

Hermitage ABC
Pre-K Center
Parent/Guardian Handbook
2018-19

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Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Yearly Calendar	4
Enrollment Requirements	5
Program Mission	6
Attendance	7
Arrival/Departure Procedures	7
Transportation	8
What Your Child Needs to Bring	8
Toilet Training	9
Behavior Guidance	9
Health and Safety	10
Parental Involvement	12
Curriculum and Learning	14
Daily Routines	14
Signature Page- Sign and Return	15

Welcome to Hermitage Pre-K Center!

We are excited to begin a partnership with your family as together we prepare your child for future success. **We believe that preschool should provide early childhood learning experiences that motivate and cultivate a love for learning, self, and others.**

Hermitage Pre-K Center is an Arkansas Better Chance, or ABC preschool program. The ABC preschool initiative strives to meet high quality standards in child development and learning through exploration and experiences.

This handbook provides program policies and practices that serve to establish a safe and developmentally appropriate environment. Please read it carefully.

Thank you for trusting our team at the Hermitage Pre-K Center. We look forward to a great partnership with you.

Please call, email, or come by if you have questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Jade Huitt, Director

(870) 463-8500

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Hermitage School District Calendar 2018-19

August 13th	First Day of School
September 3rd	Labor Day- No School
October 8th	Columbus Day - No School
October 22nd	Parent Teacher Conferences 2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
November 19th-23rd	Thanksgiving Break- No School
December 21st-January 4th	Christmas Break - No School
January 7th	First Day Back to School for Students
January 21st	Martin Luther King Jr. Day- No School
February 18th	President's Day - No School
February 19th	Parent-Teacher Conferences 2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
March 18th- 22rd	Spring Break- No School
April 19th	Good Friday- No School for students (<i>possible make-up day</i>)
May 23rd	Last Day of School

Enrollment Requirements

1. Child must turn 3 years of age before August 1st of the current school year.
2. Completed all forms
 - ABC Child Application (3 pages)
 - ABC Family Eligibility Application (2 pages)
 - Child Personal Data Sheet (2 pages)
 - ABC Well Child Screening Form (2 pages, doctor signature required)
 - Consent to Screen Form (1 page)
 - Home Language Survey (1 page)
 - Transportation Form (1 page)
3. Submitted all of the following documentation
 - Birth Certificate or Hospital Record --Search this website to order a birth certificate (<http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsservices/certificatesvitalrecords>)
 - Social Security Card (www.ssa.gov)
 - Updated Immunization Record (Bradley County Health Unit (870) 226-6990)
 - Proof of Earned Income: for one (1) month for each adult in the home.
 - One (1) of the following items can be used for proof of income:
 - 30 days current pay stubs
 - Income Tax Form
 - W2
 - Letter from your employer
 - A letter from your DHS caseworker
 - If unemployed:
 - One (1) of the following items can be used for proof of unemployment:
 - Notarized statement signed by the parent stating that there is no earned income.

Our Program Mission

Hermitage School District Mission

We are a district that is committed to learning for all in an environment that promotes a pathway to excellence while fostering a sense of community that celebrates our diversity.

Hermitage Preschool Mission

We are a preschool that is committed to early childhood learning for all in a safe and caring environment that provides experiences to develop a love for learning, self, and others.

School District and Preschool Core Beliefs/Values:

- **LEARNING FOR ALL**

We believe that students and staff must be lifelong learners utilizing technology, demonstrating innovative ideas, and acquiring the skills needed to succeed in careers and higher levels of education. *We believe cultivating lifelong learners begins in preschool through discovery and exploration opportunities that develop ideas and skills needed for success.*

- **ENVIRONMENT**

We value our staff and students and believe that all are entitled to a collaborative learning environment that is safe and clean, fun and engaging, and caring and respectful. *We value our students and staff and believe through modeling preschool builds the foundation for successful collaboration, safety, engagement, care, and respect.*

- **EXCELLENCE**

We expect the *HERMIT PRIDE* to be evident in individuals, academics and extracurricular activities, with everyone striving for excellence and being held accountable for their actions. *We expect the preschool to establish the HERMIT PRIDE by fostering perseverance and intrinsic motivation throughout each student's initial school experiences.*

- **COMMUNITY**

We honor the relationships and partnerships, particularly with our families and community, necessary to ensure that our students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

- **DIVERSITY**

We celebrate the people and cultures represented in our schools and seek to explore teaching methods that are engaging, while addressing different learning styles and interests.

Separation of Church and State

The Establishment Clause in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits public aid for religious worship or instruction. Court decisions interpreting the Establishment Clause make it clear that ABC materials must be neutral with respect to religion, and that no religious activity may occur during the ABC day.

