



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
HAND-IN-HAND  
EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

**FAMILY  
HANDBOOK**

# Hand-in-Hand Early Learning Center

## Table of Contents

Heading	Page
Mission and Center philosophy	1
Goals for the children	2
Center information	3
Center information continued and Operating schedule	4
Closings, tuition, admission and withdrawal information	5
Admission/withdrawal continued and Discipline policy	6
Nutrition policy and Observation	7
Health and Pesticide management	8
Safety and General information	9
Staff requirements for employment	10
Drop off and pick up information	11
Important dates for the school year	12
Contact information page	13



Everybody's Church

First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham

**HAND-IN-HAND  
EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

**Address**

1669 West Maple Road  
Birmingham, MI 48009

**Phone**

(248) 644.2040 ext. 124

**Fax**

(248) 644.8047

**Email**

[handinhand@everybodyschurch.org](mailto:handinhand@everybodyschurch.org)

**Hand-in-Hand Director**

Heidi Wilkinson

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE**  
**2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR**

Please note that a classroom calendar will be distributed at the beginning of the school year that will contain specific events pertaining to each room.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

First day of school-Monday, September 11  
Parent Coffees- September 12 and September 13  
Last Day of School- Friday, June 1  
Mini Summer Camp 2018-June 5,7,12,14

**HAND-IN-HAND WILL BE CLOSED ON THE DAYS LISTED BELOW:**

Thanksgiving Holiday-	November 22-24
Christmas Holiday-	December 18-January 2
Martin Luther King Day-	January 15
Mid-Winter Recess-	February 19-23
Spring Recess & Easter-	March 30-April 6
Memorial Day	May 28

Hand-In-Hand Early Learning Center

1669 West Maple Road

Birmingham, Michigan 48009

(248) 644-2040 ext. 124

**MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY**

We are committed to providing a quality program within a safe, nurturing environment.

Our curriculum encourages and promotes the intellectual, social, cognitive, emotional and physical development of young children.

Our programs will provide your child with the opportunity to develop at his/her own pace in a loving, caring and Christian environment. We encourage each child to develop a positive self-image, to be responsible for their own behavior and to develop skills at an age appropriate level.

Play is an essential element in learning. Children need to play for play's sake. They are learning by experiencing different activities, people and age appropriate materials. In our Christian environment they are given an opportunity to develop socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and spiritually.

You will see developmental growth in your child. We are pleased when we see children actively enjoying the various activities, classmates and bonding with our staff. Since each child is unique, they will vary in how much they are able and willing to communicate what is taking place in their classroom.

Infants are held and cuddled, read to, encouraged to sit up, crawl or walk; have their basic needs met and encouraged to meet their age level developmental goals. Older children are encouraged through varied activities to expand their skills in all academic and social learning areas as stated in our mission statement.

## **GOALS FOR YOUR CHILD**

1. To provide a safe and healthy environment.
2. To provide opportunities for physical development of fine and gross motor skills through activities and use of equipment.
3. To provide imaginative interaction with other children.
4. To provide an opportunity for children to develop the social skills appropriate for their chronological and developmental age with the intended goal to be able to communicate respect for each other and each other's property.
5. To provide children with opportunities to explore emergent reading, language, math & science skills.
6. To provide parents with time for themselves without worry regarding their child's safety and happiness.
7. To provide the opportunity for children to become more independent, learn to be responsible, gain self-help skills and to explore new areas of learning without a fear of failure.

### **Arrival and Pick up:**

All children must be accompanied by a parent or designated adult to and from classroom doors.

Class begins at 9:15am. The doors will be opened at 9:05am and secured at 9:30am until 11:35am. Entrance during those times can be made through the southwest entrance of the church.

Please be prompt picking your child up at the end of the class time.

**Pick up times are 11:45 AM for all morning classes. Four year old Lunch Bunch pick up is 12:30pm. Extended day pick up is 1:15pm on Tuesday-Thursday.**

If the child is habitually picked up late then a charge of \$5.00 cash will be assessed after the first five minutes and an addition \$5.00 for each five minutes thereafter. Many of the teachers have go to another room at the end of the morning program so they have to leave on time. This must be paid in cash at the time of pickup, or before the child's next regularly scheduled day.

If you are unable to pick up your child as expected, please call the church and notify the director. Arrangements will be made to ensure the safety and care of your child. No child will be left unsupervised, however a late fee may be charged.

If you are running late please call 248-644-2040 ext. 132. This phone is located in the preschool rooms and there is generally someone in the room.

If you make arrangements for your child to be picked up by someone other than yourself or another preschool parent, a picture I.D. must be shown along with a signed note from you or that person is listed on the child information record.

