

His House
Preschool & Learning Center



Curriculum Handbook

(Revised: 1/22/16)



HIS HOUSE PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR: Amy Horn
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR of FINANCE & ENROLLMENT: Marsha Leingang
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR of PROGRAM OPERATIONS: Holli Klotz

479-636-7165

hishouse@rogersfirst.com

His House Preschool is a Ministry of
ROGERS FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
4911 W. Pleasant Grove Road, Rogers, Arkansas 72758
www.rogersfirst.com/hishouse

His House Curriculum Handbook

Table of Contents

1. Educational Philosophy
2. Classroom Placement
3. Infant Classroom
4. Toddler Classroom
5. Two Year Old Classroom
6. Pre-K 3 Classroom
7. Pre-K 4 Classroom
8. Bridge Classroom
9. Learning Centers
10. Learning Centers in the Classroom
11. His House Chapel
12. Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care
13. Arkansas Early Childhood Framework
14. Child Assessments
15. Better Beginnings
16. Learning Curriculum
17. Portfolios

I. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

At His House Preschool and Learning Center, we value...

- A Christ centered learning environment
- Teaching children to have a biblical world view
- Each child, their individual needs, and learning style
- Children's thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- Family involvement in their child's early educational experience
- A positive early education experience for each child

At His House Preschool and Learning Center, we believe that children learn best...

- Through play
- Using authentic materials and through authentic learning experiences
- When they are actively engaged in the learning process
- By asking questions
- Experiencing the natural world
- Engaging in conversations with teachers and peers

At His House Preschool and Learning Center, we will strive to...

- Teach your child to early know and love the Lord
- Provide a safe and secure environment where each child knows they are loved and cared for by God and our staff members
- Provide authentic learning experiences that promote higher order thinking skills and creativity
- Guide your children in growth through age-appropriate activities
- Meet each child at their level and provide learning experiences that will enhance their growth and development in all areas of their life
- Partner with parents and families of children in our care to provide the best possible experience for each child
- Build each child's confidence, self-esteem, academic curiosity, and belief in God's love for them

2. CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

All of the classrooms at His House are designed with ratios that meet and exceed state licensing regulations. His House is a School Year Program and our children remain in the same classroom, with the same teachers and classmates, from August through May. We follow the August 1 cut-off date in placing children in the appropriate classroom, starting at age 2 (i.e. if a child is 2 years of age by August 1 they will be in our 2 year old classroom).

3. INFANT CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 10 children to 2 teachers and a part-time teacher assistant, our infant classroom is for children aged 6 weeks to 18 months. Baby's first year is an exciting time with lots of exploration and discovery. Engaging infants in interactive experiences that involve sensory, motor, and social explorations build brain connections. Children are actively engaged and stimulated through social interactions- talking, playing, moving, singing, reading, and signing. Activities are integrated across all domains of infant development- physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. They will participate in activities that encourage their emerging motor development, language and communication development, and social development. They also help to develop a wide variety of skills including- language acquisition, sense of self, sensory awareness, motor skills, visual tracking, self-help skills, and much more. Most of all, they will be cared for in a loving, safe environment where they are given every opportunity to thrive.

4. TODDLER CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 10 children to 2 teachers and a part-time teacher assistant, our toddler classroom is for children aged 18 months to 24 months. The children in this classroom learn manners, how to work with others, and basic communication and language skills. Our toddlers learn through active play, manipulation, and exploration of the world around them. Teachers provide authentic materials and active, hands-on learning experiences creating secure connections and motivating exploration. The activities are integrated throughout the domains of toddler development- physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. This classroom follows a predictable schedule, which allows room for flexibility, but provides the children with structure throughout their day.

5. TWO YEAR OLD CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 12 children to 2 teachers, our two year old classroom is for children who have reached 24 months of age on or before August 1. This class focuses on the development of motor, social, communication, and cognitive skills. The children participate in activities that encourage participation in every major area of learning- personal and social development, letter and number recognition, and motor skills development. Authentic learning experiences are provided throughout the day to encourage children's creativity and engage them in activities that help them learn shapes, colors, numbers, and letters, as well as manners and Bible truths. The children learn through the use of ideas, games, songs, and activities within learning centers, whole group, small group, and one-on-one instruction. Our goal is to instill a love of learning at an early age.

