



Student Handbook

2026 - 2027

Our Philosophy of Learning

In a caring and positive atmosphere, we create a warm and happy place for pre-schoolers to learn. As we bridge the gap from home to school, we guide children to a continued good self-image while building social skills in a school setting.

Sensory, motor, perceptual, and language skills are introduced through materials and activities which are both child-centered and teacher-directed. Work is planned which emphasizes **the process rather than the product**, fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Classroom routines encourage active involvement, meaningful experimentation, and reinforcement through repetition. Schedules are designed which balance structure and free choice, as well as active and quiet times.

We treat each child as an individual, working from the level each child has attained and moving forward a step at a time. We teach **a love of learning** by allowing children to experience their own stage of development and helping them to feel **success without pressure**.

Parents may gain valuable insights and techniques from the expertise of the staff, and at the same time, share their own talents and interests to maintain the excellent quality here at Highland Day School. School then becomes a shared experience which hopefully will continue throughout each child's educational process.

Director: Kari Spangenberger

901-312-4940

kari.spangenberger@highlandcc.org

Statement of Purpose

Highland Day School is a Christian school located in the building of Highland Church of Christ. Our mission is to love, play, and teach God's children.

- We provide care for students ages 8 weeks through 4 years of age.
- We offer full time and part time plans to accommodate working families, as well as families seeking to provide part time preschool experience for their children.
- We are open from 8:00am–5:00pm Monday–Friday. We provide early care from 7:00am-8:00am for fulltime students.
- Children provide their own meals.
- Highland Day School provides snacks as needed to supplement those brought from home.
- Students must have a birthday prior to August 15 to proceed to the next age level class.
- Admissions requirements include:
 - Application
 - Proof of current immunization (We do not accept any exemptions.)
 - \$150 registration fee
 - Tour of facilities by the parents
- Kept on file for each student:
 - Child's physician information
 - Health history checklist
 - Permission to provide medical treatment in case of an emergency

HIGHLAND DAY SCHOOL POLICIES 2026-2027

SCHOOL YEAR

Our Day School is in session for ten months. We begin on Thursday, August 6th. It is understood that a child who is admitted to the Day School is to be enrolled for the entire school year.

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL DATES

School calendar will be posted on the website: www.highlandcc.org/day-school. We will distribute a hard copy at *Meet The Teacher* on Wednesday, August 6th.

ADMISSION AGE REQUIREMENTS

We will admit children 8 weeks - 4 years old.

- Children will be placed in classes based on their age by August 15th of the current school year.
- A child entering the two year old class must be two by August 15th of the current school year.
- A child entering the three year old class must be three by August 15th of the current school year. The child must be potty trained for this class.
- A child entering the four year old class must be four by August 15th of the current school year.

SCHOOL HOURS

Half Day Students: 9:00am–2:00pm | Full Day Students: 8:00am–5:00pm
Students may arrive 10 minutes prior to their planned arrival times and may stay up to 10 minutes after their planned dismissal time at no additional charge.

EXTRA CARE

Early Care is available from 7:00am–8:00am. Any extra care a child attends outside of his/her regular plan is \$15 per hour and will appear on your next bill. (This service is at no cost to fulltime 5 day 8-5 students.) Please make arrangements for extra care with the Director 24 hours in advance.

EXTENDED DAY

At 3:15pm we begin our extended day. Students will combine with other classes in their same age group for recess and afternoon activities.

SCHOOL DAYS

5 Day: Monday–Friday

3 Day: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

2 Day: Tuesday & Thursday

FEES

There is a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$150 per year/per child. Acceptance of this registration fee assures your child a place in our program. A bi-annual supply fee is paid with the August and January tuition.

- 2-3 Day Supply Fee: \$100
- 4-5 Day Supply Fee: \$150

SUMMER DAY CAMP

HDS Summer Day Camp is available for 8 weeks in the summer.

TUITION

Highland Day School is a non-profit, self-supporting school. All fees and tuition are used to provide the best teachers, equipment, and curriculum aids available. Tuition is paid through our online website. Go to www.highlandcc.org/hds-tuition and click “Make Payment.” You can pay with your checking/savings account info or credit/debit card. There will be a 3% fee for using the credit/debit card option. Tuition is due regardless of days missed due to illness, vacation, or snow. We cannot offer make-up days. If HDS has an unscheduled closing of more than 5 days due to an act of God, tuition will no longer be charged after those 5 days.

Summer Session is optional. The same monthly tuition rates apply, regardless of days missed due to illness or vacation. You may make plan changes for summer if needed. You may register for June, July, or the whole summer. Tuition is due the first week of the month, regardless of days missed due to illness or vacation.

Highland Day School does not pro-rate any tuition fees. All fees are nonrefundable and due regardless of days missed due to illness, closings, vacations, etc. Your tuition reserves your child’s spot in our program.

In case of an extended absence due to illness, the Director must be notified. It is the Director’s discretion to decide if a reduction of fees or a refund is in order. If a child is withdrawn from our program, the Director must be notified two weeks in advance. Parents are required to pay for those two weeks, regardless of when the child leaves the program.

