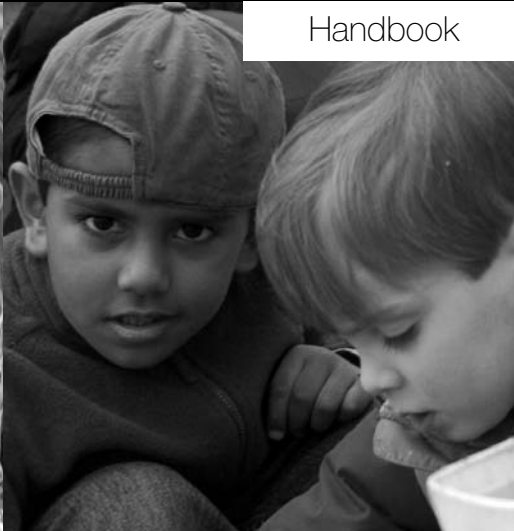




Harper College

Child Learning Center

LEARNING AND ENRICHMENT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



Handbook



Dear Parents:

We would like to introduce you to the Child Learning Center at Harper College.

The Child Learning Center is a component of the Early Childhood Education Program at Harper College. This program offers an associate of applied science degree to students preparing to teach in preschools or child care centers, or intending to become teacher aides in elementary schools or special education facilities.

The Child Learning Center is licensed by the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. The Center has received an award for Exemplary Practice from the Illinois State Board of Education.

The Center accomplishes two purposes: first, to provide an exemplary educational environment for young children; and second, to provide a model of teaching methodology for Early Childhood Education students.

The Center has two programs: Preschool and Extended Care Preschool. On the following pages you will find a full description of these programs and a list of established guidelines, procedures and requirements.

It is our intention to provide a warm, loving environment in which your child may feel secure, learn and grow.

We want to work with you to make this, your child's first school experience, a positive and exciting stepping-stone to the future. Please contact a staff member who will answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Child Learning Center
Supervisor and Staff

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**Child Learning Center
Preschool**

The Preschool program is open to the public. The children are registered for set sessions that coincide with Harper’s academic calendar.

Harper College Palatine Campus
Business and Social Science Center, I123
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, IL 60067
847.925.6262

Sessions: Monday / Wednesday / Friday 9 a.m.-Noon OR
1-4 p.m.
Tuesday / Thursday 9 a.m.-Noon OR
1-4 p.m.

Current Fees: Visit www.harpercollege.edu
OR call 847.925.6262.

Registration: \$50 registration fee is assessed annually. New children are accepted on a first-come, space-available basis. A \$25 nonrefundable one-time application fee is assessed for all new children. Enrollment and medical forms must be completed. A copy of the child’s birth certificate is required.

**Child Learning Center
Extended Care Preschool**

The Extended Care Preschool program is open to the public year-round from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Summer hours may vary based on enrollment needs.)

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Child Learning Center Program Philosophy

The curriculum is based on the philosophy that young children learn through active exploration in an environment which is rich in materials and opportunities to converse, socialize, work, play and negotiate with others.

The classrooms are planned to encourage curiosity, exploration and problem solving in an atmosphere of warmth, affection and respect for each child. Teachers plan experiences based on children's interests and appropriate educational concepts.

Children may work individually or collaboratively and may choose whether or not to participate in a project. Children are actively involved in experiences which include foundations of math, science, social studies, creative art, language arts, music, movement and dramatic play.

All interrelated aspects of the child's growth and development are considered—intellectual, social, emotional, physical and creative.

Activities, experiences and teacher-child interactions are constantly being measured and evaluated in terms of the following programs goals.

To provide an atmosphere which encourages within each child:

1. Development of a positive self-concept
2. Respect for the individuality and rights of others
3. Positive ways of interacting with peers and adults
4. Acceptance and expression of both positive and negative feelings
5. Growth of independence and self-sufficiency
6. Growth of creative thinking and problem solving
7. Cognitive growth and development
8. Emergent literacy development
9. Small and large muscle development

Child Learning Center Daily Activities

The classrooms are divided into interest centers and are designed to encourage children's learning through investigation, exploration and problem solving. In order to effectively motivate and stimulate children's curiosity, some interest centers remain constant while the use and presentation of others are varied. Most weeks, the curriculum revolves around a topic which offers children novel and concrete learning experiences and practice in physical and intellectual skills.

