



Finding your place in God's world

Parent Handbook 2018-2019



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Little Seekers Day School is a weekday ministry of
Hixson Presbyterian Church
1450 Jackson Mill Drive
Hixson, TN 37343
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About Little Seekers Day School

Our Mission:

To provide quality Christian child development that serves families by enhancing the relationship between the church and community.

- By representing Christ to the community
- By creating and maintaining a safe environment.
- By partnering with families.
- By structuring activities and providing curriculum that facilitates the growth of each child's heart, body, mind and soul.

Our Objectives and Curriculum:

The heart, body, mind and soul make up the “four directions” of the compass, our chosen symbol for the Little Seekers Day School. Luke 10:27 states, “...*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*” Heart, soul, strength (body) and mind are the four quadrants that must be engaged for holistic learning to occur. The daily activities as well as the annual scope and sequence shall reflect an intentional pursuit of the curriculum objectives listed below.

Children will explore:

God’s Word: This addresses both the mind and soul and provides the framework for all learning.

God’s World: This addresses the body and how the child interacts in God’s world. This includes nurturing and engaging a child’s natural curiosity.

God’s Worship: This is the outcome of allowing God’s Word to define how we act in God’s world. Weekly chapel services and music classes are a vital part of the overall program’s objectives.

Our chosen curriculum is “ABC Jesus Loves Me.” It is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum for ages 1-5 that focuses on academics, development, and the Bible. The five 36-week curricula incorporate learning into the toddler's and preschooler's day instead of controlling it, allowing the child to explore, play, and learn new things.

Dates and Rates:

Little Seekers Day School operates Monday-Thursday from 9:00am-2:00pm each day. A child may be enrolled either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday.

	Monthly tuition	Annual supply fee
Two-day option (M/W OR T/R)	\$150.00	\$35.00

Monthly tuition is due on the 5th of each month and is payable via cash, check, card, or automatic draft. Payments 30 days past due will be subject to a \$50 late fee. Accounts that go over 60 days past due will be subject to late fees, and that family may be asked to unenroll their child from the program.

2018-2019 Day School Calendar

August 1 st – August 3 rd	Teacher Training & Professional Development
August 9 th	Open House (10am-2pm)
August 13 th	First Day of School
September 3 rd	Labor Day (Closed for Holiday)
September 19 th & 20 th	Muffins with Mom
October 8 th – October 12 th	Fall Break (Closed)
November 19 th & 20 th	Thanksgiving Celebrations
November 21 st – November 23 rd	Thanksgiving Holiday (Closed for Holiday)
December 13 th	Christmas Program
December 17 th – January 4 th	Christmas Break (Closed for Holiday)
January 7 th	Day School resumes
January 21 st	MLK Day (Closed for Holiday)
February 6 th & 7 th	Donuts for Dad
February 18 th	Presidents' Day (Closed for Holiday)
March 4 th -15 th	Teacher Conferences for Pre-K students
March 18 th -22 nd	Spring Break (Closed)
March 25 th – March 28 th	Pre-Enrollment for 2019-2020 school year for current LSDS students & siblings
April 1 st	Open Enrollment Begins for 2019-2020 School Year
April 20 th	HPC Easter Family Celebration
May 16 th	Closing Program (ALL classes involved this year!) and Last Day of School

- Calendar is Subject to Change
- Spring Portraits Dates will be announced

Special Events

Open House: This is a drop-in event where parents and children are welcome. Open House is a great time meet your child's teachers, visit classrooms, and get ready for the upcoming year.

Muffins for Moms: This annual event is a time for mothers, grandmothers, or other family members can spend a little time in the morning with their child and getting to know their teachers and classmates. Plan to stick around after drop-off and enjoy muffins and fun activities. This event will last about an hour.

Thanksgiving Celebrations: Families will sign up to bring a food item and together we will celebrate and give thanks! This will happen during the regular Day School hours.

Christmas Program: Each year we take a journey through the story of the birth of Christ starring your children. This is a great time to get involved as a parent with costume prep and providing refreshments for family and friends after the program.

Donuts with Dad: This annual event is a time for fathers, grandfathers, or other family members can spend a little time in the morning with their child and getting to know their teachers and classmates. Plan to stick around after drop-off and enjoy donuts and fun activities. This event will last about an hour.

HPC Easter Family Celebration: Church-wide event to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior! Egg hunts, food, and games will be involved in this celebration!

Closing Program: Children will close out the year with a program to delight their family and friends. All classes will be involved in this program.

Communication with Families

Annually: Parents will be kept informed on policies, calendar, curriculum, etc through a parent handbook each year.

