## EARLY DISMISSAL

**If a student must check out during the day**, a parent or guardian must come to the school office to sign out the child. The child will then be called to the office. Please do not call and ask that a child wait for you in the office. Office personnel will call for the student when you arrive. Continual early checkouts will be referred to the social worker and administration.

**Parent/guardian will not be able to check out their children between 1:15 and 2:00 pm** as the whole school has begun to prepare for our afternoon dismissal procedures. If parent/guardian arrives at 1:15 or after for early check out, they will be directed to the car rider line for dismissal at 1:45.

## DAILY DISMISSAL

Our school day ends at 1:45 pm. After school care is not offered at Howe Pre-K but there are several alternatives available to families. All students are required to have arrangements for their afternoon dismissal.

Our dismissal routine is conducted with **student safety as the top priority** and is meant to ensure that each child is accounted for at the end of the day.

We will have 4 areas for dismissal:

**Car Riders** - 10th & Marsteller St.

**Bus Riders** - Meares St.

**Daycare Vans** - Meares St..

**Walkers** - Front porch at Entrance Two

## WALKERS

For safety, parents/guardians who walk from their residence will retrieve their child at the front entrance areas near Classroom #1. Walkers will be dismissed at 1:45 pm. Photo ID is required.

## BUS RIDERS

The New Hanover County Schools Transportation Department determines the walk zones for all schools, bus routes, and bus stop assignments. Eligible students are assigned morning and afternoon buses to their home address. Students are only permitted to ride the bus they've been assigned. Students are automatically removed from a bus route when they have not ridden the bus for three consecutive days.

A parent, guardian, or authorized adult (18 years or older) MUST be present at the bus stop each day. Due to scheduling, buses cannot wait for a parent to arrive at the stop. Children will be returned to school if an authorized adult is not at the bus stop when the bus arrives. The parent, guardian, or authorized adult will then be required to pick up the student at the school. After a child has been returned to the school three times, their bus riding privileges will be revoked.

Times given are estimated and may vary depending on traffic; please be ready and at the Bus Stop at least 10 minutes early.

## CAR RIDER PROCEDURES

For your convenience, we have established car rider procedures in an effort to provide the safest and most efficient process for our families and staff.

Car rider dismissal will be available from 1:45 until 2:00. Parents are required to arrive by 2:00 pm to pick up

students. Parents arriving after 2:00 will be required to check out their child from the front office.

1. We will provide 2 tags per family.
2. Only authorized individuals with a Howe Pre-K car tag will be permitted to pick up a child in the car rider line.
3. The car tag should be clearly displayed in the window when you come through the car rider line.
4. If you give your official Howe Pre-K car tag to another person, you are authorizing that person to pick up your child. Their photo ID will not be checked.
5. Please do not leave your car unattended in the car rider lane. Parents must remain in their vehicle until the child is brought to the car.
6. A teacher will escort your child to the car and open the car door for your child. However, it is the responsibility of the driver or another passenger in each car to buckle/ secure the child in the child safety seat. School staff members are not permitted to buckle seat belts.
7. Just as your child's safety is our number one concern while your child is at Howe Pre-K, we are also concerned about your child's safety when they are riding in your vehicle. NC laws dictates child passenger safety seats. Generally speaking, all students at Howe Pre-K should be riding in, at minimum, a booster seat.

Please note: If you do not have the official Howe Pre-K tag, you will be asked to park your car and come to the front office with your photo identification. We will check to ensure that you are able to pick up the requested student(s) before allowing the student(s) to leave with you.

Birth	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13+
REAR-FACING CAR SEAT	Required	Required	Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
BOOSTER SEAT	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
SEAT BELT	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Required

## TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

\*\*For the first 10 days of school, changes are being made that may affect your bus stop location and/or time of pick-up/drop-off.

**The bus will not stop if students are not at the bus stop site.**

Definition: Bus Stop = Corner, end of driveway, at the State Right of Way (4 feet away from the road). Students should always stand where they can be seen as the bus approaches.

Walk with your child to the stop and wait with them. Be at the stop in the afternoons to get them. Small children cannot see over the seats and the window ledge to see where they are.

A responsible adult (18 years or older) must be at the stop every afternoon to receive a Pre-K student

No child may ride a bus other than the one assigned without prior approval from the School Bus Coordinator and the school principal. Please allow 3 days for this process. Directions for requesting a change in bus assignment are below.

Students may get on and off only at their assigned stops unless pre-approved by the School Bus Coordinator.

The driver can not add Bus Stops to the route. Only the School Bus Coordinator can do this. Please plan for 3 days to process these requests (First 7 School days may take longer).

Stops where students do not ride daily will be deleted. Once a route/stop has been deleted, the driver cannot add them back to the route/stop.