Group Time

The children meet to share ideas and experiences, sing songs, perform finger plays and discuss topics for the week.

Free Choice Time

Children are encouraged to explore the teacher-prepared environment. Each child is free to choose his/her own activities. Teachers function as facilitators, interacting with the children and extending their learning experience. The activities may include the following:

Math: teacher-made games and equipment which reinforce perceptual motor development such as matching, sequencing, patterning and classifying

Manipulative Center: small motor, hand-eye coordination activities such as puzzles, Lego® pegboards, building apparatus, math and alphabet games

Block Center: a variety of large and small blocks, wheel toys, model animals and people

Dramatic Play Center: fully-equipped child-sized kitchen, dress-up clothes, mirror, props for other role-playing situations

Science Center: magnifying glass, plants, animals, rocks, shells, seasonal nature items

Music Center: record player, records, tapes and compact disks, rhythm instruments

Language Center: story books, tape player with earphones, simple reference books, flannel board and story pieces, puppets, keyboard, alphabet and numeral board, comfortable pillows

Child Learning Center General Program Information

Eligibility

Children of Harper students, faculty, staff and children from the community.

Ages

Three through age five. Children must be completely potty trained (day and night; pull up diapers are not allowed). Enrolled children may complete the semester in which they turn six. Children aged two may attend Extended Care if fully potty trained. (See Acceptance and Discharge.)

Teaching Staff

Lead teachers in both programs have degrees in Early Childhood Education or related fields and experience teaching and supervising in the field of early childhood education.

Teacher Assistants

Teacher assistants are either graduates of or are enrolled in an Early Childhood Education program.

Student Teachers

Each semester students from the Early Childhood Education Program are assigned to assist the teaching staff.

Children With Special Needs

Children with special needs are accepted on an individual basis when reasonable accommodations can be made. Collaboration and consultation among the Harper staff, parents and the special education district are expected in order to fully meet the needs of children.

Dates in Session

The Preschool conforms to Harper's calendar and not the public school calendar. The College is in session for two 16-week semesters. A summer program is also offered. The Extended Care Preschool program is closed for the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving break (two days), winter break (two weeks), Martin Luther King's birthday (January 19), Lincoln's birthday (February 12), Reading Day (Friday before Easter), Memorial Day and July 4.

Observations

An observation room with a one-way viewing glass and sound system is adjacent to the preschool. Parents may observe at any time. Call 847.925.6262 to make arrangements.

Orientation

An orientation program is held each fall for one day during the week prior to the start of school. This is an informal visit to the classroom by the child accompanied by one or both parents. Children and parents are invited to acquaint themselves with the room and meet the teachers. An open house that consists of a parent information night is also held in the fall of each year.

Records

Each child enrolled is required to have on file: 1) registration form; 2) copy of birth certificate; 3) enrollment history form; 4) current medical form; 5) emergency information forms; 6) guidance and discipline policy and other forms which may be required by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Deposit

Preschool parents will be responsible for payment of a \$100 nonrefundable deposit to guarantee their child's place in the preschool program. The \$100 deposit will be applied to tuition. A \$25 nonrefundable one-time registration fee is assessed for all new children.

Outdoor Play

Children play outdoors every day unless weather is extremely severe. Children should wear appropriate outer clothing daily. Children too ill to be outside should not come to school.

Field Trips and Resource Visitors

Off-campus field trips are not taken, but on-campus sites of interest are occasionally visited. Children may walk to such places as the security police office, television studio, health service office and dental hygiene department. Resource people including firemen, pilots and musicians visit the classroom. Parents are encouraged to share their talents, occupations and hobbies with their child's class.

Parent Involvement

Parents are strongly urged to become part of their children's world through participation in school activities. Evening meetings are held to discuss subjects concerning curriculum, parenting of preschoolers. These meetings provide an opportunity to share ideas and concerns with other parents of children of similar age and stage of development.