Monthly: A newsletter including upcoming events will be sent out via email and in paper form each month.

Weekly: Each week individual teachers will communicate class specific details with parents.

Unscheduled school closings (inclement weather): We will use some or all the following to communicate unscheduled school closings: a text, an email, our Facebook page, and our website. We typically follow Hamilton County Schools in weather closure situations however there are exceptions.

In case of emergency: In the event of an emergency (fire, tornado, etc), the Director and/or teachers will text or email to keep parents informed until it is safe and feasible to call.

Incidents and Illnesses: In the event that your child becomes ill or is involved in a major incident, the Director or teacher will call as soon as possible.

Annual kindergarten assessment for PreK: Using the Hamilton County Kindergarten readiness guide, progress will be tracked throughout the year and an informal assessment done in the Spring. Parents will receive a report from the teacher after the assessment to help guide families on how they are performing in a classroom setting.

Little Seekers Day School Policies

HEALTHY CHILDREN POLICIES

Illness, Hygiene, and Injury:

1. We kindly ask the parents to refrain from bringing their child if they have had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the past 24 hours without any anti-fever medication such as acetaminophen or Ibuprofen. We ask staff to do the same.
2. A parent will be contacted when a child develops any of the following symptoms while under our care: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, colored runny nose, excessive coughing, excessive crying, unusual rash, unusual tiredness, pink irritated eyes, or if child is simply not acting like usual self. If there is any question or concern about a child's health status, the parent will be referred to the Director.
3. Allergies can often present symptoms similar to colds, pink eye, and other viruses. We will be sensitive to parents' claims in these cases.
4. All families are required to designate allergies and special medical information on the registration form. If special precautions need to be taken, such as keeping an epinephrine autoinjector onsite, the Director will handle it on a case by case basis.
5. Smokers are respectfully asked wear an additional layer of clothing or smock when handling infants/toddlers.
6. Hand washing is the best way to protect both child and caregiver. Staff members will always wash hands upon arrival, after bathroom use, diaper changes, etc. They will also instruct the children in proper hand washing. Hand sanitizer will also be used as needed.
7. If a child is injured beyond the incidental bumps and scrapes, a parent will be contacted immediately by the teacher and/or Director. Examples include, but are not limited to, bumps to the head, cuts that bleed enough to need a bandage, biting, hitting, etc.
8. When an injury is the result of another child (biting/hitting), the name of the child who inflicted the harm will never be revealed by our staff. An incident form will be placed on file and those parents contacted confidentially. We will also evaluate the situation and take extra steps to reduce the risk of it happening again.

Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Procedures: In accordance with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard, all precautions will be observed at this facility in order to prevent contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials.

1. Identify tasks that have the potential of exposure. These include, but are not limited to, treating nose bleeds, First Aid, laundry, changing diapers and soiled underwear, and assisting a child who has vomited.
2. All blood and other potentially infectious materials will be treated as infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source material.
3. Disposable gloves will be available and used.
4. All garments soiled with blood will be bagged and removed from the classroom. Blood and other bodily fluids will be cleaned up immediately or as soon as feasible.

Food Allergies: The entire HPC children's wing is a peanut and tree nut free facility.

1. No peanuts, tree nuts, or such products are allowed anywhere in the HPC children's classrooms, check-in stations, or playground during any time, including church ministry events.
2. Products that are processed in a facility that also processes peanuts and tree nuts can be brought in lunches, snacks etc. for personal consumption. However, no such products can be served to the children by HPC. (class parties, kid's birthdays, etc.)
3. Food brought in for birthday parties and class parties will be strictly regulated by the Director. Food will not be served if it cannot be guaranteed peanut and tree-nut free. All labels must be saved and referenced.
4. If a child has any food allergy as stated in their file, the Director will inform all staff and decide on a case by case basis on how to proceed.

Diaper Changing Procedures

1. Staff will always wear disposable gloves. A new set of gloves is required for each diaper changed. A box of gloves is available at each diaper changing station.
2. All diapers should only be changed on a diaper changing station.
3. Before changing a diaper, staff will wash hands and wipe down changing pad.
4. Staff will gather all supplies needed (diaper, gloves, etc.) before placing a child on the changing station.
5. A child will never be left unattended on a diaper changing station at any time.
6. Gloves will be removed by rolling inside out, so that any residue remains inside them.