FINANCIAL AID & TUITION ASSISTANCE

Highland Day School participates in the TN Child Care Certificate Program.

Highland Day School offers an Emergency Scholarship Program.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents/guardians will need to walk each child to his/her classroom if not using carline. Each child must be checked in and out each day on the Playground app. Please send a note if your child will be picked up early or if your child will leave with another adult. We must have on file the name, addresses, and telephone numbers *of at least one* individual who is permitted to drop-off and pick-up your child from school. If someone arrives to pick-up your child and he/she does not have proper identification, we cannot allow your child to leave with them. HDS employees are trained to not release children to anyone (including a parent) whose behavior may place the child at immediate risk. Should this situation arise, authorities will be called. Thank you for understanding that your child's safety is our first priority.

For security purposes, the doors will remain locked at all times. Carline is available from 8:00–8:15am, 9:00-9:15am 2:00-2:10pm, 3:00–3:10pm and from 4:45–5:00pm. Parents may choose to utilize this service or come inside for drop-off and pickup. If using carline during scheduled times and no one is outside, please use the playground app to notify the HDS office that you have arrived, or call the office at 901.312.4940.

HDS closes at 5pm. Pick-up after that time will result in a charge of \$25 in 15 minute increments.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is developed through teacher observation and evaluation of each child. Concepts and skills are introduced which follow the TN Early Learning Standards and are appropriate to each child's stage of development which reinforce social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. Concrete, hands-on activities and experiences are planned according to units of study which are relevant to the children, providing meaningful learning. As required by the TN Department of Human Services, we integrate a Personal Safety Program in our Day School curriculum.

HEALTH

Keep children home for a full twenty-four-hour period (free of medication) after having any of the following illnesses: chicken pox, diarrhea, draining ears, fever, green runny nose, matted eyes, presumed pink eye, measles, sore throat, vomiting, or consistent cough. If your child(ren) arrives with any of the symptoms, we will send him/her back home with you. Children too sick to participate fully in the day's program need to be kept at home. We will call you if illness or injury occurs while your child(ren) is at school. If your child has a fever of 100.4 or higher, 2 episodes of diarrhea, or 1 episode of vomiting you will be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child within one hour. Please be mindful that germs spread quickly in a school environment. Help us keep our children and teachers healthy!

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students attending Highland Day School must submit a TN Department of Health / Certificate of immunization form documenting all required vaccinations and a current physical. *Exemptions are not accepted for philosophical, religious, or medical reasons.* Students experiencing homelessness and children in foster care may receive a grace period not to exceed 60 calendar days to obtain these records.

CAR SEATS

Student safety is top priority at HDS. Our staff is required to report to DHS if a student is not buckled in a proper car seat upon arrival or pick up at school. HDS has car seats that can be loaned in the event a family needs one. If your family cannot afford a car seat, please reach out to HDS administrative staff for assistance.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

At Highland Day School students are taught that they have the opportunity to make choices in their life and that there are consequences, both positive and negative, to those choices. Students are encouraged to think about the choices they have made.

Reasons that a student may be sent to the office include but are not limited to: kicking, hitting, biting, verbally or physically assaulting staff, self or others.

BITING

After repeated biting encounters and depending on the ages and circumstances involved, the following actions may include:

- Discussing a better solution with all children involved
- Separation of involved children
- Administrative Shadow
- Maintain a log to track the behavior
- Relocation of friend
- Call a parent to pick up the biting child (no more than two bites per day)
- Conference with parents to discuss the child's actions and search for additional resources.

Just as any behavior issue regarding a child is confidential, the name of the child that has bitten is also confidential, in order to ensure the privacy of the child and the family. Children who bite two times in the same day may be sent home for the day. Children who continue to bite after all efforts of school and family will be dismissed.

SUSPENSION / DISMISSAL

In situations where a child or other children are at risk, if a negative environment is created, or if we feel we are unable to meet the needs of a child, we will conference with the parents about any possible factors leading to the negative behavior.

Suspension or dismissal may be necessary if any of the following occur:

- A child requiring continued one on one attention
- A child using inappropriate language
- A child being disrespectful or verbally abusive to teachers
- A child whose behavior causes injury to others
- A single incident of severe misbehavior may result in dismissal
- Failure to provide HDS with current certificate of immunization

DISMISSAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER

HDS follows Shelby County Schools for inclement weather closings. If Shelby County Schools are closed or dismiss early for poor road conditions, we will be closed also. Closing information will also be posted on the Playground App. Highland Day School reserves the right to deviate from this when necessary.

EMERGENCY PLAN

HDS has specific procedures in place to protect children in an emergency. This plan is available in the office and all classrooms for parent review upon request.

CLOTHING

Please dress your child(ren) in comfortable clothes with appropriate shoes. Do not send your child(ren) to school in flip-flops, open-toe sandals, or in hard boots. Remember, we will get messy. We also ask that you send a change of clothing (seasonally and size appropriate) in case of an accident. This applies for all classes. We will return the clothes at the end of the school year. Please label all of your child's belongings. Jackets, sweaters, hats, gloves, etc. should have your child(ren's) name on them as well.

