



Hay Springs Early Childhood Program Handbook



The Hay Springs Early Childhood Program believes a parent is a child's first teacher.

By supporting parents, the Hay Springs Early Childhood Program will allow children to learn in a play-oriented environment. Cognitive, physical, social and emotional development will be enhanced in a child based setting.

The Preschool, along with input from the families, will meet each child at his or her developmental level and provide activities to meet those individual needs.

Hay Springs Early Childhood Program Mission Statement:
We believe that all young children should have access to a quality early childhood program that will provide experiences to promote success at every level.

HAY SPRINGS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM
407 N Baker Street - Hay Springs, NE 69347
(308) 638-4434

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Admissions Procedures and Requirements

Any child who is not eligible to attend kindergarten (5 before July 31) will be eligible for preschool enrollment in the current school year. While enrollment is open to both 3 and 4 year olds, priority will be given to four year olds.

Students must be 3 prior to July 31 of the current year to attend. If a resident five year old student is not prepared for kindergarten, he/she may attend preschool if the Hay Springs preschool has not met capacity.

If there is a waiting list for the Hay Springs Early Childhood Program, children who are attending another preschool program may be ineligible to attend the Hay Springs Early Childhood Program.

Parents need to complete an enrollment form which indicates an interest in the program. A student is **officially** enrolled in Hay Springs Early Childhood Program when an enrollment form **and** health forms are received.

Enrollment and Health forms include the following:

- Proof of immunizations
- Birth Certificate
- Free/Reduced lunch forms (if applicable)

Birth Certificate Requirements: Nebraska State law requires that a certified copy of a student's birth certificate or official verification of age be presented when enrolling a new student in our school. If your child is registering with Hay Springs Schools for the first time and you do not have a certified birth certificate, you may obtain one from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which your child was born. Assistance in obtaining Nebraska birth certificates may be obtained from Health Records Management, P.O. Box 95065, Lincoln, NE 68509-5065. There is a small fee per certificate.

If a birth certificate is unavailable, other official proof of a student's identity may be used. These documents *could* include naturalization or immigration documents showing date of birth or official hospital birth records, a passport, or a translation of a birth certificate from another country.

The documents must be accompanied by an affidavit signed by the parent and a Notary Public documenting the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.

A visit to the preschool for parents and their child can be arranged prior to the first day of attendance.

School Calendar/School Day

The preschool follows the Hay Springs Public Schools calendar for vacations and in-services. See www.hshawks.com for a complete yearly calendar.

Morning Program: 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. - Monday-Thursday

This session is for 3 year olds, who will not be eligible to attend kindergarten the following fall.

Breakfast is served daily.

There is no snack provided with the exception of special occasions such as classroom celebrations or birthday parties.

Afternoon Program: 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Monday-Thursday

This session is for children who are eligible to attend kindergarten the following school year.

Lunch is served daily.

There is a daily snack provided. Not served with milk.

Meals

Lunch is served daily for the afternoon program. Meals are served "family style" which means that children are encouraged to serve themselves. Meals follow USDA requirements for a healthy child's intake. For a copy of the USDA's My Pyramid for children's nutrition see

http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/mpk_poster.pdf

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is Prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

You **must** use the office door for drop off. The **only** exceptions to this are the need for the handicap accessible door located in the classroom and Noah's Ark pre-school students. This needs to be set up with the teacher prior to using it.

Morning students may be dropped off beginning at 7:50 and should be picked up as close to 11:30 as possible.

Morning Arrival: Students will wait on the benches at the office for the teacher to come and welcome them and lead them to the classroom at 8:00.

Morning Departure: Students will be picked up from the benches by the office.

Afternoon students may be dropped off beginning at 11:50 and should be picked up as close to 4:00 as possible.

Afternoon Arrival: Students will wait on the benches at the office for the teacher to come and welcome them and lead them to the classroom at 12:00, unless students are arriving from Noah's Ark Pre-school.

Afternoon Departure: Students will be picked up on the sidewalk between the Elementary School and Lister Sage buildings.

All students will enter the building through the front door of the school, with the exception of Noah's Ark Preschool.

Anyone picking up your child **must** be on the emergency contact form or called into the office ahead of time or they will not be released without first receiving the consent of a primary caregiver.