Parents are never permitted to step onto a school bus.

The following guidelines have been provided by the NHCS Transportation Department. Please take some time to review them with your children.

### **10 Rules of Bus Safety**

- Wear bright clothes so the bus driver easily sees you.
- Get to the bus stop at least 10 minutes before the bus is due to arrive.
- Line up quietly in single file away from the edge of the road.
- Don't push, yell or throw things while waiting.
- Stay out of the Danger Zone which is 10 feet around the bus on all sides.
- Use handrails to get on and off the bus.
- Pay attention to the bus driver.
- Keep the aisles clear.
- Never stick your hands, head or feet out the windows.
- Talk quietly and stay seated on the bus.

### **BUS RULES**

1. Students should walk directly to the bus.
2. Remain in your assigned seat.
3. No food or drink allowed.

### **REQUEST TO RIDE AN ALTERNATE BUS**

If, for any reason, a parent needs to request that their child ride another bus, a **letter requesting the change must be written at least 3 days in advance**, including the following information:

- Name of student and parent
- Address of student
- Name of responsible adult & address of alternate location for student drop-off
- Reason for the request
- Date(s) that the change will be needed
- Contact numbers where parent/guardian may be reached
- New bus stop information (if known)

A request may be denied for the following reasons:

- The request requires NHCS to add a stop that is off of its regular routes
- School does not allow change
- Lack of room on the alternate bus
- Prior misbehavior on the alternate bus
- Responsible adult at alternate location has not been at the stop on three different occasions.
- The existing stop is too far from the home of the alternate location

Please note that if a bus becomes overcrowded or if there are any behavior concerns, the privilege to ride an alternate bus will be revoked. Also, all requests for changes expire at the end of one school year.



**New Hanover County Schools Preschool Transportation  
TRANSPORTATION POLICIES FOR PARENTS**

Parent, please initial each of the following items:

- I, or a responsible adult on the emergency contact list, will be at the bus stop in the morning and afternoon to supervise and ensure the safety of my child.
- Preschool children must sit in the front row(s) of the bus.
- Preschool children may not sit with school age children except for siblings.
- I have provided emergency contact information for my child. If I do not provide emergency contact information my child will not be transported until it is received.
- When the bus arrives at the school, the driver will not allow the preschool children to exit the bus unless the designated center employee is available to receive them.
- When the bus arrive at the child's drop off site the driver will not allow the preschool children to exit the bus unless the designated responsible adult is there to receive them.
- If no one is at the drop off site to receive the child, the driver will return the child to the school and deliver the child to the principal or designee.
- Preschool children will never be left on the bus without an adult present.
- The driver will not transport more than 15 preschool children if the age of the youngest child is three, and no additional adults are present. If the age of the youngest child is four, the driver will not transport more than 20 preschool children.
- I will inform center staff of any special behavioral, emotional or physical needs of my child (ren).
- Other policies: I will notify the teacher immediately of any changes to the emergency contact information for my child.
- I acknowledge the receipt of Pedestrian/Bus Safety Education information and training.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Child's Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**School**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Parent (please print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Parent/Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Teacher**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Distribution:  
Parent Copy in Family Handbook copy

# Off-Premise Activity Authorization

**Off-Premise Activities** refer to any activity which takes place away from a licensed and approved space. Licensed and approved space includes primary space, outdoor space, single- use rooms and other administrative areas that have been approved for use.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give \_\_\_\_\_  
parent/guardian named printed school name

permission to take my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in activities at  
child's name as written on the birth certificate

the following off-premise locations at Mary W. Howe Pre-K Center:

Location 1	Courtyard
Activity purpose and frequency of use	Courtyard at Howe Pre-K Center for nature exploration and other developmentally appropriate activities throughout the year.
Location 2	Field
Activity purpose and frequency of use	Outdoor area adjacent to the parking lot for nature exploration, evacuation during a fire drill, and other developmentally appropriate activities throughout the year.
Location 3	Sidewalk
Activity purpose and frequency of use	Sidewalk around Howe Pre-K Center for parades and other developmentally appropriate activities throughout the year.

This authorization is valid from 7/1/19 to 6/31/20.  
(up to 12 months)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 parent/guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 date signed

Distribution:  
 Parent Copy in Family Handbook

## DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

We believe that children learn self-discipline in many ways. They learn from the example of their teachers and other adults. They learn through play and social encounters with the other children. They learn by trying things over and over again. Children need to know the adults in their classrooms will love them and keep them safe no matter what negative behaviors they display. We believe that children develop discipline through many different experiences with loving professionals to guide their progress.

