



Mt. Harmony Weekday Early Education Parent Handbook

2020-2021

Dear Parents and Families:

Welcome to the Weekday Early Education Program of Mt. Harmony Baptist Church serving families in the Mableton/Smyrna area. Words can't express how much we appreciate our families and how excited we are that you will be a part of our family this coming school year! Our program exists for you and your child. We will strive to provide the loving care and guidance that your child needs as he or she grows and develops.

As parents, you play a vital role in our ministry. This handbook is designed to help you understand our program and policies, its mission, and the guidelines under which we operate. You are always welcome to visit, ask questions, and make suggestions. Partnerships between parents and staff will contribute to a successful experience for your child. Our school values children and believes in families. Thank you for letting us be a part of your child's growth both academically and spiritually.

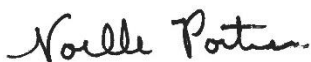
We welcome family involvement whether that is simply to pray for our school, staff, and children, or if your interests lie in volunteering or becoming a substitute teacher. Our families are what make the school a success, and we can't thank you enough for joining us to further God's Kingdom!

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns at 770-874-7493 or by email at wee@mtharmony.org

Sincerely,



Carrie Harlin
WEE Director



Noelle Porter
Assistant Director

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Mission Statement:

Mt. Harmony Weekday Early Education Program is a Christian Ministry of Mt. Harmony Baptist Church providing education to students of Kindergarten, Preschool, toddlers, and their families. Our primary purpose is to provide developmentally appropriate care and opportunities for young children to grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, and as persons created by GOD. We do so by providing planned developmental learning experiences fostering a Christian atmosphere of love and acceptance while modeling Christian behavior.

Philosophy

Because each child develops mentally, physical, spiritually, socially, and emotionally, age appropriate learning experiences are provided to allow each child to progress at his/her own pace and to experience success through hands-on activities and learning centers.

All personnel of the weekday early education program are professing Christians and active participants in their church, will incorporate appropriate Bible stories and verses, and will strive to lay the foundation for the development of biblical worldview in the mind and heart of each child. Each staff member must be willing to sign the church's statement of faith.

History

The Mt. Harmony Weekday Early Education (WEE) program started as a volunteer ministry in 1986. The program was a free offering for church members to have a "Mother's Morning Out" twice per month with only three volunteers watching babies and children.

Over time a preschool curriculum was added under the guidance of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. After adding the curriculum, it became clear that the program should be a full-fledge preschool program with a paid director and staff. As the program grew, the additional classes and oversight required that a monthly fee be charged for a child to attend. This growth also required additional sessions and the program became a weekly offering.

In its current structure, the WEE program is self-funded through charging a monthly tuition. The school offers a structured preschool class set-up from ages 1 through Kindergarten with 17 employees utilizing well researched curriculums.

Administration

Mt. Harmony Weekday Early Education is a ministry of Mt. Harmony Baptist Church. Our Weekday Education classes are administered by the Director according to established policies.

Operating Policies of Mt. Harmony WEE

Entrance Requirements

- Completed Weekday Early Education Enrollment Application
- Your child is between 1 and 6 years of age.
- All children enrolled in the 3's, K4, and Kindergarten class must be potty trained.
- Children shall be of the following ages for enrollment in the following classes:
 - 2's: children turn 2 on or before September 1st of this school year
 - 3's: children turn 3 on or before September 1st of this school year
 - K4: children turn 4 on or before September 1st of this school year
 - Kindergarten: children turn 5 on or before September 1st of this school year
- All children shall have current immunizations. Kindergarten students shall have Health Form 3231 in addition to the immunization form.
 - This form is available from your doctor or the Health Department. It must be on file in our office by the first day of school. If we do not receive this form, your child will not be able to attend school until this form or a State of Georgia-accepted exemption form is provided.
- Mt. Harmony WEE does not discriminate enrollment of students based on race, creed, or color. Enrollment of students with special needs shall be considered on an individual basis. Enrollment of any child may be based on transcripts from former schools or other pertinent information as deemed appropriate by the administration. Pre-registration preference will be given to current students, their siblings, and church members.