6. PRE-K 3 CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 12 children to 2 teachers, this class is the beginning of our Pre- Kindergarten program. This class is for children who have turned 3 on or before August 1. In our Pre-K 3 classroom, children are engaged in authentic learning experience through large group, small group, and one-on-one instruction and interaction. Early handwriting skills and age-appropriate phonemic awareness activities are taught through songs, visuals, and hands-on experiences to keep your child engaged in their learning. Key concepts are solidified using math manipulatives, science experiments, and periodic review. Activities focus on letter and number recognition, science, social studies, and math concepts, and aid in social, cognitive, and language development. Teachers assess the children throughout the day to document their learning throughout different activities within learning centers and other instructional times. The children follow a schedule that provides them with routine and structure throughout the day. Potty training is required upon entry to our Pre-K 3 program.

7. PRE-K 4 CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 15 children to 2 teachers, our 4 year old Pre-Kindergarten program is for children who have turned 4 years of age on or before August 1 and will be entering kindergarten the following school year. Our Pre-K 4 classrooms follow a schedule that is very similar to what they will encounter in a kindergarten classroom, so that we can best prepare them to make the transition the following year. Children will participate in activities that promote kindergarten readiness skills. They will learn through many different authentic experiences within large group, small group, and one-on-one instruction. Pre-K 4 students will participate in hands-on activities within learning centers, while teachers guide their learning in each of the domains of learning- social and emotional development, creative and aesthetic learning, cognitive and intellectual learning, physical development, and language. Children will be assessed throughout the day and teachers will document their learning to use for planning activities and learning experiences for the children. When a child completes our Pre-K 4 program, they should be ready to make that transition into kindergarten.

8. BRIDGE CLASSROOM

Designed with a ratio of 12 children to 2 teachers, our Bridge program is available to children who will turn 5 years of age by December 1 and will be entering the kindergarten the following school year. Our Bridge Class uses an adapted kindergarten curriculum that promotes literacy, math, language, and social skills. The structure of this classroom models the daily activities that a child will experience in kindergarten. Children are given opportunities to learn through large and small group activities, as well as opportunities for one-on-one instruction with the classroom teachers. All children will be regularly assessed to monitor progress towards achieving educational goals. When a child completes our Bridge program, they should be ready to make that transition into kindergarten.

9. LEARNING CENTERS

Young children are active learners who touch, feel, experiment, and create. They are interested in the world in which they live; learning centers are a representation of their world. In centers, children can try out many ideas and rearrange happenings to fit their level of understanding. In this environment, they can build their confidence and begin to believe that they are capable learners. The design of an early childhood classroom environment nurtures the total development of young children. Classroom activities provide opportunities for children to participate individually, in teams, and in small groups. Both teacher- and child-directed activities are included for use throughout the day. Learning centers are a special component, allowing children to participate in self-directed play activities. Alternating teacher- and child-directed activities provides variation while helping children learn to control their own behavior. Learning centers, by the nature of their design, allow each child to work at his or her individual developmental level. As children participate in the centers together, they learn from each other in many ways. They share vocabulary and are excited about learning a new word that a friend used. They ask questions when a child talks about something they don't understand. Through these interactions, they learn to make changes and adjustments in their activities, as they begin to cooperate during center play.

When working in learning centers, young children:

- Make choices, developing confidence in their problem-solving abilities
- Expand their oral language, combining words with their activity
- Enhance their creative abilities, determining the direction of their play and selecting materials
- Develop social skills as they work with others
- Understand others as they try out roles and participate in related play sequences
- Develop responsibility as they care for and build with the materials they are using
- Learn how to make plans and follow through to completion, developing persistence on a task
- Move into more advanced play as they develop roles, sequencing, and working cooperatively with others in the episodes
- Develop longer attention spans as they increase the length of time they work in centers and participate in activities that interest them
- Develop their understanding of symbols as they use concrete items in their play and move to imaginative representations
- Enhance their self-image as they learn that they can influence their world while participating in the center
- Experience integrated learning as they use all areas of the curriculum in meaningful ways

10. LEARNING CENTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Block Center

Block play enhances all areas of a child's development, including the physical, social, and intellectual domains. When children are working in the Block Center, they are enhancing their fine and gross motor skills. They develop social skills as they interact with each other to build and put together. The Block Center includes many types of building materials for children to use in their constructions and combinations. The design of this center encourages children to be active builders as they think about their constructions, discuss possibilities, and dramatize the functions of their projects. Because the Block Center provides opened-ended materials with many possibilities, it is a wonderful place for children of differing developmental levels and abilities. Here, they will be able to build at their own levels and experience success at construction.

Fine Motor Center

Young children are in a period of rapid development in many areas. In motor development, there are major changes in large or gross movement, walking, running, and throwing. However, less visible changes occur as young children gain skills in using their small motor abilities. The fine motor center provides children with activities and materials that encourage the development of eye-hand coordination- using the fingers and eyes together to manipulate objects. The materials in this center help children practice the skills required to handle or manipulate small objects with their fingers, especially the fingers and thumb working together. The open-ended, challenging experiences provide opportunities for children to experiment, practice, and extend their small motor coordination. They will increasingly refine their skills as they use them when dressing, drawing, cutting, writing, and lacing.