Employees, volunteers, and visitors are critical to the success of our students, and must agree to adhere to the following code of ethical conduct:

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child, family, staff member and volunteer and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability;
- Follow the program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, staff, volunteers, and/or internal operating procedures;
- Adhere to New Hanover County Schools' policies and procedures for filing a community complaint;
- Adhere to New Hanover County Schools' policies and procedures for filing an employee complaint;
- Refrain from accepting or soliciting personal favors, gratuities, or anything else of significant value from contractors or potential contractors and employees or potential employees of the program;
- Assure that no child will be left alone or unsupervised while in my care;
- Use only positive methods of child guidance & will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation.
- Not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as a punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

The use of profanity is strictly prohibited by all visitors to Howe Pre-K Center. Anyone who is heard using profanity will be asked to leave the building immediately.

This policy is in accordance with New Hanover County Schools Code of Conduct

### BULLYING

The New Hanover County Board of Education believes that all employees, students, and their parents/families should be free of harassment and bullying as part of a safe, orderly, caring and inviting working and learning environment. School Board Policy 8307 expressly prohibits harassment or bullying of students, employees and their parents/families,

by students. Any violation of this Policy is considered a serious violation and appropriate action shall be taken in response to a violation in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy 8410.

If you suspect that your child / student is being bullied, complete the **Reporting Form** that is used by parents and / or teachers. A copy of the **Reporting Form** can be obtained at the school office or on the New Hanover County Schools website at

[http://www.nhcs.net/forms/Bullying\\_Harassment\\_Parent\\_Teacher.pdf](http://www.nhcs.net/forms/Bullying_Harassment_Parent_Teacher.pdf)

### CELL PHONE USE

Please do not use cell phones in the building. To protect the time that parents spend with their children in the school, parents are asked to position their phones on vibrate when in the building, and to refrain from having phone conversations when visiting the building and especially during classroom volunteer time.

### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Every citizen, including parent and child care workers, has the legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.

A report can be made by phoning the NHCS Department of Social Services at the child abuse hotline number (910) 798-3420 or by calling 911. If you need to make a report after 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, or on the weekend, or a holiday please call 911 and ask to speak to the social worker on duty.

An individual failing to report, or knowingly preventing another from doing so is guilty of second-degree misdemeanor and may be prosecuted.

**NHCS employees are mandated reporters; meaning they are required to report suspected child abuse and neglect.**

# Mary W. Howe Pre-K Center

## Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

Date Adopted: August 21, 2019

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods in managing the behavior of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. No child shall be subjected to any form of corporal punishment. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, this facility will practice the following age and developmentally appropriate discipline and behavior management policy:

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**We:**

1. DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. DO reason with and set limits for the children.
3. DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. DO listen to the children.
6. DO provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. DO provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. DO treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. DO ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. DO explain things to children on their level.
11. DO use short supervised periods of time-out sparingly.
12. DO stay consistent in our behavior management program.
13. DO use effective guidance and behavior management techniques that focus on a child's development.

**We:**

1. DO NOT handle children roughly in any way, including shaking, pushing, shoving, pinching, slapping, biting, kicking, or spanking.
2. DO NOT place children in a locked room, closet, or box or leave children alone in a room separated from staff.
3. DO NOT delegate discipline to another child.
4. DO NOT withhold food as punishment or give food as a means of reward.
5. DO NOT discipline for toileting accidents.
6. DO NOT discipline for not sleeping during rest period.
7. DO NOT discipline children by assigning chores that require contact with or use of hazardous materials, such as cleaning bathrooms, floors, or emptying diaper pails.
8. DO NOT withhold or require physical activity, such as running laps and doing push-ups, as punishment.
9. DO NOT yell at, shame, humiliate, frighten, threaten, or bully children.
10. DO NOT restrain children as a form of discipline unless the child's safety or the safety of others is at risk.

Distribution: Parent Copy in Family Handbook



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

We make every effort to observe and teach healthy practices at school. Children are encouraged to practice good toileting habits, and to wash hands after toileting and before eating. We also encourage children to cover coughs and wipe runny noses.

The best way to prevent the spread of illness is to make sure you do not send your child to school when he or she is visibly ill. Please **DO NOT** send your child to school if **any** of the following is present:

- Lice (including nits)
- Bedbugs
- Ringworm
- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Thick, discolored nasal discharge
- Chest congestion or constant cough
- First 24 hours on antibiotic medicine
- Pink eye
- Rash or impetigo
- Earache
- Sore throat with fever
- Communicable disease such as: chicken pox, measles, mumps, strep throat, hepatitis, etc.

Your child may ask to come to school even though he/she is ill. We understand that your child may be disappointed, please keep him/her at home when he/she is sick.