"To ensure that no religious activity is paid or subsidized by public funds or occurs in any manner suggesting governmental endorsement of any religion or message:

- a. ABC funds must be used exclusively to support allowable ABC program costs incurred to provide non-religious instruction and activities during the ABC day; and
- b. No religious activity may occur during any ABC day regardless of the source of funds used to support the activity."

Attendance

Developing a school routine early in your child's life establishes the importance of learning.

Hours 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Your child is expected to attend for the full day. Developing a school routine early in your child's life establishes the importance of learning. Early arrival before 7:30 a.m. puts your child in danger of not being supervised. Please help us alleviate anxiousness from your child and maintain staff schedules by picking up your child on time.

Absences

If your child must be absent from school, please call to let us know. Illness and family emergencies arise from time to time. However, if your child is absent more than 10 days during the school semester, a parent conference may be required.

Tardiness

The ABC program day begins at 8:00 a.m.

Arrival and Departure Help us keep your child safe by following the procedures.

Children in the ABC program must be signed into and out of the program by a parent/guardian. Or other authorized adult. **Arrival:** Park in the parking lot in front of the gymnasium. Walk your child to his or her classroom and sign your name and time on the sign-in sheet. Children who ride the bus will be walked to class by older students who volunteer. **Departure:** When picking up your child you are required to sign him or her out on the sign-in/out form in the classroom. Children who ride the bus home will be loaded on the bus by a staff member. Bus drivers have a copy of emergency contact information for each child riding the bus.

Release of Children

A parent/guardian or authorized adult must accompany children into and out of the center at all times. No child will be released to persons not authorized by a parent/guardian. Staff shall call parents for authorization to release a child, but a picture ID will be required if the person is not familiar. We welcome parents/guardians to join your child in learning any time. Parents shall not be denied access to their child at any time during hours of operation.

However, **after 8:15 and prior to 3:00 p.m. the preschool center doors will be locked.** Parents and Guardians will be required to contact the preschool to have a staff member unlock the doors.

Weather Related Closings

Hermitage Pre-K Center adheres to the Hermitage Public School District's policy and procedures for weather related closings. Closings will be communicated through news stations, radio, and school alert system.

Transportation

Buses

Our program provides bus transportation through Hermitage Public School. Children are expected to maintain appropriate behavior during bus rides. If a child's behavior on a bus causes safety concerns for the child, other children, or bus driver, the child may lose bus transportation privileges.

Transportation Changes

Please contact the school by 2:00 p.m. if your child will need a change in transportation for the day. If your child will be riding a bus, please give the address for drop off.

What to bring to Preschool

- A backpack or tote is recommended, but **not required**. All bags will be checked by staff upon arrival to eliminate possible hazards.
- A change of clothes...Please send a ziplock bag with an extra shirt, pair of pants, underwear, and socks in case of accidents or spills during the school day. The clothes will stay at school until needed.

A shirt



pants



socks



under pants



How to dress:

Our program promotes active, creative play. For your child to be able to fully participate, please consider the following guidelines:

- Clothing that your child can easily manage for toileting
 - Can your child fasten and unfasten buttons, zippers, snaps, buckles?
 - NO BELTS... Belts are not allowed by our state licensing rules due to the hazards they can cause.
- Clothing that is inexpensive, durable, and washable so that soiling, damaging, or losing will not cause great concern. Your child will run, jump, flip, paint, roll, learn to use scissors...
- Sturdy, protective shoes. Flip flops, sandals, and open toed shoes can be hazardous.
- Weather appropriate clothing. We play outdoors at least 60 minutes of our day.

Please label jackets, coats, hats, gloves, etc. with your child's name.

Toys from home are not permitted. We have materials and resources for children to play, create, and explore.

Toilet Training

Children will not be dismissed from the ABC program due to a lack of toilet training skills. ABC programs do not refuse to admit a child because of toilet training issues if the child meets all other age and income eligibility requirements. Staff will assist children not yet toilet-trained with cooperation and enthusiasm. Parents and guardians will be included in any plan so it may be a team effort and reinforced at both home and school.

Behavior Guidance Our goal is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. Our program is designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences and to build trusting, respectful relationships. A well-planned schedule, classroom arrangement, routines, and curriculum, along with well-trained staff, significantly reduces instances of inappropriate behavior. However, when children do make mistakes in behavior, we use the following guidance techniques.

- Tell the child what he/she CAN do.
- Give choices whenever possible.
- Support children in learning to solve their own problems and work out conflicts.
- Redirect a child to another activity.
- Reinforce appropriate behaviors with praise and encouragement.
- Help children learn how to play with friends.
- If a child does not respond to a verbal command which instructs the child as to how he or she is supposed to behave, the child will briefly separated from the group or activity. The child will be supervised during this brief "time out". *Time out will not exceed one minute per year of the child's age.*
- Physical punishment and threats are never used by our staff.