### **Requirements for employment:**

All of our teachers must have experience working with children. Our Lead teachers have either a college or master's degree in Education or have met strict early childhood criteria as mandated by the State. They must also complete the following:

1. Application for Employment.
2. Confidential Report for Employees.
3. Current medical history.
4. A signed Abuse and neglect Clearance Form.
5. A state clearance for child Abuse and Neglect through the Michigan Department of Consumer & Industry Services.
6. Michigan State Police Criminal Records report (ICHAT)
7. CPR and First Aid certification-annual basis
8. 16 hours of continued early childhood educations-annually
9. SIDS and shaken baby training and blood borne pathogen training.

All staff and volunteers shall be of responsible character suitable to meet the needs of children.

In order to comply with licensing regulations, all staff members and volunteers will be screened for any substantiated criminal history. These will be kept on file. All staff and volunteers must undergo a criminal history check using ICHAT (the Michigan Department of state police internet criminal history access tool. This is updated annually. All staff and volunteers also undergo a national background history check required by the Church.

Prior to allowing a staff member to be present at the center and before any final employment offers for staff and /or before any unsupervised contact with children by volunteer; documentation must be on file from the department of human service showing that they have not been named in a central registry case as a perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect, a listed offense of the sex offenders registration act, and/or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual with the 10 years immediately preceding the date of offering to volunteer or work at the center. This shall be updated every two years. Each staff and volunteer must complete and sign a statement as to whether they have been convicted to any crimes, other than a minor traffic violation, and if so, provide information about the conviction. They will also sign a statement that they are aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law, they have been informed of the center's policies on child abuse and neglect and that they are mandated reporters as required by law. If a staff member and or volunteer's criminal background check reveals any child abuse, child neglect, a felony and/or sex offender's registration act then they will not be allowed to be present at the center.

Each Teacher has a staff handbook with policies on sanitation, discipline, safety and general classroom policy and curriculum.

### **Literacy Development:**

We are using "Handwriting Without Tears" curriculum to assist in fine motor development, letter recognition and letter formation.

### **Butterfly, Elephant and Whale rooms:**

Reading and writing are encouraged in age appropriate stages and included in the curriculum.

Infants and toddlers share picture books and storybooks with adults. By exploring the pictures and turning the pages they begin their reading journey.

Older children are encouraged to look through books. They are read to individually and in groups. The children are encouraged to follow the text. Through drawing, painting and early writing their beginning writing skills are formed. Books, paper and crayons are available in all classes.

### **Eagle, Enrichment and Young Five rooms:**

Age appropriate reading and writing are part of the curriculum. Books are introduced several times during the day. The children listen to stories as they look at the pictures. There is individual time to allow the children to explore books independently. They begin to associate the language with what they observe in the pictures. Teacher led discussions aid in vocabulary development and comprehension. We teach upper and lower case letters and use "Handwriting without Tears." There are always materials for the children to practice. Each room uses age appropriate books for the children.

### **Operating Schedule:**

#### **Butterfly, Elephant, Whale rooms - (4 months - young threes)**

Monday-Friday- 9:15-11:45am.

#### **Lion Room-Enrichment room- (three and four year)**

Tuesday and/or Thursday-9:15-11:45am (4 year old)

Monday, Wednesday and/or Friday-9:15-11:45am (3 year old)

#### **Eagle Rooms (Three and Four year old preschool):**

Three years old -

Tuesday and Thursday-9:15-11:45am

Tuesday and Thursday-12:30pm-3:00pm

Four years old-

Monday, Wednesday, Friday-9:15-11:45am

#### **Frog Room (Young Fives):**

Monday-Thursday -9:15-1:15pm and Friday-9:15-11:45am

#### **Extended Days:**

Monday-Thursday-11:45-1:15pm

## **CENTER INFORMATION**

First Presbyterian Hand-In-Hand Early Learning Center is licensed by the State of Michigan and the City of Birmingham.

**The Butterfly, Elephant and Whale rooms** provide age defined classrooms for children age four months to young three years olds. A thematic curriculum is used.

**The Eagle rooms, (preschool rooms),** include two large connecting rooms-each with child sized bathroom facilities. Each room has a one-way window for parent observation. Equipment and activities include: climber, jumping board, small and large blocks, slide, workbench and manipulatives of all kinds. The kitchen center has utensils, cookware, food and dishes and housekeeping center with dolls, phones and dress up clothes.

**The Lion room (three and four year old enrichment classes)** – The three year old enrichment classes run on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The four year old enrichment classes run on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The large room is equipped with toys, manipulatives, books, blocks and a dramatic play area.

**The Frog Room (Young Five’s room)**-This room is set up for those children who are not ready for a full day of kindergarten and would benefit from a small class and teacher to student ratio to gain the social and academic skills needed for kindergarten success. They have a kitchen area, toys, blocks, painting area and many manipulatives.