### **CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL THEY ARE SYMPTOM FREE FOR 24 HOURS!**

If you have any questions about whether your child should come to school with a medical condition, please call the school and ask to speak to the school nurse. In addition, please inform the school if your child becomes ill with a highly contagious illness such as chicken pox, flu, strep throat, pink eye, etc. We will want to notify the parents of the other children so they can watch for symptoms.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will make every effort to contact you or the persons designated on the emergency contact forms. If your child has a medical emergency, we will also call all of the people listed on the emergency contact list. please be sure that we have your home, work, and cell phone numbers and that these numbers are kept current. Please make sure this information is kept

up to date by informing the office and the teacher. If no one can be reached, we will take the child to New Hanover Regional Medical Center for emergency treatment and act on the parents' behalf until they can be reached.

## EMERGENCY CARE PLANS

Please notify your child's teacher if your child has a serious medical condition, such as diabetes, asthma, sickle cell anemia, or severe allergies. It is important that we have an emergency care plan in place to provide the necessary medical care for your child if the situation arises.

### ASTHMA

The nurse will work with the family and child's physician to develop a care plan for an asthmatic student to include the teacher/staff having the appropriate preventative or emergency medications on hand to treat symptoms of an asthma attack or severe allergic reaction.

### DIABETES

North Carolina law (G.S. 115C-47) was changed in 2002 to strengthen support for students with diabetes attending NC public schools. The law requires development of care plans and staff training relative to students with diabetes. If your child has diabetes, please let us know so that we can have our school nurse contact you to complete a Parental Request for an Individual Diabetes Care Plan.

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

We will give medication to children under the following conditions:

A medical form must be obtained from the office, filled out and signed by the prescribing doctor as well as the parent or legal guardian.

The prescription must be current.

**Medicine must be brought in by the legal guardian in the original container/ prescription bottle. Do not send any medicine, prescription or over-the-counter, to school by your child.**

The child's name and dose must appear on the container. Expired medication will not be given.

## **SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME AND HEAD TRAUMA**

New Hanover County Schools' policy for Shaken Baby Syndrome and Head Trauma is included in the pages that follow.

### **SUNSCREEN**

Sunscreen protects the skin from the sun's ultraviolet rays and helps to prevent sunburn. Children go outside for at least one outside play time each day and for a minimum of 60 minutes daily. In an effort to protect your child's skin from the damage that exposure to direct sunlight can cause, please apply sunscreen to all exposed areas prior to sending your child to school each day. This is extremely important if your child is prone to sunburn. The school is not permitted to apply sunscreen or allow children to have sunscreen in their backpacks.

### **NC HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS**

North Carolina General Statutes #130A-440 and #130A-155 state all students enrolling in public school must provide a certificate of immunization and a health assessment completed by a physician. As of August 2015, all students enrolling in the NC public schools for the first time must submit proof of a health assessment completed by a physician. If documentation is not presented on or before the student's first day of school, the principal shall present a notice of deficiency to the parent or guardian. The parent or guardian shall have thirty (30) calendar days from the first day of attendance to present the required health assessment and completed immunization certificate. Upon termination of thirty (30) calendar days, the principal shall not permit the child to attend school until the required forms have been presented.

Immunizations may be obtained from a family physician or at clinics by the New Hanover County Health Department. call the Health Department at 910-798-6500 to schedule appointments for physicals and immunizations as soon as possible if needed. The Health Assessment must be completed by a physician on the approved form.

Your signature on the Receipt of Policies and Procedures Form indicated that you have received a copy of the Health Assessment form when you enrolled your child and that you understand that the Health Assessment as well as all required immunizations must be completed with documentation provided to the school by the first day of attendance or within thirty (30) calendar days.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

Public schools and licensed childcare facilities are required to conduct routine safety drills in preparation for emergency situations. Fire drills will be held monthly to ensure that children know how to respond in the event that the building has to be evacuated. An annual tornado drill is held each spring and an earthquake drill is held in the fall. In addition, we will practice quarterly lockdown drills and shelter in place drills to ensure that children and staff know how to respond in the event that an emergency arises that requires us to stay within the confines of the school building and classrooms. Emergency bags are located in each classroom which contains plans, contact information as well as emergency supplies.

### **SCHOOL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM EMERGENCIES**

If an incident occurs that requires the notification of all parents, our school, along with all schools in the New Hanover County Schools system, will initiate the contacting of parents using the **CONNECT 5** system. **CONNECT 5** is capable of sending a telephone or email message to every parent in our school and our school system all at once at a specified time. The successful delivery of information is dependent upon accurate phone numbers. In order to make sure that you receive important messages, we must have the most current names and phone numbers of emergency contact people. If your emergency information changes during the school year, please let school personnel know immediately so that we can keep school records updated and accurate.