Art Center

Young children are very creative and enjoy using art materials to express their ideas. The art center provides appropriate materials that interest children and allow them to express themselves through their creations. Art materials are purposefully selected that children can handle well, matching their ages and abilities. Art materials are used by children to scribble, draw, paint, manipulate play-dough, and glue materials to create visual presentations. By experimenting with different media, children can begin to understand both their world and how to use the tools in their world to communicate. Children are able to create individual expressions by using art materials in their own creative way.

Reading Center

In the reading center, wide selections of books are accessible to the children. In this center children are able to practice reading to their friends, use props to act out stories, and retell familiar stories. Children are able to become familiar with the concepts of print and learn how to properly use books in a comfortable and secure environment. The design of the reading center draws children to the area and captures their interest in books and related materials. Soft pillows, stuffed toys, and area rugs make the space warm and inviting. The children will be taught that the reading center is a special place in the classroom for enjoying books and stories.

Music and Movement

Music is an essential element in the development of the "whole child" and is an integral part of an early childhood classroom. The Music and Movement Center provides a meaningful way for young children to develop an interest in music as they select instruments, recordings, and activities. The children are provided with musical materials, musical toys, and musical instruments that children can use to make or listen to music. There are various types of music used with children- classical, vocal and instrumental, children's songs, lullabies, jazz, lively or quiet. The music center encourages children to be creative through musical activities. In this center, young children are musicians, composing and often sharing their music with others.

Dramatic Play

In the dramatic play center, children engage in a highly productive language activity. This can include manipulating puppets, reading plays, and role-playing. Dramatic play can take place in any corner of the room that can be transformed. The dramatic play center has organized materials with props that represent what children experience in everyday life. The dramatic play center can also be transformed to extend children's learning by providing authentic materials they can use to role play and imitate what they are learning. One key area of a dramatic play center is Home Living. This is an essential element in an early childhood classroom. This area is the perfect transition from home to school. Young children are familiar with the roles and materials available. They can be adults, children, or the family's crying baby as they dramatize familiar roles. In this safe environment, children can act out their ideas and experiment with props. Often, children who are unsure about classroom happenings will return to the predictable environment of the home living center to build their self-confidence.

Nature and Science

Young children are curious about the things in their world. In the Nature and Science Center, children are encouraged to explore as they become scientists, learning about materials they have seen, or exploring new items that capture their interest. This area allows children to examine things closely, compare and contrast, and draw conclusions about their observations. Children are given opportunities to experience the natural world daily, either indoors or outdoors. The children will have daily experiences with living plants and/or animals. Everyday events are used as a basis for learning about nature and science. Children are encouraged to bring in natural things to share with others or add to collections.

Math and Number

In the math and number center, children are given many developmentally appropriate materials to promote math and number learning. Children will work on counting, measuring, comparing quantities, recognizing shapes, and becoming familiar with written numbers. Math and number activities can be incorporated within many different centers, as well as stand-alone math activities.

II. HIS HOUSE CHAPEL

His House Chapel is done on the first Tuesday and third Wednesday of each month. Our chapel time will focus on our His House Character Words. The character words that we will be using are the Fruits of the Spirit. Each month, in each classroom, children will do activities through Bible Stories as they learn about the specific character word. Each word has a memory verse to go along with it. During our monthly chapel time, one or two children from each classroom will receive a special His Kid in Action award for showing that character word in the classroom. Listed are the Character Words and information about what we will be teaching.

Love: A feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affections for someone such as a parent, family member, friend, and God. I Corinthians 13:4 and Galatians 5:22-23.

Joy: The emotion of great delight or happiness. Psalm 28:7 and I Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Peace: The world's view of peace includes an end to conflict, peace with yourself, or complete relaxation. But, God's peace is greater than anything the world can offer. We have perfect peace that can only come from God. John 14:27

Patience: Calmly putting up with pain or trouble without getting upset or angry. Revelations 14:12 and Galatians 5:22-23.

Kindness: Being friendly, having a tender heart, and being compassionate. Luke 6:31 and Ephesians 4:32.

Goodness: Making good choices, but also doing good things for others. Galatians 6:9 and Galatians 5:22-23.

Faithfulness: Being true to one's word or promises; being reliable or trusted. God will never withdraw His love or break His promises, He is faithful. Psalm 33:4 and Psalm 17:17.

Gentleness: Speaking to others with sensitivity, tolerance, and compassion, playing with others carefully, without causing harm, and treating belongings with respect. Ephesians 4:2 and 1 John 3:18.