Operating Hours

Office Number: 770-874-7493

- Students are not allowed in the building prior to 8:50am. Please be aware that our staff must prepare the classrooms for your child and attend prayer, devotions, and staff meetings each morning before school begins. The greeters will begin opening car doors when this time is completed. Please do not drop your child off unattended. Please wait for a staff member to open the car door and help your child out of the car. Please do not exit your car during carpool. The staff will take care of getting your child out of the car. If you arrive after 9:10am, please park your car and walk your child to their classroom.
- The one-year-old class operates Monday/Wednesday, 9am-1pm.
- The two-year-old class has the option of going 2, 3, or 4 days a week, 9am-1pm.
- The three-year-old class has the option of 3 days a week or 4 days a week, 9am-1pm.

- K4 students attend 4 days a week, Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm.
- Kindergarten students attend Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm.
- A late pick-up fee of \$5.00 will be assessed per child for each 5-minute time period beginning at 1:15pm. We realize that emergencies occur but please be respectful of this policy. The late fee will be added to your next month's tuition.

Dismissal

We reserve the privilege of dismissing any child if, after entering, he or she is found to not be potty trained (does not include occasional accidents), fees are not paid on time, parents are uncooperative with recommendations concerning their child, policies are knowingly ignored, the child is found to require one-on-one teacher instruction that we are unable to provide, or the child's behavior is unmanageable to the point of classroom disruption and danger to self, others, and/or property.

Tuition and Registration

Registration fees are due upon registration. Fees are non-refundable.

All tuition is due the first of each month and is considered late after the 10th of the same month. Notification/reminders of tuition payments will be sent via email and posted to the Mt. Harmony WEE Facebook page. Payments are to be made online at www.mtharmony.org/give. Click on the words "give" which will bring up an external page. Click on the drop-down box indicating fund and select WEE School. Late notices will be sent on the 10th of each month and a late payment fee of \$30.00 will apply to all tuitions received after thereafter. Any checks submitted and returned for non-sufficient funds may result in a request for cash payment only, a late fee, plus \$25.00 returned check fee.

If payment is not received by the end of the month, your child will not be able to return to class until fees are paid. Please speak with our Director if there is a situation or question concerning this policy. We depend on your tuition payments to meet day to day operating expenses including purchase of educational materials and supplies, maintenance of equipment, and staff salaries. Monthly obligations continue regardless of attendance or enrollment. Fees cannot be pro-rated by absences, vacation, etc. Please feel free to discuss extenuating circumstances with our Director.

Tuition payments are due over a 10-month period, August-May.

Withdrawal

Tuition is obligatory on a monthly basis. If a child must be withdrawn, one month's notice is required. Notice must be given in writing. A full month's tuition is required even if the child attends only part of that month. In accordance with our one-month notification policy, withdrawal after August 1st will also require payment of September's Tuition. In the event of any situations which would cause our school to cease indoor operations (i.e. pandemics, community outbreaks, and/or natural disasters), we will continue education through remote learning. If you do not wish to continue with online learning, a 30 day notice is still required.

Behavior Management

It is Mt. Harmony policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs/time-ins, redirections, and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and volunteers observe the following guidelines:

- 1. Try to anticipate the problem before it begins.** Many times, we teachers can intercept a potential problem before it arises. This is our first response to negative behaviors and works especially well to avoid a more serious behavioral issue.
- 2. Redirect the child or children.** If we are unable to anticipate the problem, a teacher is asked to redirect or try to get the child's focus away from the aggressive or disruptive behavior. Positive redirection is used many times daily. A teacher is instructed to try and redirect at least 3 times per problem before advancing to the next step. With younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary (i.e. removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- 3. Warning the child of disciplinary action.** A warning is used with more redirection. We cannot expect all children to redirect themselves and must help them to learn this basic skill.
- 4. Time out.** Time outs are only used as a last resort. It should last no more than a few minutes. Time out is a way for a child to calm down.
- 5. Office referral.** If a child is overly aggressive with other students or teachers, a teacher is instructed to call the office for assistance. Office referrals are to be used as a last resort when a teacher needs assistance. If a child is in danger of harming themselves or someone else or they require one-on-one due to the disruption, they may be sent home for the day depending on staff availability.

Clothing

Please have your child wear comfortable play clothing that can be washed, is appropriate to the weather or season, and labeled with your child's name. The school will not be held responsible for damaged or lost articles or clothing or jewelry. Please be sure to cover all girls' panties with bike shorts or leggings. Because kids are active and in various positions during play or on circle time, everything needs to be covered. Please be aware that your child will play inside as well as on the playground and will need comfortable shoes to wear. We require shoes that are safely fastened to the foot (i.e. no flip flops without straps, no play dress-up heels, no rainboots, etc.). Please label all coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, backpacks, water bottles, and lunch boxes with your child's name.