### **TOBACCO FREE CAMPUS**

It is the belief of the New Hanover County Board of Education that the use of tobacco is harmful to general health. The Board desires that all New Hanover County School facilities and properties be free from the use of tobacco products. Therefore, the use of tobacco and all smoking devices is in or on New Hanover County School facilities or property is prohibited.

# SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME AND HEAD TRAUMA

## New Hanover County Schools Early Childhood Education Program Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy

### Belief Statement

We, NHCS Early Childhood Education Program, believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and being required to report shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

### Background

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death<sup>1</sup>. According to North Carolina Child Care Rule for Child Care Centers (10A NCAC 09 .0608) each child care facility licensed to care for children up to five years of age shall develop and adopt a policy to prevent SBS/AHT<sup>2</sup>.

### Procedure/Practice Recognizing:

Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

### Responding to:

- If SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will<sup>3</sup>:
- Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director.
- Call the parents/guardians.
- If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR<sup>4</sup>.

### Reporting:

- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing [webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov).
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the county Department of Social Services. Phone number: NHC Department of Social Services 910.798.3400

### Prevention strategies to assist staff\* and parents in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child

Staff and Parents first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff and parents will attempt one or more of the following strategies<sup>5</sup>:

- Take at least 3 calming breaths with the child encouraging to breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth
- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child and/or stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
- Turn on music or white noise
- Staff: Distract the child with a book, toy or other activity
- Parents: Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy or go on a stroller ride.
- Other: strategies as needed for the situation

In addition, the facility:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children<sup>6</sup>.
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.
- Other: strategies as needed for the situation

### Prohibited behaviors

Behaviors that are prohibited by staff and parents include (but are not limited to):

- shaking or jerking a child

- tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat
- pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

### **Strategies to assist staff and parents understand how to care for infants**

Staff reviews and discusses:

- The five goals and developmental indicators in the 2013 North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development, [ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF\\_forms/NC\\_Foundations.pdf](http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF_forms/NC_Foundations.pdf)
- How to Care for Infants and Toddlers in Groups, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, [www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups)
- Including Relationship-Based Care Practices in Infant-Toddler Care: Implications for Practice and Policy, the Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers, pages 7-9, [www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/nitr\\_inquire\\_may\\_2016\\_070616\\_b508compliant.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/nitr_inquire_may_2016_070616_b508compliant.pdf)

Parents are encouraged to read through these links and to contact Smart Start of New Hanover County at 910.815.3733 for parent resources, classes and opportunities.

### **Strategies to ensure staff and parents understand the brain development of children up to five years of age**

All staff take training on SBS/AHT within first two weeks of employment. Training includes recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment as well as the brain development of children up to five years of age. Staff review and discuss:

- Brain Development from Birth video, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, [www.zerotothree.org/resources/156-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/156-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth)
- The Science of Early Childhood Development, Center on the Developing Child, [developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eecd/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eecd/)

Parents are given the links above and are encouraged to contact Smart Start of New Hanover County at 910.815.3733 for parent resources, classes and opportunities. Parents are also encouraged to look up information on [www.consciousdiscipline.net](http://www.consciousdiscipline.net) related to parenting.

### **Resources**

Staff: Principal, Guidance Counselors, Social Workers and the School Nurse are immediate support staff Staff and Parents: Smart Start of New Hanover County and the Department of Social Services

### **Parent web resources**

- The American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://dontshake.org/family-resources>
- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info/>
- Other: [www.consciousdiscipline.net](http://www.consciousdiscipline.net)

### **Facility web resources**

- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma, <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm?StdNum=3.4.4.3&=+>
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kb/trprev/Preventing\\_SBS\\_508-a.pdf](http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kb/trprev/Preventing_SBS_508-a.pdf)
- Early Development & Well-Being, Zero to Three, [www.zerotothree.org/early-development](http://www.zerotothree.org/early-development)

### **References**

1. The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)
2. NC DCDEE, [ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb\\_ccrulespublic.asp](http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ccrulespublic.asp)
3. Shaken baby syndrome, the Mayo Clinic, [www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-babysyndrome/basics/symptoms/con-20034461](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-babysyndrome/basics/symptoms/con-20034461)
4. Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, American Red Cross, [www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA\\_CustomProductCatalog/m4240175\\_Pediatric\\_ready\\_reference.pdf](http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4240175_Pediatric_ready_reference.pdf)
5. Calming Techniques for a Crying Baby, Children's Hospital Colorado, [www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-andadvice/calm-a-crying-baby/calming-techniques](http://www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-andadvice/calm-a-crying-baby/calming-techniques)
6. Caring for Our Children, Standard 1.7.0.5: Stress <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/1.7.0.5>

**Application**

This policy applies to children up to five years of age and their parents and all family members responsible for caring for children, operators, early educators, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers.