Potty Use / Potty Training Procedures

1. Our staff will never insist that a child use the potty until the parent has made a request. This should occur following a period of potty training at home.
2. Our staff will be sensitive when assisting children with use of potty, honoring the child's request for privacy or for help.
3. Our staff will wear gloves when a child needs lots of assistance.
4. Our staff will instruct children in proper bathroom hygiene such as wiping, flushing, and washing of hands.
5. A staff member will never be out of eye or ear shot of another adult when assisting a child in the potty. For example, they will never go alone into the bathroom with a child and close both the bathroom door and stall door.

Head Lice Policy

1. If head lice are discovered while the child is attending the Day School, a parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child. The child may return to school once all lice and nits have been removed. In cases of children with long hair, we ask that hair be worn in a bun or braids for one week following treatment.
2. Parents of other children in that class will be notified that head lice were discovered, and will be advised to check their child thoroughly.

SECURE CHILDREN POLICIES

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Drop off/Pick-up Procedures

1. Each morning begins at 9:00am. Teachers and teachers' aides will be ready to receive children right at 9:00am.
2. Children will be walked in by a parent to their classrooms.
3. Children must be signed in each day, no exceptions.
4. Pick-up is at 2:00pm. Parents will pick up their children from their classrooms.
5. Teachers monitoring check-out are required to check ID if anyone other than the parent is picking the child up. That person **MUST** be on that child's approved pick up list. While it may be an inconvenience for a moment, it's a simple action that adds immensely to the security of the children in our care.
6. Parents will contact the Director if they need to pick up a child early or are running late.
7. Reoccurring or excessive late pickups will result in extra charges.
8. If a child is going to be absent, the parent will be asked to contact the Director and let them know.

Supervision and Care

1. A classroom of children will never be left unattended.
2. Accountability and adherence to the ratios outlined in the Child Protection Policy will always be upheld.
3. If a child cries for an unreasonable amount of time, the teacher and/or Director will contact a parent.
4. Children will be instructed to play appropriately with toys and to use resources wisely.
5. Damages, broken, or dangerous toys and equipment will be removed from the classroom.

Photo/Video Policy

Only designated staff are allowed to take photos and videos of the children and only for reasons outlined in the signed parent agreement. Individual staff members are not allowed to take photos/video of the children nor are they allowed to post them online (website, social media). In addition, staff members are not permitted to make comment or elude to any child and/or their behavior on or off social media. A teacher may choose to set up a private Shutterfly account for viewing only by the parents of children in that class. A parent may choose to opt out of any photos and not be included in such group.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The mission of HPC in situations where discipline is necessary is best accomplished when there is a clear understanding of the importance of the home/church/school partnership as well as the creation/sin/forgiveness/redemption mindset. Our goal is to help children learn and grow from their mistakes, understand that we are all sinners, and with God's help, we can work towards making the right choices.

Our actions affect not just ourselves, but also our school community. As we seek to love God, love each other and love the world, we must consider how our actions affect others and the community. When discipline is necessary, we will work with the child and their family to help grow and learn from the inappropriate behavior, as well as others who were affected by their choices. Family members will work with the school when Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy is being used.

CODE OF CONDUCT: At the beginning of each school year, children will be taught the Code of Conduct. Parents will be asked to sign this code to promise to support our efforts in requiring their child to respect and abide by the Code of Conduct. All children will have the Code of Conduct reinforced throughout the year by their teacher in an age-appropriate manner.

Love and Obey God

- I will speak of God in respectful ways.
- I will respect myself because God created me in His Image.
- I will be respectful in the words I use and how I use my body.
- I will obey adults who are leading and teaching me.

Love Others

- I will be respectful of others and I will not hurt others
- I will interact with others using kind words and not resort to name calling, swearing or inappropriate language toward each other.
- I will respect other's things and use it only with permission.
- I will include others in work and play.
- I will respect everyone by remembering "no touching except for helping."
- I will learn to apologize and ask for forgiveness when I mess up and seek God's help to learn from my mistakes.

Be a Caretaker

- I will take care of school property. This includes furniture, books, equipment, sporting equipment and the building.
- I will tell an adult about any damage done.
- I will help keep the school clean inside and out.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION: TEACHER CORRECTION

Teacher Responsibilities

- The classroom teacher is responsible for creating a positive learning environment.
- Teachers should convey clear rules and spend time teaching children how to behave in the classroom.
- Teachers have individual freedom to use their unique gifts to teach, however, teachers are required to abide by the school policies consistently and positively.
- Document all major disciplinary actions given for reportable misbehaviors.
- Communicate with families regularly and share correspondence with the Director.
- Report to the Director concerning children with repeated disciplinary concerns, and follow procedure listed below.