Transportation for Field Trips

It is our goal at Mt. Harmony WEE to provide engaging and hands-on learning experiences for all students. On predetermined dates and locations, this can be in the form of field trips for our K4 and Kindergarten students. Although it is our goal to provide field trips each year, decisions about this will be based on the current recommendations from the Department of Health and Cobb County School Systems in regard to safety of all children.

If a field trip is scheduled, Mt. Harmony WEE does not provide transportation. Parents can make arrangements for their child to carpool with other families if they are not able to attend. When arrangements have been finalized for a carpool, notify the school in writing and a carpool tag will be provided. Notification must be in writing. Siblings are automatically considered a carpool. Carpools may be activated the first week of school if enough notice is given. Written permission is required for any change in the normal routine of transportation to and from the school.

Mt. Harmony will not provide transportation for field trips. Arrangement for transportation is done through the parents. Mt. Harmony cannot authorize carpools to and from field trips as this will all be organized through the parent.

Messages

Please send all communication in writing. We cannot depend on a child's interpretation of your instructions. You may also call the Director with last minute messages. We will be more than happy to pass along a phone message to your child's teacher when necessary. Office number is: 770-874-7493. If there is an emergency, you may also call the church office at 770-948-3900 and ask that a message be delivered to the Director.

Email:

Carrie Harlin- Director- charlin@mtharmony.org

Noelle Porter- Assistant Director- noelle@mtharmony.org

Snacks/Lunch

Mt. Harmony is not a peanut free facility. Teachers and administration will be aware of ALL students with allergies even if not directly in their classroom. All staff have been trained in how to use an EpiPen and proper hygiene for preventative measures. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of any allergies or food restrictions that a child may have. In addition to this, all students with an allergy must have an allergy action form completed by their doctor.

Snacks are typically not provided unless there is a special occasion. Due to the school day including lunch and lasting only 4 hours, snacks are typically not needed. If snacks will be given to the students, the teachers will inform the parents ahead of time.

All students are asked to bring a water bottle and a lunch to school each day. If your child has a peer in their class with an allergy, you will be informed of precautions that must be taken. Lunch can include finger foods and items that your child typically eats for lunch. The teachers will not throw away food that a child has not eaten in order for the parents to see what food might be going to waste.

School Calendar/Inclement Weather/School Closings, and Teacher Workdays

Mt. Harmony WEE follows the Cobb County School System for most school closings with some additions/exceptions. Please refer to our 2020-2021 school calendar for further questions. If Cobb County schools close for inclement weather or other event causing a safety risk to the students, we will also close. If Cobb County has a delayed opening, depending on the timing of the delay we will either close or possibly delay by one hour, please check emails for communication from the WEE Director. We also reserve the right to modify the calendar as deemed appropriate for situations that may occur during the course of the school year.

- It should be noted that if a school closure lasts longer than a full business week, arrangements will be made to provide remote learning.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

Children will be greeted in their cars at the back entrance to the school and helped to find their room each morning. For safety reasons, we require that your child be dropped-off and picked-up in this manner. Most children adjust quickly to this routine and separate more easily from parents if it is approached as a matter of fact and in a positive manner. Remember, if you arrive after 9:10am, you must park your car and walk your child to the front door of the school.

Please do not allow your child hang out the car windows and/or to open the car door and exit by themselves. The greeter will open the door and help your child out of the car. Greeters begin opening doors at 8:50am and continue until 9:10am. If you arrive after this time and there is no Greeter, please park your car and walk your child to the front entrance. Please do not drop your child off if there are no teachers standing there. Afternoon carpool begins at 12:50pm. After you pick-up your child, please pull forward and buckle your child past the carpool line. This allows the carpool line to move more efficiently.

Parents will enter the carpool line through Pebblebrook Road. This is the first road on the right to the left of the school. Entering in through Pebblebrook Road prevents back up onto Veteran's Memorial Highway. Please see detailed carpool instructions in your communication folder.