**Communication**

**Staff**

All current staff members and newly hired staff will be trained in SBS/AHT before providing care for children up to five years of age.

- Staff will sign an acknowledgement form that includes the individual's name, the date the center's policy was given and explained to the individual, the individual's signature, and the date the individual signed the acknowledgment
- The child care facility shall keep the **SBS/AHT staff acknowledgement form** in the child care file labeled SBS/AHT.

**Parents/Guardians**

- A copy of the policy will be given and explained to the parents/guardians of newly enrolled children up to five years of age on or before the first day the child receives care at the facility.
  - Parents/guardians will sign an acknowledgement form that includes the child's name, date the child first attended the facility, date the operator's policy was given and explained to the parent, parent's name, parent's signature, and the date the parent signed the acknowledgement
  - The child care facility shall keep the **SBS/AHT parent acknowledgement form** in the child care file labeled SBS/AHT.
- \* For purposes of this policy, "staff" includes the operator and other administration staff who may be counted in ratio, additional caregivers, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers.

**Effective Date: 2017**

**This policy was reviewed and approved by: NHCS Early Childhood Department and Howe Pre-K Administrative Staff**

**NHCS Early Childhood Education Department**

**Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy  
Formulario de reconocimiento del padre, la madre o el tutor legal**

**Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment**

I, the parent of guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
(child's name)

acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the facility's Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Policy.

Printed name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date policy given/explained to Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution:  
Parent Copy in Family Handbook

# INSTRUCTION

**Children in Pre-K learn through play** using exploration and discovery as a way of learning, The Creative Curriculum enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. It is based on 38 objectives for development and learning which are fully aligned with our state standards and fall under the following domains: reading, math, social-emotional, physical, and language. Teachers at Howe Pre-K utilize two main curricula to address the 38 objectives, Conscious Discipline and The Creative Curriculum.

## Conscious Discipline

Our Social-Emotional Core instruction comes from the philosophies of Conscious Discipline. Our goal is to assist students with learning self-regulation. Students will learn to recognize their emotions, engage in breathing techniques, and participate in connection-based activities. From the moment every student enters the building, staff help to support their development with these techniques and strategies. One thing that sets Conscious Discipline apart from other behavior management strategies and social-emotional curriculum is our belief that these changes, self awareness, and self-control begin with the adults. Even as a staff we are constantly engaged in this learning process and work to continue growing in our abilities to connect with each other and remain aware of and in control of our executive functioning and emotional states. We invite and encourage parents to join us on this journey.

## Creative Curriculum

The philosophy and goals of our program are reflected through our curriculum. The Creative Curriculum 5th Edition is used in all classrooms. Modifications are made in the curriculum, environment, and staffing pattern as needed in order to meet the special needs of all our children. Ongoing assessment of the objectives from Creative Curriculum is documented in a program entitled, Teaching Strategies Gold. Reports from this program will be available after Fall, Winter, and Spring Checkpoints to ensure your understanding of your child's progress. Not only do we measure academic skills associated with cognition, literacy, and mathematics; but we also include gross and fine motor skills and social emotional development.

The daily schedule provides a balance of activities including individual, small group and large group activities. Activities alternate between quiet and active play. Transitions between activities are used as learning opportunities. To encourage

large and fine motor development as well as social skills, there are daily outdoor activities (weather permitting).

The classroom is bright, safe, clean and comfortable. This fosters a secure environment in which learning and play can take place. We encourage good safety and nutritional practices. Children's artwork is displayed to brighten the classroom as well as to foster self-esteem and to encourage an appreciation of the arts. We incorporate culturally diverse toys and materials into our environment and promote a positive view of each child's diverse background.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned to supplement and enrich the total instructional program. In an effort to ensure student safety, transportation is provided by New Hanover County school buses. Every child must have written permission from a parent or guardian before he/she can attend a field trip. No verbal permissions (in person or over the phone) will be accepted from parents.

For some field trips parents of currently enrolled students may be permitted to attend field trips for the purpose of assisting with chaperoning students. Siblings and students not enrolled at our school are not permitted to attend the field trip. Parent chaperones must first become a qualified volunteer and undergo a background check through the school system.

As a chaperone, your participation is very important. In order to make field trips educational, fun, and a safe learning experience, we have outlined a list of chaperone guidelines. A previously approved roster of all persons who are participating on the trip MUST be submitted to the office BEFORE leaving for the destination. Non-chaperoning parents/family members are asked to honor the rules by not "just showing up" with the intention of accompanying the class unexpectedly. Non-chaperoning parents/family members must complete a background checks as well. These guidelines are for your child's protection, and are necessary in keeping all of our children safe. The teacher is ultimately responsible for maintaining discipline and control of the group. Chaperones and volunteers are under the direction of the teacher.