Limits of Behavior

- You may not hurt others.
- You may not hurt yourself.
- You may not hurt toys or equipment.

Pattern of Inappropriate Behavior- When a pattern of inappropriate behavior emerges, parents are required to meet with our staff to develop a plan. The goal will be to work together to find a solution to the problem behavior and resolve the difficulty. If outside professional consultation or evaluation is necessary, the center director will invite an appropriate consultant to join the parent-staff partnership.

- If the child is not cooperative and we are unable to keep them and/or the other students safe, they will be sent home for the day.
- If the child harms another student or teacher, he/she will be sent home for the day.
- If the child brings weapons to school, he/she will be sent home for the day and a parent/teacher conference will be required.

If inappropriate behavior continues, we reserve the right to exit the child from the program.

Health and Safety

For the good of all children and the teachers, please keep your child at home if he/she is ill.

If symptoms appear during the day, we will call you to pick up your child immediately.

If your child is exposed to a contagious illness, we will send a notice home with your child or contact you by phone or e-mail. Please let us know if your child has been exposed to a disease away from school so that we can watch for symptoms. State health regulations require that children with the following symptoms be excluded from child care.

- Fever over 101 degrees/oral in a child who also has pain, behavior changes, or other symptoms of illness.
- Diarrhea, defined as watery/runny stools, if frequency exceeds 2 or more stools about normal for that child and is not related to a change in diet or medication. Or if diarrhea is causing soiled clothing.
- Vomiting illness (2 or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours)
- Abdominal pain which last more than 2 hours.
- Mouth sores or drooling
- Rash with fever or behavior change
- Conjunctivitis or "pink eye"
- Pediculosis (head lice), until after first treatment
- Active tuberculosis, until doctor states that the child is receiving appropriate therapy
- Impetigo, until treatment started
- Strep Throat, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started
- Chicken Pox, until all lesions have crusted
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Pertussis (whooping Cough); until 5 days of antibiotic treatment
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of gland swelling
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Hepatitis A, until 1 week after onset of illness or as directed by the health department

Injuries

1. Staff will give any injury immediate attention.
2. Parents/Guardians will be notified.
3. Licensing Unit will be notified within one day of injuries requiring attention of medical personnel.

Contagious Illness

Parents/Guardians will be notified as soon as possible if any child has a contagious illness.

Medication *Request a Medication form from preschool staff.*

The staff shall administer medication only with a signed parental permission which includes:

- Date
- Type
- Drug name
- Time
- Dosage
- Length of time to give medication
- Reason for giving medication

The medication shall:

- Be in the original container
- Child resistant cap
- Not have expired
- Labeled with the child's name

Staff may provide ibuprofen and acetaminophen, if parental permission has been granted. Staff shall follow the dosage amounts on the medicine container.

Special Health Needs

Children with special health needs such as asthma, allergies, seizures, diabetes, etc. who require scheduled daily medications or medications to be given on an emergent basis shall have a CARE Plan. CARE Plans will be created by parents/guardian and Director and shall have:

- Clearly stated parameters, directions, and symptoms for giving the medications.
- CARE Plans shall be updated as needed, but at least yearly.

Food Allergies/ Special Dietary Needs

Notify your child's classroom teacher immediately if your child has food allergies or special dietary needs. **Documentation from the doctor will be needed to provide appropriately for special dietary and allergy needs.* CARE Plans will be created to ensure safety and communicate appropriate procedures for emergencies. Menu items with equivalent nutritional value will be substituted for allergy-causing foods.

Immunizations

Within 15 days of enrollment of a child, the child care facility shall verify that the child has been immunized as required by the AR Department of Health and Human Services or the child cannot remain in care.

Incidents and Accidents

If a child is involved in any incident or accident during the school day, a report will be completed by the staff member present and a copy will be sent home to the parent/guardian on the day of the occurrence.

Sunscreen

Children shall be protected from overexposure to the sun. Sunscreen shall be used if needed and as directed by the parent. Permission to apply sunscreen is given or not given upon enrollment on the multiple verification form.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures are practiced monthly for fire and severe weather. Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom. Each classroom has an emergency preparedness pack along with a list of contact information and medical information for each child. We strive to reduce anxiety by being prepared and practicing.

Abuse or Neglect Reporting

All preschool staff are required to report suspected child abuse/maltreatment. Staff are trained to recognize indicators of possible abuse/maltreatment. Reports are confidential and considered allegations until an investigation is completed. The phone number for the Child Abuse Hotline is posted in each classroom and on the parent information board.

Parental Involvement

Family is the first school for young children, and parents are powerful models.