**Each classroom is equipped with age appropriate toys, manipulatives and equipment and activities to cover all area of learning.**

**Gross motor skills** development include: riding toys, rocking toys, small and large blocks, slides, mats, workbenches, tools and musical instruments.

**Fine motor skills** and development include: puzzles, books, games (for concept, sorting, perception, language development, coordination, etc.), finger toys for infants, riding toys and toy figures/dolls for older children.

**Dramatic Play** includes: dress up areas, kitchen center and house keeping center are equipped with dolls, phones and household items.

**Literacy:** Many books for early readers and for reading to the children. The center has use of a large, fenced outdoor playground with a play structure, a play house, tot tree, climbers, and a variety of riding toys. Walks outside on our church grounds and use of our playground, weather permitting, may be included in the days’ activities. Knox Hall and Calvin Hall may be used when the weather does not allow outside play. The use of any of the outdoor or indoor areas is determined by the age and developmental stage of the children.

## **Safety Procedures:**

The teachers are trained in emergency procedures. Safety procedures and evacuation maps are posted in each room. Our primary focus is to keep your child safe at all times. We practice fire, crisis management and tornado drills. If in doubt we will err on the side of caution and 911 will be called. The fire department across Maple Road is our response team. In case of a building evacuation we will take the children next door to First United Methodist Church, 1589 West Maple Road, Birmingham, 248-646-1200. We will attempt calls to everyone via cell, home or spouse phone numbers.

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Tennis shoes provide the greatest safety for active feet. Be sure your child is dressed according to the weather because outside play is a regular part of our curriculum.

If anyone other than yourself is picking up your child, please bring a written note informing the staff. Photo ID is required; please tell your replacement. If an emergency causes a change in the assigned pickup person please call that morning, we will release only to those named on your list.

Please notify the director and the teachers if there is anyone that may not be allowed near your child. (A non-custodial parent or grandparent). If the child greets the person there may be confusion as to who is expected to pick the child up, even with a note.

In an emergency, if you are unable to be reached, your spouse or emergency person will be called. Please keep the program informed of any changes in these numbers including cell and pager numbers.

## **General Information:**

The hall bulletin boards located outside of the Eagle rooms will have notices of general interest. A monthly newsletter is distributed by email and an annual calendar is given to the parents.

A bulletin board in the main hallway will have short announcements regarding closings, upcoming events, etc.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. Your child is very important to us. We want their experience in Hand-In-Hand to be a positive one.

This Center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans. The notebook will be available to parents to review during regular business hours.

Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

### **Health:**

The teachers have received training by a professional in sanitary work habits. Hand washing, diapering, food storage and room sanitation as well as general illness symptoms have been covered. Procedures from the State of Michigan Health Department are posted in appropriate places within our classrooms. We strive to provide a clean and healthy environment for your children and our teachers.

We ask parents not to bring their child to school if they are displaying signs of illness. If a child becomes ill all attempts will be made to contact a parent/guardian immediately. Your child will be cared for by a teacher in a separate area until you arrive.

Before a child returns to the center they must be free of fevers, diarrhea, rashes and colored nasal discharge at the time of drop off and for twenty-four hours prior to this time. Please inform the teachers if any of these symptoms are present but have been verified by a physician to be non-communicable. Please inform us of any allergies or special needs. If medication needs to be dispensed then a form will need to be filled out by the parent and kept on file. All epi-pens must be in their original containers and placed in a Ziploc bag with the child's name on it. If a child requires an epi-pen then it must be brought each day the child is in the program. All medications will be kept out of reach of the children.

Please notify the director if your child has any contagious diseases so that we may notify others of the possible exposure.

If any teacher suspects abuse or neglect, it will be reported to the proper authority.

### **Pesticide Management:**

If an application is needed an annual notification would be provided to parents or guardians informing them that they will receive advance notice of the pesticide application. The annual notice would be provided in September of the year it was to be applied. The annual notification to parents or guardians would specify 2 methods by which the advance notice of pesticide application would be given. An advance notice containing information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of the application, contact information at the center, and a toll-free number for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan department of agriculture.

### **Holidays and Closings:**

Hand-In-Hand follows most of the Birmingham School District calendar and will comply with their closing decisions for inclement weather. Please check with local radio and television stations to determine school closings. The center will also send out an email if we will be closed due to weather or building problems.

### **Tuition:**

Fees and tuition are set by the Children's Family/Children Ministries of the First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham. Please see the tuition information that was included with your welcome packet. Cash is accepted. All checks should be made out to the First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, please write the words, Hand-In-Hand, on the memo line. You may also pay on-line and the instructions are also included in the welcome packets. You are responsible for all tuition payments to be made by the first of each month. If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, there will be a \$30 fee incurred as a result of the returned check.