Conferences may be arranged by either teacher or parents at anytime during the semester.

Conferences

Parental conferences are scheduled in the spring. However, conferences may be arranged at any time at the request of either the teacher or parents.

Newsletter

Monthly program newsletters will be distributed to all parents. They contain program policies and procedures reminders, current general information such as specific classroom activities and important event dates.

Payment of Fees

Fees are assessed weekly for the Extend Care Preschool program and monthly for the Preschool program. There are no refunds for sick days, holidays, vacations, emergency closings or staff development days. Fees may be made on the Harper College Child Learning Center on-line tuition payment system or directly to the CLC supervisor.

Emergency Situations

Up-to-date emergency information will be required of all parents, including parent's location, phone numbers and friends to call if parents cannot be reached. Parents and on-campus Health Service personnel will be contacted immediately in case of a child's illness or other emergency that may require medical attention.

Laboratory Procedures

The Child Learning Center is the laboratory component of the Early Childhood Education Program. As such, students enrolled in some courses in the program are assigned to observe or participate in the Center.

Research studies are occasionally conducted in the Center by professionals in various fields. Such studies are carefully screened by the Center staff. Parents will receive information as to the nature of any study to take place and parental permission for their child's participation will be requested.

Child Learning Center Policies and Procedures

School Closing

If the campus is closed due to inclement weather, announcements to that effect will be made on the website www.harpercollege.edu or by calling 847.925.6000 after 6 a.m. The announcements are also sent as an automated message when signed up for the Harper Emergency Alert system.

Drop-off and Pick-up

Preschool children may arrive no earlier than 10 minutes prior to their designated arrival time and must be picked up promptly.

Parents may park cars briefly in the drive next to the playground behind the Business and Social Science Center for the purpose of dropping off or picking up children.

Children may not, under any circumstances, be dropped off outside the building. Each child is to be accompanied to the classroom by a parent. Younger siblings should not be left unattended in the car while the parent is in the building.

No child will be released to anyone other than his/her own parent or designated car pool driver without the written consent of the parent.

No child will be released at any time to a parent or designated individual who is visibly impaired due to alcohol consumption, substance abuse, prescription drugs or other substances. In the event a parent or designated individual is impaired, the Center's staff will telephone individuals on the child's information sheet to arrange for the child to be released in his or her custody. The Center staff will immediately telephone the appropriate law-enforcement officials.

Dressing for School

Since creative art and outdoor activities are an integral part of the daily curriculum, washable clothing should be worn by the child.

During cold, snowy weather, the child should dress for outdoor play with a heavy jacket, hat, gloves and boots. All outer clothing should be marked with the child's name, and mittens should be fastened to sleeves. Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves. Parents can help by teaching children to put on and remove outer clothing in proper sequence.

Health Policy

Each child is required to have a complete physical examination and be up-to-date on all immunizations. A child who appears ill without obvious symptoms (for example, a child who is unusually pale or flushed, acting irritable, or is unusually tired or lethargic) or any child who exhibits obvious symptoms (such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea) should be kept home from the Center.

The Child Learning Center uses the Health Service department on campus as a consultant to advise the Center on children's health and wellness issues.

Ill Children

Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill at the Center. Parents should remove children from the Center after notification. Children exhibiting signs of illness listed below should remain at home. The following are indications of illness that will necessitate removal:

1. **Fever:** Children who develop a fever while at the Center and children with a fever of 100 will not be readmitted to the Center until their temperature has been normal for 24 hours.
2. **Vomiting:** Parents will be asked to remove children from the Center.
3. **Diarrhea:** Parents will be asked to remove children from the Center.

Communication

No school sessions will be disrupted by communications directed to a student or faculty member except in the case of an authorized family visit or in the event of an emergency. Any emergency communications will be directed to the Child Learning Center supervisor.