If your child arrives at or leaves school between normal drop off and pick up times, you **must** sign them in/out at the office. Please notify the office or teacher if you are going to be late for arrival or departure for any reason.

Early departure can be communicated the day of via phone call or in person. Please do **not** email on the day of an expected early departure as the teacher is not always able to check emails during the school day.

Parent Information

As a child's first and most important teacher, parents are a vital part to the success of HSECP. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education as fully as possible. Parents are always welcome to visit the preschool at any time.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held twice a year to discuss each child's progress and development-generally in October and March. Parents may also request a meeting at any time to discuss their child's progress.

You may also schedule a Parent/Teacher conference at the end of the second recording period.

During these visits we will discuss your child's development. We will go over your child's growth report. Scores are given through observations and anecdotal notes taken throughout your child's day. The notes are of interactions and activities that your child takes part in each day, as well as dialogue. At each visit we will also discuss any concerns or issues you may have about your child or the preschool. You may set up extra conferences by emailing or speaking with your child's teacher or calling the school at (308) 638-4434. Frequent communication is best for your child's development.

Home Visits: A minimum of two home visits (could be in conjunction with) the Parent-Teacher conferences will be conducted during the school year-generally scheduled at the beginning and end of the school year.

Parental Participation opportunities include:

- Providing treats for special occasions such as birthdays, holidays, etc.
- Sharing special family traditions through props, special food, etc.
- Assisting with class parties, field trips, classroom activities.
- Participating in special family programs.
- Receiving notes, newsletters, phone calls.
- Visiting the classroom.
- Offering to help in any other way.
- Participation in parent meetings.
- Participation in the Hay Springs Early Childhood Program Advisory Group

School Supplies

HSECP requires parents to supply a few items for the school year. If you have issues supplying these items please contact the classroom teacher.

For individual use:

- Backpack-labeled with child's name
- breakfast/lunch-labeled with child's name *if you choose to send meals
- Reusable water bottle that does **not** leak-labeled with child's name
- Complete change of clothes **including** socks in a ziplock bag-labeled with child's name
- Jacket or coat appropriate for weather each day

These items may be requested again throughout the school year. Additional items may be requested for special projects and events. Those requests will be sent via DOJO and/or weekly newsletters

Personal Possessions

The preschool is not responsible for lost or broken items.

Please write your child's name on his/her possessions. This includes backpacks, hats, gloves, coats etc.

Please refrain from bringing special or sentimental items to school unless it is for a specific purpose and the classroom teacher is made aware of said item coming to school.

Toys from home are not allowed to come into the classroom.

Policies and Procedures

The Hay Springs Early Childhood Program will follow all policies and procedures as outlined in the Hay Springs Public School Handbook. The following policies and procedures are not inclusive. Be sure to refer to the HSPS Handbook.

Re-enrollment

Parents will notify the school (teacher or office) by June 20 of their desire to re-enroll their child each spring. Re-enrollment is done by completing the enrollment form and returning it to the school. See Admissions Procedures and Requirements for more detailed information.

Immunizations

The following immunizations are required for enrollment in HSECP:

- 4 doses DTP, one given on or after 4th birthday
- 3 doses Polio vaccine
- 2 MMR, one given on or after 4th birthday
- 3 doses of HiB vaccine
- 3 doses Hepatitis B
- 1 dose varicella (chicken pox)

Field Trips/Community Walks

HSECP feels that field trips and community walks are an important learning opportunity for your child. A note will be sent home notifying the parents of any scheduled up-coming field trips. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Short community walks may be taken without notification, but precautions are in place to make sure all children are safe.

Administering Medications

Whenever possible, your child should be provided medications by you **outside** of school hours. If it is necessary for your child to take medications at school, you must provide a signed written consent for the child to be given the medication. There is an '**Authorization of Administration of Medication at School**' form available in the office.

Medication must be in the original container that is labeled by the pharmacy or the manufacturer with the same information written on the label as on the consent form. Prescription medicine requires a physician's signature for administration at school.

If your child has a chronic medical condition such as asthma or any allergies that require medical attention such as an EpiPen, please talk with the teacher.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, it is **absolutely** necessary for the school to be able to contact the parents of a child or someone who knows the child. **It is vital that telephone numbers and addresses be kept up-to-date at all times.** Please contact the school if there is a change in phone numbers or addresses.

