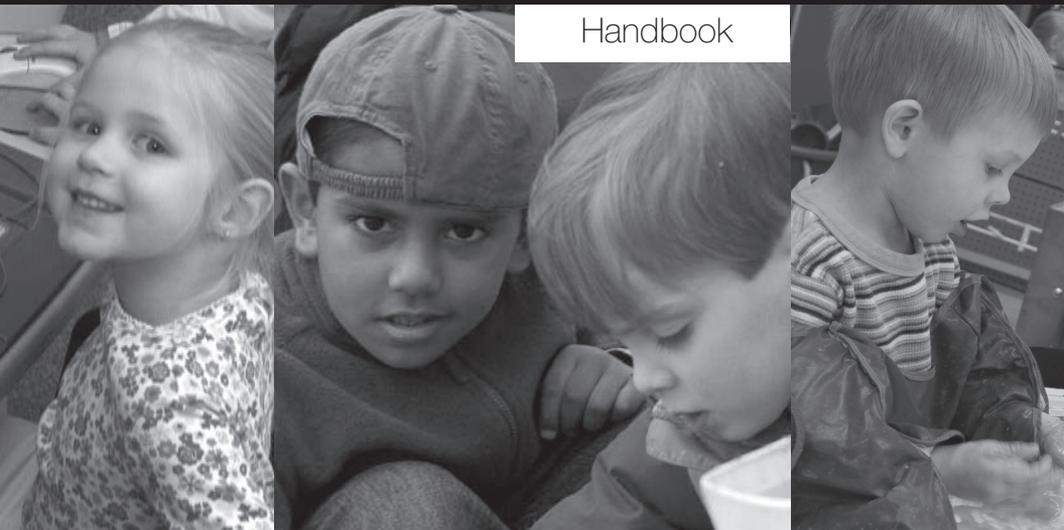




Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College

LEARNING AND ENRICHMENT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



Handbook

Dear Parents:

We would like to introduce you to the Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College.

The Early Childhood Laboratory School 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 Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College 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 and a Gold Circle of Quality from ExceleRate Illinois.

The Lab School 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 Lab School has two programs: Preschool and Extended 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,

Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College
Center Director and Staff

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**Early Childhood Lab School
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.)

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

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.

Early Childhood Lab School 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 High Scope curriculum is based on child development theory, research and proven instructional practices.

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 curriculum content areas with key developmental indicators (KDIs) for children.

Children may work individually or collaboratively and may choose whether or not to participate in a group activity. Children are actively involved in experiences which include foundations of math, science and technology, 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

Early Childhood Lab School

Active Participatory Learning

School readiness is enhanced when children are provided with play-oriented, exploratory activities that allow them to interact, make choices, and participate at their own developmental level. This vision is central to our High Scope's curriculum ideal of active participatory learning, which has five ingredients:

1. **Materials** – Program offers abundant supplies of diverse, age-appropriate materials. Materials appeal to all the senses and are open ended, that is, they lend themselves to being used in a variety of ways and help expand children's experiences and stimulate their thought.
2. **Manipulation** – Children handle, examine, combine, and transform materials and ideas. They make discoveries through direct hands-on and "minds-on" contact with these resources.
3. **Choice** – Children choose materials and play partners, change and build on their play ideas, and plan activities according to their interest and needs.
4. **Child language and thought** – Children describe what they are doing and understanding. They communicate verbally and nonverbally as they think about their actions and modify their thinking to take new learning into account.
5. **Adult scaffolding** – *scaffolding* means teachers support and gently extend children's current level of thinking and understanding. In this way, teachers help children gain knowledge and develop creative problem solving skills.

Early Childhood Lab School

Daily Activities

The classrooms learning environments are organized into interest centers and are designed to encourage children's learning through investigation, exploration and problem solving. High Scope daily routine organizes the day's events and it is the same every day, although time periods are occasionally altered to accommodate children's interest and there are exceptions for field trips, celebrations, or other special events.

Plan – Do – Review

Is devoted to the sequence: planning time, work time and recall time.

Planning Time

Meeting in a small group, each child decides what to do during work time-what area to play in, what materials to use, and who else will be involved – and shares this plan with a teacher and other children in the group.

Work Time

Work time is when children carry out their plans, alone and/or with others and then clean up.

Recall Time

At recall time, children meet with the same teacher and small group of children with whom they planned to share and discuss what they did and learned during work time.

Large Group Time

Those times when the entire class does something together. The children meet to share ideas and experiences, sing songs, perform finger plays and discuss topics for the day (message board) or playing outside.

Small Group Time

During these times, teachers introduce children to new materials, ideas, and activities, which the children can then continue to explore during work time. The activities may include following curriculum content areas: Mathematics; Language, Literacy and Communication; Science and Technology; Social Studies; Physical Development and Health; Social Emotional and Approaches to Learning. Children meet with the same teacher and set of classmates during the year. This arrangement provides continuity and security for children and also allows the teacher to develop a thorough knowledge of each child in this group over time.