We strive to create a true partnership with families. Parents/Guardians are welcome to join us at school any time. We will offer several opportunities throughout the school year for you to join us. Help us to be the best preschool we can be by asking questions, voicing concerns, and suggesting ideas. Opportunities for Involvement:

- Open House
- Parent/Teacher conferences- 2 times a year
- Field Trip
- Thanksgiving Lunch
- Christmas Program
- AR Children's Week Parent Picnic
- End of Year Celebration
- Advisory Committee
- Parent/Guardian Surveys

Pictures and Video recordings

Photos and video recordings shall not be made of any child without written permission from parent/guardian. Photos and video recordings shall not be placed on social media or any website without written permission from parent/guardian.

Permission for photos and videos is given at the beginning of the school year when signing the Multiple Verification form.

Confidentiality

All information about your child and family are considered confidential. Information is only given to staff on a need to know basis.

How we communicate

1. **Arrival and Departure-** Inform or ask questions of our staff during arrival and departure. Keep in mind that what you say during this time may be heard by other parents or staff.
2. **Weekly Folder-** Every Tuesday your child will bring home a folder containing activities and announcements from school. Please return the folders to school the following day.
3. **Classroom Newsletters-** Each teacher will send home a newsletter containing information about upcoming events and learning in the classroom.
4. **Text Message Alert System-** During open house you will have the opportunity to sign up to receive text message notification through the school way app.
5. **Conferences-** If you have questions or concerns please contact your child's teacher or the director to set up a time to meet.
6. **Email-** Below are our email addresses.
 - a. Vicki Rouse– vicki.rouse@hermitageschools.org
 - b. Marisa Gardner– marisa.gardner@hermitageschools.org
 - c. Kaylee Jo Mann- kaylee.mann@hermitageschools.org
 - d. Jade Huitt– jade.huitt@hermitageschools.org
7. **Phone-** (870) 463-2246, ext. 231
8. **Hermitage School District Website:** www.hermitageschools.org

Language Services

An interpreter for spanish speaking parents/guardians is available upon request. If you would like an interpreter during parent-teacher conferences or other meetings, contact your child's classroom teacher or the director.

Licensing Compliance

The AR Department of Health and Human Services evaluates our facility twice a year for compliance. The results of these audits are available upon request for the previous three years.

Children may be subject to interviews by licensing staff, child maltreatment investigators, and/or law enforcement officials for the purpose of determining licensing compliance or for investigative purposes. Child Interviews do not require parental notice or consent.

Curriculum and Learning

You received a copy of the *Kindergarten Readiness skills* upon enrollment. In addition to these skills, children in ABC Preschools learn the *AR Early Childhood Standards*. These standards may be found on the AR Department of Education's website. Our preschool currently uses Creative Curriculum to guide learning. Preschool is not like a traditional classroom. Since children learn through play, exploration, and inquiry our classrooms are set up with a variety of centers and materials to foster learning. During parent-teacher conferences teachers will discuss your child's progress of learning.

We also partner with the the Southeast Educational Cooperative to assess children 2 times a year and provide hearing and vision screenings. If a screening indicates a child may need further evaluation, parents/guardians will be notified.

Staff

Classroom teachers are licensed teachers or have a bachelor degree and meet qualifications for Early Childhood Education. Paraprofessionals have Child Development Associate credentials. All staff receive 30 hours of child development related professional training yearly. We maintain a ratio of 1 adult for every 10 children in our center. All staff have background checks and criminal records checks as required by law.

Daily Activities

Schedule

Each classroom will post and send home a schedule of daily routines and activities.

Outdoor Play

Children are required to have at least one hour of outdoor play daily in suitable weather. Staff will consider the following environmental factors to determine if outside play is suitable:

- Heat index is forecast to be ninety (90) degrees Fahrenheit or above, outdoor play shall be scheduled for early morning hours or reduce the length of time outside.
- Shaded areas and water are accessible during outdoor play.
- During winter months outdoor play will be reduced or suspended depending on the temperature and other weather conditions.
- Children will utilize the indoor play area when weather is not suitable for outdoor play.

Nutrition

Children are served breakfast, lunch, and a p.m. snack daily. All meals and snacks meet current U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines. Menus will be sent home in the Tuesday Communication folders monthly. All food brought from outside sources shall come from a Health Department approved kitchen. Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs will be addressed through a health CARE plan. Please notify the preschool director or classroom teachers immediately if your child has special food and dietary needs.

Handbook Signature Page

I, _____, (parent/guardian) of
 _____, (child's name) have received, read,
 and understand the Hermitage Pre-K Center Parent Handbook for
 2018-19.

Guardian 1 signature _____ date _____

Guardian 2 signature _____ date _____