Emergency contact numbers will be required on enrollment papers.

Illness/Head Injury

You will be required to pick your child up from school if they have a temperature of 100° or higher when taken by the school's thermometer or if they have episodes of vomiting or diarrhea while at school.

Your child will not be allowed to return to school until they have been fever free without medication for 24 hours.

You will be notified if your child has a head injury, and you will be asked to come to school to evaluate your child's condition.

IF YOUR CHILD:

- **Has a fever, don't send him/her to school or activities. Children who are vomiting; have diarrhea, or a temperature of 100 degrees or greater must remain home and will be welcomed back after being symptom free (last episode of vomiting, diarrhea, fever) for 24 hours without medication.**
- **Is absent because he/she has any of the following diseases:**
 - **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), may return after 24 hours with physician's written approval**
 - **Fifth Disease, may return with rash with documented physician's written approval.**
 - **Ringworm may return after treatment is started.**
- **Is absent because he/she has Head or Body Lice, may return to school when treatment is completed and a re-examination has determined lice are no longer present.**
- **Has had strep throat he/she may return to school after being on medication and fever free for 24 hours.**
- **Has any condition, such as severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, urinary or bowel problems it should be reported to the office and teacher.**
- **Needs to take medication during the school day, please refer to the 'Administering Medication' policy on page 8 of the HSECP Handbook.**
- **If both parents work and no one is home during the day, please make arrangements for a place to send your child should he/she become ill during the school day.**

Absences

If your child is unable to attend preschool, please contact the school at (308) 638-4434 before 8:30 a.m. The office will follow the school procedure of calling families if we haven't received prior contact concerning an absence.

Severe Weather Related School Closings

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close public schools in case of severe weather. The Superintendent or his designee will notify local news media.

A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service and local weather conditions indicate it would be unwise/unsafe for children to go to school.

If extreme weather causes the cancellation of school, that news will be released through Chadron radio stations (KCSR AM 610 and KQSK 97.5 FM) as well as on Hay Springs Schools Facebook page, www.hshawks.com, www.chadrad.com, and Infinite Campus Messenger—generally by 6:30 a.m.

Please listen to the radio or check one of the other options if cancellation seems likely and remember that if Hay Springs Public Schools are closed; this means HSECP also.

If school is canceled during the day, parents will be notified.

Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absence for legitimate causes provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather at any time during the school day. Students may be dismissed from school during severe weather with a telephone or personal request from the parent at the office.

Appropriate Clothing for School

The children will go outside every day for 30 minutes, please dress them accordingly-providing gloves, hats, boots, snow pants, and coats when necessary.

The extra set of clothing provided by each family will be used in the event of a blood accident, toilet accident, or any other accident. Soiled clothes will be bagged and sent home and a notification will be sent to the primary caregiver. Please send a clean set of extra clothes as soon as possible if this happens.

HSECP is not responsible for replacing damaged clothing.

It is important to dress your child appropriately for school and for existing weather conditions. Please label these items before sending them to school. Remember that the weather can change quickly. Additional socks and shoes are a good idea for wet and snowy weather.

The children will engage in messy activities such as cooking, painting, playing in the sand and water, so it is important they are dressed in clothing which allows them to participate in these activities. Children will wear paint shirts when participating in messy activities, but accidents do happen.

Newsletters

The preschool teacher uses *DOJO* to communicate with parents about activities and upcoming events, important dates, book orders and other reminders. A weekly classroom newsletter will be sent home on Thursday each week. The school newsletter is posted on the website, www.hshawks.com.

Please be sure to check your child's backpack every day!

Confidentiality

Information concerning your child or family will not be shared with un-authorized persons without written permission by you. If you suspect that information has been shared with un-authorized persons please contact the Hay Springs Public School Early Childhood Director.

Complaint Procedures

Please follow the chain of command.

Step 1: Have a scheduled conference with the classroom teacher.

Step 2: Have a scheduled conference with the classroom teacher and the PreK-12 Principal.

Step 3: Appeal to the Superintendent if the matter is still unresolved.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Signature: _____

Date: _____