POSSESSIONS

Guns, ropes, knives and other toys which encourage rough and violent play are to be left at home. Comfort toys – stuffed toys, blankets, and so forth, may be brought if needed. Please make sure that they are labeled with your child's name, and make sure the teacher is informed if they are to go home daily. Please provide 2 pacifiers labeled with your child's name, if needed.

SNACKS

Mid-morning snacks are brought in by the children for the toddlers, 2-, 3- and 4-year-old classes. Please check the calendar provided by the teacher for your child's assigned day. Mid-morning snacks will be provided for all other classes. Sometimes our snacks coincide with units of study. If your child has any allergic reactions to certain foods, please inform your child's teacher and office administration as well as completing this information of all HDS paperwork.

LUNCHES

Lunches should be a well-balanced meal in a labeled lunch box with an ice pack for perishable foods. Student's are to bring a water cup labeled with their name DAILY. Please no juice. We are not able to warm items, so please send warm foods in a thermos. Please label all containers.

BIRTHDAYS

A child may celebrate a birthday, preferably in the morning during snack time, with his/her friends. If you would like to bring a special treat, please let your teacher know in advance. If you would like to send party invitations to be distributed at school, please make sure one is included for every child in the class or reach out to families via classroom registry.

VISITATION AND CONFERENCES

You are always welcome to observe the classrooms. Since the teacher's first responsibility is to the children, please schedule a conference. Parents or teachers may request conferences at any time. Parents of 4-year-olds will have a scheduled conference with their teachers in January to help with decisions for kindergarten programs.

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS POLICY

We believe that HDS has the best teachers anywhere! We exceed licensure requirements for education and experience. All staff are trained in CPR and/or First Aid at our annual August in-service bi-annually. If you would like more information about our staff credentials, please reach out to office administration.

POTTY TRAINING

We will be glad to partner with you in the potty-training process. We will provide you with a Toilet Training agreement before we start this process at school. Three year-old students are required to be fully potty trained before attending the 3 year-old program.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual and class pictures take place in the fall. These pictures are typically contracted through a local photographer with purchase being optional.

MEDIA

At the start of the school year, we will ask permission to post your child's picture. HDS at times utilizes social media as well as the Playground app.

Movies are used on occasion to enhance learning and aid transitions at HDS. All movies available in the HDS library have been previewed to ensure they are developmentally appropriate and have no violent or adult content. You are

welcome to explore our movie library anytime. Teachers are to inform parents of the types of shows/movies being shown outside of the HDS library.

Computers and iPads are also used to enhance learning for students at HDS. All computers have a hardware filter (SonicWall) and a software filter (Vipreware) to ensure internet safety.

TRANSLATOR

If a family may need a translator or interpreter, HDS will provide such for parents and/or provide written communication that can be easily translated for families to understand.

COMMUNICATION

The classroom teacher is your primary communicator. Please reach out via the Playground app. Please know that our first priority is teaching so there may be some delay in response, but they will get back with you as soon as possible.

The school publishes a monthly newsletter.

Please read postings found around the front desk for important information.

The HDS phone number is 901-312-4940. If we are unable to answer immediately, there is a voicemail option that is checked routinely. All office administrators are available via Playground messenger.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS PARTNER TOGETHER

Please communicate via playground. Information will be sent home in your child's folder and/or on Playground

TRANSITIONING PLAN

Students transitioning to the next age group are provided opportunities to meet their teacher and visit their new play spaces. Parents will be sent the classroom's schedule and be made aware of any stipulations or special classroom rules (ie. Potty training, allergy related situations, etc.). Parents are provided opportunities to meet their child's teacher and discuss any concerns or pertinent information related to their child.

VISION SCREENINGS

We will provide this service when available. This service is optional but highly recommended. Vision screenings will be provided for 2, 3, and 4-year-olds.

SPEECH SCREENINGS

Speech screenings are offered for a small fee each year for students ages 2 and older. We highly recommend all eligible students participate. This typically takes place in the fall semester.

ALLERGIES

Information about substances to which your child is allergic needs to be in writing on the Enrollment Form and Health History Form. Please report any changes or new information in writing. We will also need a Health Information Plan to be completed for any severe allergies and asthma. All HDS staff are trained to use an EpiPen. EpiPens are carried with teachers at all times.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Child Protective Services requires any individual or organization having knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect to report it to them or a law enforcement official. Abuse prevention materials will be distributed to families annually.

STATEMENT OF RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

Highland Day School does not and will not discriminate children on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

HDS IS A SMOKE AND VAPE FREE ENVIRONMENT

Gee, All Those Kids Seem to Do is Play

At Highland Day School our students learn through play. We value play. Children learn and develop:

- Cognitive skills—problem solving
- Physical abilities—reinforcing fine/gross motor
- New Vocabulary
- Social skills—playing together
- Literacy skills