Please always display your child's pick-up name tag on the rear-view mirror of your car. This allows us to have children ready to send out to the Greeter and move the pick-up line along in a timely manner. Remember that any change in the normal dismissal routine is to be sent to your child's teacher in a written note (example: not riding in a normal carpool, going home with another child to play,

babysitter/friend is picking up your child). If there is a last-minute change, be sure to call the office at 770-874-7493. We also reserve the right to adjust carpool procedures as needed and will inform all parents of these changes.

If you must pick your child up early, please try and do so prior to 12:30pm. Please do not walk up at carpool line as this disrupts the system of carpool and can create safety issues for the school. If you must pick your child up early or late, please make sure to park on the front side of the building and enter in through the front entrance of the school (Family Center). It is important that you share all carpool procedures with anyone who would be picking up your child. i.e. nanny, babysitter, grandparents, etc. to keep the line flowing and safe.

Illness or absences

According to National Academy of Pediatrics, a child who has exhibited any of the following symptoms within the previous 24-hour period is possibly contagious and should not be in a group care situation. If state and federal governments declare a pandemic for our area, further policy and procedures will be communicated at that time.

- Fever of 100.4
- Common cold
- Skin infections: boils, ringworm, and impetigo
- Vomiting
- Sore Throat
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained rash
- Red and runny eyes

Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine prior to returning. A child must also be free of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. If during the school day your child becomes ill or exhibits any of these symptoms, every attempt will be made to notify you. Your child will be isolated as effectively as possible.

It is our policy to require a complete and up-to-date emergency form for each student. These are supplied at the beginning of each school year. If the information changes during the year, it is your responsibility to inform us of those changes.

All children must have an up to date Immunization Form #3231 from the Georgia Health Department in our office by the first week of school. If this form is not in our file by the first week of school, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the required form is turned into us. This is a Georgia Health Department regulation that we are required to follow. If during the school year your child's immunization form should expire, you have a 30-day grace period from that expiration date to up-date and turn in a new form. After that date, your child will not be allowed to attend school until this immunization form is brought up to date and on file in our office. Immunization Forms are checked on a

regular basis, and we attempt to notify you one month prior to the form expiring. If you have any questions concerning this policy, please contact the Director.

Parent Conference/Child Evaluations

Children are constantly observed, assessed, and screened by our teachers. Routine parent conferences are held twice a year for K4 and Kindergarten. Children in our younger classes receive evaluations based on the (GELDS) Georgia Early Learning Development Standards. If at any time you or your child's teacher feel a situation requires a discussion, a conference may be scheduled. We reserve the right of dismissing any child if their behavior is unmanageable to the point of classroom disruption and or a danger to others, self, property.

Special Family Situations

If your child is involved in a custody situation where one parent or family member has sole custody, it is necessary for us to have court documentation on file with our school office. It is your responsibility to advise the Director of this situation and provide us with copies of court mandates and/or legal documents.

Fundraisers

We participate in several fundraisers throughout the year that help supplement our resources for teacher training and supplies for the classrooms. We hope that all families will participate in one or more of these events. Families will be given information on each fundraiser as they develop.

Room Parent

We are so grateful for our parents and volunteers as the school could not operate without them. Each year parents have the opportunity to volunteer in the office, sign up to be a mystery Reader, and/or to be a room parent. A room parent meeting will be held at the beginning of the year discussing volunteer responsibilities (i.e. coordinate parties and other pertinent information). Opportunities to sign up for room parent will be available and on a first-come-first serve basis at orientation and the beginning of the school week.

Classroom Parties

It is our desire to keep each and every child and parent that attends or visits this preschool safe. Days that our outside of the typical schedule can be fun but can also present with safety hazards. We invite parents to many of our classroom parties and encourage their participation. Your teachers will inform you as to the level of participation allowed at each party. Please make sure to let the teacher know when you are leaving with your child after a party to assure that every child is accounted for.

Photos

We love to take pictures of the children during the school day to show our parents all the fun they are having in the classroom. Permission to take photos of your child and photo releases are signed off at registration via the registration form. If at any time you would like to revoke this release, please contact the Director. Pictures are typically posted on our private Facebook page, Mt. Harmony WEE website (upon permission), and/or any collateral we might have (upon permission). If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Director.

Family Acknowledgement of Mt. Harmony WEE Policies

To ensure that you, the parent, have read and agree to the Policies of Mt. Harmony WEE, you must complete, sign, and return the following form to the office by the first week of school. A copy for your records will be made available upon request. We look forward to a great year at Mt. Harmony WEE!

Student Name(s)

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date