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## HOMWORK

Parents of children attending the Pre-Kindergarten program in New Hanover County Schools are asked to spend time reading to their child each evening. (We suggest one minute per year of your child's age.) In addition to reading, teachers may give children short assignments to reinforce a skill that they are learning in the classroom. For example, your child may be asked to look for a certain number of items in the home (environment) or finding items that are a specific shape. It is important to follow through with these activities, as they will reinforce what your child is learning and impress upon your child the importance of school and education.

## MTSS TEAM

The mission of the Multi Tiered Systems of Support Team is to design and implement timely intervention strategies targeting improved performance of an individual student. The Team utilizes a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach

to support students, teachers, parents and others as a vehicle to ensure the success of each student. Parents and staff members with concerns about a student may request assistance from the team. The primary responsibility of the team is to help teachers and parents meet the needs of students. This may include developing interventions, proposing, and designing services, requesting evaluations, and possibly proposing an Individualized Education Program.

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## CHILD NUTRITION

Breakfast, lunch, and snack are provided each day at no cost to students. Howe Pre-K is a Community Eligibility Provision School. Child Care Licensure requires meals to be nutritionally balanced. In order to ensure compliance with the DCDEE requirements, all students are required to eat the food provided by the Howe Pre-K cafeteria. Outside food and beverages will not be permitted for breakfast, lunch, or snack. Our meals are defined as follows:

**Breakfast:** milk, juice or fruit, & bread or cereal (all 3 components)

**Lunch:** milk, 2 or more fruits or vegetables, meat or meat alternative, bread or bread alternative (all 4 components)

Families who request to opt out of this nutrition program must schedule a conference with the Early Childhood Department and principal. If your child has special dietary

restrictions or food allergies due to a medical condition, please communicate this to your child's teacher and the school nurse. Documentation from a physician will be required and well as completion of appropriate paperwork.

**Parent Visitation at Lunch:** We welcome family members to eat lunch with their children. Please sign in at the office and get a visitor's sticker. Parents will need to pay for their lunch. Students and their parents will need to sit with their child's class. Pre K has lunch in their classrooms so family members should sign in in the office and pick up a lunch in the cafeteria to bring to the classroom to eat with your child. Because of child care licensing regulations we ask that you refrain from bringing food from fast food restaurants in to Howe Pre-K.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

NC Pre-K sites shall implement strategies designed to develop partnerships with families and build reciprocal relationships that share decision making.

In order to make this happen, different types of communication channels may be used. Some of these are and are not limited to:

- Newsletters
- Daily notes
- Telephone
- Text
- Email
- Social media
- Bulletin boards
- Webinars
- Workshops

Parents will be offered:

- Home Visits (Required in August & February)
- Parent/teacher conferences (November, June, & as needed)
- To volunteer in the classroom and/or attend field trips
- Serve on any committee/parent groups which may be offered at the site
- Notified of family community events (eg. Smart Start parenting programs, etc.)

When children are enrolled during the year, parent/teacher conferences will be adjusted as needed.

### CELEBRATIONS AND BIRTHDAYS

Classroom celebrations are held during the school year. Your child's teacher will send a letter home with your child in their communication folder notifying you of any planned parties. If you do not want your child to participate in a holiday or class celebration, please notify your child's teacher. It is the parents' responsibility to inform their child that they cannot participate. Please discuss with your child prior to the scheduled party/celebration.

We believe that each child is a unique and wonderful creation and recognize that birthdays can be a special day for the child. If you would like to bring refreshments for your child's birthday, please make arrangements in advance with your child's teacher. Generally, birthdays are celebrated with one small food items such as cupcakes or ice cream sandwiches. **These items must be store bought only and must be in the original packaging.** All birthday treats must be served at the end of the day and are not allowed to take the place of school lunch. \*As we promote healthy living

parents who wish to send in a birthday treat are encouraged to send in healthy alternatives such as Gogurt or any other healthy treats.

Please let us know if your family celebrates a holiday that is different from traditional American holidays. We would love for you to visit and share some of the traditions and symbols of the holiday with the rest of us.

**Our program does not allow balloons in our classrooms. Balloons will not be permitted in the building.**

### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Each school is required by state law to develop a School Improvement Plan. A School Improvement Team, consisting of staff and parent representatives, oversees the improvement process. Parent representatives are elected by the parents of students in our school. Parents are always invited to attend these meetings.