Self-Control: Being in charge of your feelings, actions, and thoughts. Having self-control is making yourself do something that is not easy or doing something you really do not want to do. Proverbs 25:28 and Galatians 5:22-23.

12. ARKANSAS FRAMEWORK FOR INFANT AND TODDLER CARE

The Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care uses the six developmental domains as benchmarks for infant and toddler development. These areas are:

- To learn about themselves- Self-Concept Development
- To learn about their feelings- Emotional Development
- To learn about other people- Social Development
- To learn to communicate- Language Development
- To learn to move and do- Physical Development
- To learn to think- Cognitive Development

13. ARKANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD FRAMEWORK

The Arkansas Early Childhood Framework focuses on benchmarks within the five different areas of a preschool aged child's development. These areas are:

- Social/Emotional Development- act independently, experience success, and interact socially
- Creative/Aesthetic Learning- expression through art forms and activities
- Cognitive/Intellectual Learning- language arts, mathematics and science, and social studies
- Physical Development- health and nutrition, fine motor, and gross motor
- Language

14. CHILD ASSESSMENTS

All His House children will be given two forms of assessment during the school year. The Ages and Stages assessment is a developmental assessment. The Teaching Strategies GOLD is an assessment in support of learning. Assessment results will be shared with parents during conferences in October and February.

The Ages and Stages assessment is composed of 21 questionnaires designed to be completed by parents at any point between 1 month and 5 ½ years of age. These questionnaires can identify accurately infants or young children who are in need of further assessment to determine whether they are eligible for early intervention services.

The Teaching Strategies GOLD system aligns with the Arkansas State Frameworks for Early Childhood Education. These assessments are designed to evaluate children's progress in the areas of social-

emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. The assessment is based on observations, anecdotal records, and classroom performance.

15. BETTER BEGINNINGS

His House Preschool has earned a level 3 certification as an Arkansas Better Beginnings facility. Better Beginnings is a voluntary quality rating improvement system for licensed child care and education facilities in Arkansas. During the Better Beginnings certification process, our facility was assessed in five areas: Administration, Administrator and Staff Qualifications and Training, Curriculum, Learning Environment, and Child Health and Development.

All child care facilities in Arkansas are licensed by the Department of Human Services. Minimum licensing regulations primarily address health and safety issues. Better Beginnings however, looks beyond minimum standards, evaluating the elements of high quality child care and early education experiences.

Here are some of the things that you can expect as a result of our decision to meet the higher standards for Better Beginnings Level 3:

1. Increased qualifications and training for staff and administrators
2. Administrative practices that exceed national standards
3. Increased standards for classroom quality
4. Daily activities that address learning goals for children
5. A written curriculum plan

We invite you to visit www.arbetterbeginnings.com to read about all of the benefits of enrolling your child in an Arkansas Better Beginnings Facility.

16. LEARNING CURRICULUM

The His House curriculum meets and exceeds all state standards and provides a strong foundation for a child's early years, inspiring a love for learning. We encourage learning by providing an environment that promotes higher order thinking skills and creativity. His House uses a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum- The Creative Curriculum. This curriculum includes objectives for children's development and learning, through teaching in ways that promotes each child's optimal development. Our teachers are committed to providing strong family-school connections through regular communication and family participation in preschool activities.

With our Infants, Toddlers, and Two Year Olds, we are committed to:

- Building a trusting relationship with each child
- Providing individualized care
- Creating environments that support and encourage exploration
- Ensuring children's safety and health
- Developing partnerships with families
- Observing and documenting children's development in order to plan for each child and the group
- Recognizing the importance of social-emotional development
- Appreciating cultural, family, and individual differences
- Taking advantage of every opportunity to build a foundation for lifelong learning

With our Preschool Students, we are committed to:

- Child development and how children learn
- The individual strengths, needs, and interests of each child
- The cultures of each child's family and community
- Positive interactions and relationships with adults to provide a foundation for successful learning
- Ensuring social-emotional competence for school success
- Constructive, purposeful play to support essential learning
- Providing a physical environment for quality learning interactions
- Promoting teacher-family partnerships for each child's development and learning

17. PORTFOLIOS

Portfolio documentation of learning is kept for all His House students. Portfolios are collections or samplings of information relating to each child's developmental progress in the early childhood setting. The portfolio will contain a collection of representative work of children that illustrates their progress and achievement throughout the school year. The portfolio is a celebration of each child's unique abilities, achievements, and progress using authentic samples of their work, as well as anecdotal records and photographs. Anecdotal records are written, factual documentation of what the teacher sees and hears children do while alone, with other children, or with a teacher or other adult.