### **Admission Information:**

The Butterfly, Elephant and Whale rooms are age defined and room placement is determined by their age in September of the current school year.

The Eagle rooms are based on their age by September 1 of the current year.

If a child turns three or four in the fall of the school year then the decision to admit the child shall be discussed with the director, parents and the teachers.

The Lion room (Three year old enrichment) - Must be three years of age.

Elephant room (Four year old enrichment) - Must be currently enrolled in a four year old preschool program.

Young Fives-

Enrollment in the young five's program will first be offered to those children who have completed a four year old preschool program. If there is space then it may be opened to other children who meet the age requirement stated below.

**THE CHILD MUST HAVE TURNED FIVE BETWEEN JUNE 1 and DECEMBER 31 OF THE GIVEN SCHOOL YEAR. ANY DEVIATIONS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR.**

### **Enrollment:**

Advanced enrollment notification will be given to First Presbyterian members and currently enrolled families. If space is still available after going through the waiting list, new families are added during the school year if there are openings. Forms for the next fall semester admittance are available in February.

Enrollment is secured when application, health forms and a non-refundable registration fee are received. This registration fee will reserve the space in the classroom. Enrollment will be open to any child provided there are openings and the center can meet the needs of the child, without discrimination with regard to sex, race or nationality.

The child must meet existing health requirements. Health regulators of the Michigan State Department of Health are as follows: Each child must have a medical examination performed by a qualified physician a maximum of no more than six months prior to admission to the school and every year thereafter. Upon reaching the age of 30 months, physicals may be done every two years. Immunization records need to be updated as new vaccinations are received by the child. All children must be current with their immunizations and in good health. If there is a medical reason or parent choice not to fully immunize a child then the parent has to obtain a signed Medical contraindication form or make an appointment to get a waiver from the Oakland County Health Department. These must be provided before the child is admitted to the center. A health appraisal must be provided stating that the child is in good health and that the parent assumes responsibility for the child's safety while at the center. It is understood that the parent will be notified in case of emergencies. A completed Child Information form must be on file prior to the child entering the program.

Two weeks written notice must be given for withdrawal during the school year. If it is determined that Hand-In-Hand is unable to meet the needs of the child, suitability of the program for a particular child, non-payment of tuition, or specific behaviors that are unacceptable, (i.e. excessive biting or aggressiveness). All attempts will be made to work with the family and the child. The director will reserve the right to have a conference with the family to discuss other placement options if necessary.

#### **Discipline Policy:**

Our program's primary goal is to provide a healthy and safe environment for our children and teachers. Our discipline policy is based on the use of positive methods of discipline which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-reliance, self-esteem and cooperation.

Teachers will respect all children and use disciplinary methods such as: modeling appropriate behavior, redirecting children to other activities, offering children choices, separating children who are experiencing conflict and discussing the reasons why certain behaviors are inappropriate. Love and Logic is also used in many of the classrooms. At no time will children be humiliated, threatened, shamed or deprived of meals, sleep or snacks as a means of discipline. Nor will children ever be confined in an enclosed area, or subjected to any physical punishment. On rare occasion, a child may be momentarily restrained in order to prevent him/her from harming themselves or others. If the above methods are not successful, a cool down time may be used to help a child re-focus prior to re-joining the group. If a child is having consistent difficulty with certain behaviors a conference will be scheduled with the parent to explore solutions.

#### **Nutrition Policy:**

A daily mid-morning class snack is provided and consists of water and fruit and/or crackers. Parents may provide food for their child if they are unable to eat finger foods (cheerios, goldfish...). The director and teachers need to be notified of any child with known food allergies and/or special dietary needs. We will make every effort to collaborate with the parent/guardian to make sure each child with special dietary needs and/or allergies will be provided a snack in accordance with the child's needs.

Treats for birthdays and other occasions may be furnished for the classroom by the parent. Please let the teacher know prior to bringing in a treat to determine if there any allergies within the room. We ask that attention be made to allergies and be age appropriate choices, small cookies are usually best. Water is always available to the children.

For the infants and toddlers:

Covered cups or bottles are to be provided by the parents for any child not easily able to drink from an open cup. We also have cups available at the center. Formula must be mixed at home. We have a refrigerator available in the infant room for storing formula and milk. Please mark all your child's items with his or her name in a permanent manner. No child will be deprived of a snack or drink and will be fed on demand.

#### **Observation:**

##### **Infants and Toddlers:**

Parents are welcome to view their child at anytime through the windows in each room. We ask that you do not enter the room until you are ready to remove your child for the day. Separation can be difficult for some children and this minimizes their confusion. Please see the teacher if you would like to visit the classroom.

##### **Eagle Rooms:**

We have two one way glass windows in addition to the hallway windows. Parents are welcome to visit the class.