### VISITOR AND VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

Parents and visitors are expected to stop in the main office and sign in at any time they are visiting or volunteering in the classroom. You will sign in on the computer located by the front door. This includes volunteer time, having lunch with your child, going on a field trip, or attending a conference or meeting. These procedures are critical to maintain the safety of our school and all of the children.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services conducts regular routine sanitation and safety inspections. Any purse, backpack, briefcase, etc. in this building is subject to inspection. Any item found in a purse, backpack, briefcase, etc. and labeled "Keep out of Reach of Children," will result in our Pre-K building being cited for a health code violation and temporarily closed. **Therefore, all visitors will be asked to leave all personal belongings, including purses, backpacks, briefcases, etc. locked in the trunk of their car.** While we understand that this is inconvenient, it is an effort to ensure that all of our students are safe at all times and that your belongings. Please remember to grab your photo ID before locking your belongings in your trunk.



## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES**

New Hanover County Schools Pre-K Programs do not and will not discriminate in relation to race, sex, age, religion, national background, handicap and other human differences in all matters concerning our customers. This policy of nondiscrimination is in accordance with local School Board Policy 1710.

### **NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504 1973 REHABILITATION ACT**

1. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act is a non-discrimination statute barring discrimination on the basis of disability.
2. It is the policy of the New Hanover County Schools (NHCS) not to discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by the Act.
3. The 1973 Rehabilitation Act requires the school system to locate, evaluate and determine if the student is a qualified individual requiring accommodations necessary to provide access to educational programs. The accommodations will be provided in the least restrictive environment for the student.
4. Parents are entitled to have the opportunity to review relevant educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The requirements are described in the local board of education policy manual and implementation procedures.
5. Parents or guardians disagreeing with the decisions reached by school personnel regarding necessary accommodations for access to educational programs may request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer by notifying the school principal.
6. Compliance with Section 504 is managed by the Exceptional Programs Office which can be contacted by calling 254-4445.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE 1973 REHABILITATION ACT SECTION 504**

When parents or guardians and the school are unable to agree about services proposed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, it is expected that the disagreement be resolved at a level closest to the student. The first attempt to reach accord should be through a meeting involving the classroom teacher(s) that serve the student and the principal at the local school level.

If no resolution is reached, the parent or guardian may request, in writing, a review. Address the written request for a review to NHCS Section 504 Compliance, Exceptional Programs Office, 1802 South 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Wilmington, NC 28401. As a part of his review, the parent or guardian will receive the formal Grievance Procedures adopted by New Hanover County Schools.

At any point in this grievance procedure, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

### **New Hanover County Schools Annual Notice about Educational Records**

The Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires New Hanover County Schools to annually notify parents and student who are 18 years of age or older about their rights concerning educational records. The following information summarizes these rights. Parents and students 18 years of age or older have the:

- Right to confidentiality of the Official Record at the collection, storage, disclosure and destruction stages
- Right to inspect, review and obtain free copies of the Official Record
- Right to have a representative of your choosing inspect and review the Official Record with you
- Right to a full explanation, interpretation and analysis of the Official Record by the principal or designee
- Right to add data or information to the Official Record which explains or clarifies information contained in the Official Record
- Right to a list of the types of and the location of all records maintained and disclosed by New Hanover County Schools
- Right to know that written consent is required to disclose the Official Record to others EXCEPT for the following: NHCS officials, teachers and other employees (list posted at each school), other schools where a student intends to enroll, state and federal education authorities, financial aid applications, studies and research, accrediting organizations, judicial order or subpoena, health or safety emergency, and Directory Information.
- Right to request the correction or removal of information from the Official Record if you believe it is inaccurate, outdated, irrelevant, misleading or violates privacy
- Right to a hearing, if NHCS refuses your request to correct or remove information from the Official Record
- Right to file a complaint regarding records with the U.S. Department of Education, FERPA Office, Washington,

D.C. 20202. Complaints must be written and specify allegations of fact

Right to obtain copies of the New Hanover County School Board Policies on records from the New Hanover County Schools Superintendent's Office

Right to know that the New Hanover County Board of Education has designated a student's name and school of enrollment as Directory Information

Right to know that Directory Information is disclosed as a part of officially designated school activities such as: team/activity rosters, scholar athlete awards, athletic eligibility, honor society, honor roll, good citizens, academic scholars, presidential awards

Right to refuse to allow New Hanover County Schools disclose Directory Information by notifying the principal within 10 days of receipt of this notice

Right to know that when records are no longer needed, NHCS destroys them according to a destruction schedule. NHCS permanently maintains only the following information: student name, address, phone number, grades, attendance, classes attended, grade levels completed, date of birth and identification numbers

Right to know that a graduating senior's name, address, phone number and school name are disclosed to the military

NHCS has designated the Assistant Superintendent for Student Support as the school official responsible for ensuring confidentiality of the Official Record. A student's principal also is responsible for maintenance and security of the Official Record. Please direct any inquiries or requests concerning your rights and the Official Record.