Snack Sharing

Nutrition education is an important part of the program. Each preschool child is required to provide a nutritious snack for his/her class for one week each semester. This is both a learning and sharing experience for the children as they discuss the various snacks provided. They explore smell, taste, texture, color, shape, and where and how the food is grown or made. Suggested foods include raw fruit or vegetables, dried fruit, cheeses, whole grain crackers, or breads. Only prepackaged foods can be accepted. Children cannot be served any home-prepared foods. A refrigerator, stove and oven are available and the children help with snack preparation. Child Learning Center is Nut-Free environment. This includes peanuts and tree nuts. No whole grapes, raisins, popcorn, hard pretzels or chunks of raw carrots will be served as they may be a choking hazard. Sweets such as candy or cookies will not be accepted.

Separation

For some parents and children, separation is much more difficult than for others. We support those for whom separation creates anxiety by allowing a parent to stay in the classroom. While in the room, a parent is asked to try to gradually become uninvolved with the child, encouraging him or her to move away. When the child seems more at ease and has learned to trust the teachers, and when the child and parent seem comfortable separating, the parent is encouraged to leave.

Acceptance and Discharge

Children who demonstrate the inability to benefit from the program offered, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, will not be accepted. If a child is enrolled and it seems that his or her individual needs cannot be met, the child will be discharged.

Change of Schedule

Two week notice needed to change the child's schedule.

Withdrawal

At least two-weeks notice of withdrawal is required. Parents are responsible for payment for those two weeks.

Child Learning Center Guidance and Discipline Policy

Center Philosophy

The staff of the Child Learning Center believes that each child is an individual with unique needs, feelings, interests, abilities and learning styles. If the child's needs are met, her feelings accepted and acknowledged, her interests stimulated, abilities and learning styles recognized and challenged, the need for discipline will be minimized. All children need an environment that respects their developmental levels and emerging abilities, and challenges them to learn and grow. The Harper Child Learning Center works to provide such an environment.

Discipline

Children are encouraged to express their needs and feelings in words. They are supported by the teachers in their interactions with peers—to negotiate, to discuss, to confront appropriately and to express their feelings. Teachers acknowledge and accept children's feelings and help them find acceptable ways to deal with them. In the rare event that a child cannot be helped to control her emotions or behavior, a teacher will sit with that child, comfort her, and help her regain composure and rejoin the activity.

Communication With Parents Regarding Discipline

Parents of a child will be informed if there is a problem with a child's behavior. Parents and teachers will work together to set appropriate goals for the child and determine strategies for helping the child achieve the goals. If necessary, a consultant may be recommended to work with the child, parents and teachers.

Terminating a Child's Enrollment Because of Disciplinary Issues

A child's enrollment will be terminated only after all avenues for assisting that child have been exhausted and it has been determined that it is in the child's best interest to leave the Center. The child's and parents' needs shall be considered by planning with the parents to meet the child's needs when he or she leaves the facility, including referrals to other agencies or facilities.

Difficulties in the Classroom

Please arrange a conference with the classroom teacher to discuss any concerns you have about your child's experience in the classroom. The coordinator of the program is also available at any time for a conference. If your concerns are not satisfied through this process, the dean of the Business and Social Science Division is also available for a conference.

Harper College Child Learning Center Grievance Procedure

Thank you for choosing the Harper College Child Learning Center. If you have questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to speak to us. We want your child to enjoy his/her time with us.

Harper College
Child Learning Center
Building I, Room I123
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, Illinois 60067
847.925.6000

Extended Care Preschool (ext. 6262)

Aldona Fudala and Mary Beth VanWijk
afudala1@harpercollege.edu and
mvanwijk@harpercollege.edu

Preschool (ext. 6262)

Fran Heun and Jennifer Lesiak
fheun@harpercollege.edu and
jlesiak@harpercollege.edu

Supervisor (ext. 6262)

Irena Bakalus
ibakalus@harpercollege.edu

Division Dean (ext. 6311)

Michele' Robinson
mrobinso@harpercollege.edu

I/We _____

Parent(s) of _____

Hereby certify that I/we have received a copy of the
Child Learning Center Handbook.

Signature of Parent Date

Signature of Parent Date

Accredited by the
National Academy of Early
Childhood Programs