Consequences Used

- Consequences should match the problem behavior (i.e. if a child uses scissors to cut paper and throws it all over the floor, their consequence would be to pick up their mess and then try the scissor activity again using the appropriate behavior modeled by the teacher).
- Positive reinforcement for when rules are followed.
- Calm Down Area will allow a child to decompress, evaluate their choices, and calm down before they return to their work or play.
- HPC personnel will not use corporal punishment at any time. It is unacceptable for school personnel and/or volunteers to use any form of physical discipline.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION: REPORTING A CHILD TO THE DIRECTOR**Minor Offenses:**

- After three related offenses which a teacher has attempted to handle, student misbehavior will be reported to the Director.
- The Director will work with the teacher on behavior strategies.
- The Director will request a parent meeting, including the teacher, to create a behavior plan.

Major Offenses:

Major offenses should be IMMEDIATELY reported to the Director and include but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression toward self or others (hitting, biting, etc)
- Throwing objects, overturning furniture or other tantrum behavior that could result in physical harm
- Direct defiance/non-compliance toward any adult
- Destruction and/or vandalism of school or personal property
- Possession and/or distribution of illegal items and substances
- Use of profanity
- Use of an object as a weapon (including items meant for craft/play purposes which could be used as a weapon)
- Attempts to leave school property

In the event of a major offense, the following steps will be taken:

- For a first offense, the teacher and/or Director will call all parties involved in the incident immediately regarding the incident. The name of the child who inflicted the harm will never be revealed by our staff. An incident form will be placed on file and an action plan made to reduce the risk of another incident.
- For a second offense, the Director will contact the parents and make an action plan for home and school to remedy the behavior.
- For a third offense, the Director will meet with parents and create an appropriate plan. It could include asking the parents to keep the child at home until the behavior can be managed.
- The Director will oversee the progress of a behavior agreement plan between a child struggling to adhere to the Code of Conduct and the teachers/staff/Director.
- An unreasonable number of repeated major offenses may result in the student's removal from the program.

Parent FAQ

What does my child need to bring with them each day? For our littlest seekers who are wearing diapers, please provide a diaper bag with diapers, wipes, and ointments (if any) that you request us to apply. Also include any bottles, sippy cups, snack and lunch each day. For our older seekers, please bring their snack and lunch and any outerwear needed as the seasons dictate. For all Little Seekers, at the beginning of the year you will provide a full change of clothes to be kept in their cubby. Place in a gallon ziplock bag labeled with their full name. These will need to be changed out seasonally. As weather requires, send outerwear including hats and gloves so the kids can play outside in cooler weather. We will only stay indoors when an unreasonable temperature is reached (usually below 50 degrees).

As a peanut free facility, what does that mean for my child's snack and lunch? No peanuts or peanut products will be allowed in the children's wing at any time. When packing your child's snack and lunch, please ensure you are avoiding such products. If peanut products of any kind are brought, they will not be served and a parent will be contacted to provide alternative options. There is a strict no sharing policy in regard to snack and lunch so please advise your child accordingly.

Can I visit my child during day school? We encourage parents and families to participate in special events such as Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and the Fall Festival. In addition, parents and families are welcome to come to the classroom parties that will occur around certain holidays. We encourage these special events as great days to visit, as opposed to during a typical day.

How do you accommodate allergies/medical needs? When a child has any allergy stated on their registration form, the Director will make a plan in collaboration with the parents. All staff will be informed of the plan and it will be strictly followed. No peanuts, peanut products, foods that may contain peanuts, foods that were processed in a facility that also processes peanuts will be served to the children by Little Seekers Day School. There is a strict no-sharing policy in regard to snack and lunch. Food brought in for birthday parties and class parties will be strictly regulated by the Director. Food will not be served if it cannot be guaranteed peanut-free or free of other allergens that may arise among a class. All labels must be saved and referenced. If a child needs to carry an epinephrine autoinjector or inhaler, the parent must provide a complete set to stay onsite at all times. The epinephrine autoinjector or inhaler will be kept in a location in the classroom out of reach of children. All staff will be informed of the location of such items.

What is your child to teacher ratio? We aim to keep a lower ratio as compared to Tennessee State Standards.

Ones: 4:1

Twos: 6:1

Threes: 8:1

Fours/Fives: 8:1

What training do your teachers receive? Each year teachers go through a three-day orientation that includes training in the following areas: CPR/AED, First-aid, Little Seekers Day School Policies and Procedures, HPC Child Protection Policy, ABC Jesus Loves Me Curriculum, communicating effectively with children and families and current trends and issues. This training will be provided upon hiring as well as annually. All substitute teachers and volunteer aides are required to have the same training.

What if I need to withdraw my child? We ask for a two-weeks' notice for withdrawal from the program.