Early Childhood Lab School 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 if fully potty trained and enrollment not at capacity. (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. Lead Teachers are also HighScope certified.

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 17-week semesters. Two professional development days are scheduled during the fall semester and preschool program is closed for those days. A summer program is also offered. The Extended Preschool program is closed for the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving break (three days), winter break (two weeks), Martin Luther King's birthday, Lincoln's birthday (February 12), Reading Day (Friday before Easter), Memorial Day, Professional Development Days (two days), July 4 and summer break (one week).

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 application fee is assessed for all new children. Annual nonrefundable \$50 registration fee required for all programs.

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

Teacher Reflection Form is sent to parents at the end of the first semester, where the teachers list accomplished milestones, progress that has been observed and list the milestones that this child is working on. Parental conferences are scheduled in the spring. However, conferences may be arranged at any time at the request of either the teacher or parents.

Assessment

Our assessment practices look at the whole child. We use the COR Advantage, aligned with Illinois Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education, assesses children's learning in every content area. Each day, teachers writes brief anecdotes that objectively describe children's behavior. They use these notes to evaluate children's development and then plan activities to help individual children and the classroom as a whole progress.

Screenings

A developmental screening will be conducted on each newly enrolled child and shared with the family within 60 days of start date. We use the Ages and Stages (A&S) Parent Questionnaire for the screening. The director scores the screening after completion by parent or guardian. The purpose of this screening is to determine what learning opportunities the teacher and parent think developmentally appropriate for the child.

The publisher of A&S has provided information within the user's manual on standardization samples, standardization procedures, scoring, reliability and validity. This information is available upon request.

Confidentiality of Children's Records

Information pertaining to the admission, progress, health or discharge of an individual child shall be confidential and limited to facility staff designated by the program manager, unless the parent of the child granted written permission.

Program Evaluations

The Program Quality Assessment (PQA) evaluates whether teachers and administration implement effective program practices. High Scope observers rate classroom teaching and program operations to identify strengths and area of improvement. Evaluations of the preschool program is also distributed to parents twice a year. Evaluations can be dropped off at the office, in the envelope on the parent board or mailed directly to the program director, and all responses will remain anonymous. Please take the opportunity to complete the evaluations; your input is very important in continuing to provide a successful preschool program for the community.

Integrated Pest Management Program

IPM uses the most appropriate practice to achieve control of pests while avoiding adverse effects on people and the environment. Public Act 95-0058 requires written notification prior to the application of pesticides. Should parents wish to receive written notification prior to the specific application of pesticides they must register. To register to receive written notification 48 hours prior to pesticide applications, parents may submit their name and address by email to ibakalus@harpercollege.edu

If an emergency pesticide application exists to protect against an imminent threat to health or property, prior to the actual application, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on this registry.

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 per semester for both programs. Payments might be made weekly or in the installments. There are no refunds for sick days, holidays, vacations, emergency closings or staff development days. Fees may be made through the Harper College on-line tuition payment system.

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 Early Childhood Lab School of Harper College 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 Lab School.

Research studies are occasionally conducted in the Lab School by professionals in various fields. Such studies are carefully screened by the Lab School 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.

Early Childhood Lab School 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 short-term parking spaces for the purpose of dropping off or picking up children. All spaces are marked "Reserved for Child Drop Off".

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 Lab School'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 Lab School 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 Lab School.

The Early Childhood Lab School uses the Health Service department on campus as a consultant to advise the Lab School on children's health and wellness issues.

Ill Children

Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill at the Lab School. Parents should remove children from the Lab School 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 Early Childhood Lab School 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. Early Childhood Lab School is Allergy Aware environment. No peanuts or tree nuts allowed on the premises. 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.

Early Childhood Lab School 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.

Early Childhood Laboratory School of Harper College Grievance Procedure

Thank you for choosing the Early Childhood Lab School. 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
Early Childhood Lab School
Building I, Room I123
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, Illinois 60067
847.925.6000

Extended Care Preschool (ext. 6262)

Aldona Fudala and Claudine Voltolina
afudala1@harpercollege.edu and
cvoltoli@harpercollege.edu

Preschool (ext. 6262)

Fran Heun and Carmen Dean
fheun@harpercollege.edu and
cdean@harpercollege.edu

Supervisor (ext. 6262)

Irena Bakalus
ibakalus@harpercollege.edu

Division Dean (ext. 6311)

I/We _____

Parent(s) of _____

Hereby certify that I/we have received a copy of the
Early Childhood Lab School Handbook.

Signature of Parent Date

Signature of Parent Date

Accredited by the
National Academy of Early
Childhood Programs

