



**Happy Harbour ECP
Parent Handbook 2016-2017**

Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program
3459 FM 518 East
League City, TX 77573
281 538-1515
www.happyharbourecp.org

Hello Parents!

Thank you for entrusting your children to us this year. Believe me, we understand the importance of that trust. At Happy Harbour your child will be treated with the love and care that so many Happy Harbour parents have come to know and appreciate over the past 20 years. When your child is here, he/she is in a safe, nurturing environment where a foundation for learning, relationships and knowing God's great love is established in a wide variety of fun, creative and stimulating ways. The staff at Happy Harbour will care for your child and pay close attention to the individual needs of your child. As the pastor at Bay Harbour United Methodist Church, I am available to you and your family any time for anything I can help you with. I hope that while you consider Happy Harbour a safe, accepting place for your child, you'll also consider Bay Harbour UMC a safe, accepting place for your entire family.

Praying and Planning for a Great Year!
Pastor Paul

Dear Parents,

Welcome! We are happy you have chosen Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program. We look forward to a wonderful year and the opportunity to get to know you and your child.

This handbook is provided so you will have a reference source for Happy Harbour policies. If you have further questions that are not addressed in the handbook, please don't hesitate to stop in or call the office. Also, our website (www.happyharbourecp.org) provides information on many of these topics.

We are proud of our program, teachers, and facility and hope you will have a wonderful experience here at Happy Harbour.

Sincerely,
Happy Harbour Directors

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program (hereafter referred to as Happy Harbour) is a non-profit organization operated by the Happy Harbour Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has final authority over all aspects of the program, unless a decision directly affects Bay Harbour United Methodist Church (BHUMC). Happy Harbour is a ministry of BHUMC, and as such, spiritual growth is a key component of the goals for all children and staff. Christian beliefs will be expressed to the children, as well as the importance of faith and trust in God. Chapel will be held weekly, and education in the classrooms will include prayer recital before meals, Bible verses, and Christian songs.

Happy Harbour is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), and follows the Minimum Standard Rules developed by DFPS. Happy Harbour ensures the program is operated according to these high standards with the use of annual inspections, continually updated record-keeping and monitored safety practices.

A copy of the most recent DFPS inspection report is posted on the Parent Board in the hallway by the office for your review. You may also ask to see the Minimum Standards or view them online at www.dfps.state.tx.us. The current licensing phone number is: 713.940.3009. Other inspection reports are also available in the office for your review upon request.

HISTORY

Happy Harbour was made possible by the efforts of many members from Bay Harbour United Methodist Church. Thanks to the tireless work and dedication of the Founding Committee Members – Gail Smith, Becky Collins, Betsy Hoffman, and Donna Burkett - Happy Harbour opened its doors to the children of the church and community on August 29th, 1994. Happy Harbour incorporated on March 31, 2007. The program continues to support the overall mission statement of Bay Harbour United Methodist Church, which is to “make disciples of Jesus Christ.”

PURPOSE

Happy Harbour’s mission is to provide high quality early childhood education in a Christian environment. Happy Harbour continually strives to achieve this by maintaining a program that enhances a child’s self-esteem and promotes an interest in learning. To this end, Happy Harbour has developed a program that promotes physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development of the young child. The program’s goals are as follows:

- To provide developmentally appropriate, hands-on, child initiated experiences.
- To inspire a sense of self-worth and a desire for life-long learning.
- To help each child develop a respect for self and for those around them.
- To maintain and nurture a loving Christian environment in all aspects of the program.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Happy Harbour Board of Directors consists of the following:

- Happy Harbour Director
- Happy Harbour Assistant Director
- Happy Harbour Office Manager
- Bay Harbour United Methodist Church (BHUMC) Senior Pastor
- BHUMC Children's Minister
- BHUMC at large members (at least 4)
- Church lay leader
- Representative from Trustees
- Representative from Finance
- Representative from SPRC

The Board Chair is elected by the Board of Directors annually. It has a service term of one year. The BOD Chair must be a member of BHUMC. All board members shall be elected by The Happy Harbour Board. The Board of Directors has final authority over all aspects of Happy Harbour, unless a decision directly affects the church. The Board meets at least quarterly. Parents and teachers may attend the first 15 minutes of board meetings to present matters and concerns with prior approval from the Board Chair.

Happy Harbour Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee will consist of:

- Chairperson
- Happy Harbour Director
- Happy Harbour Assistant Director
- Happy Harbour Office Manager
- Happy Harbour Curriculum Specialist
- BHUMC Children's Minister
- Happy Harbour Teacher Representatives (at least 2)
- Happy Harbour Parent Representatives (at least 4)

The Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee is a sub-committee of the board responsible for assisting in coordinating school fundraisers and special events. The Chair of the Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee is selected by the Board of Directors annually. It is a non-paid position with a service term of one year.

PHILOSOPHY

In 1999 Happy Harbour developed its Philosophy Statement using guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Since that time we have worked to implement NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) in each of our classrooms and to provide activities that promote the growth of the "whole" child. According to NAEYC, developmentally appropriate practice provides children with opportunities to learn and practice newly acquired skills. It offers challenges just beyond the level of their present mastery and it takes place in the context of a community where children are safe and valued, where their physical needs are met, and where they feel psychologically secure.

We believe that a high quality preschool program enhances a child's self-esteem and promotes an interest in learning. To this end, we have developed a program that promotes the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development of the young child.

Children learn best through play and active investigation of their world. Therefore, child initiated and teacher supported play is an essential part of Happy Harbour's program.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum addresses the needs of the whole child, as we ascribe to NAEYC's (National Association for the Education of Young Children) guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practices.

Children learn best through play and active investigation of their world. Therefore, child initiated and directed, teacher-supported play is an essential part of Happy Harbour's curriculum. This is all done in a setting where Christian values are encouraged and nurtured, inspiring a sense of confidence and self-worth as well as a foundation of respect for those around us.

Happy Harbour uses The Creative Curriculum to enhance instruction in all of its classrooms. For Twos, this curriculum is based on secure relationships in which the child develops trust and is free to explore and learn. It is environmentally based and built on current brain development research.

The Creative Curriculum for Threes and Fours has a firm foundation of theory and research and addresses academic content as well. It is environmentally based in which the teacher plays a vital role in connecting content, teaching, and learning for preschool children. The curriculum follows developmentally appropriate practices for preschool education.

“Child development can be divided into four areas – social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. These areas are intertwined and cannot be taken in isolation when planning activities for the classroom. Young children are learning all of the time, and then are learning to do a lot of different things that may or may not include simple tasks and amazing feats. But most importantly, they are “learning to learn.” As they indulge their natural inclinations to explore, investigate, and experiment through developmentally appropriate play, they acquire the fundamental concepts and capacities that allow them to effectively absorb from and adapt to the ever-changing environment around them for the rest of their lives. Students with whom teachers can work most efficiently and who continue to excel and improve with each passing year are not characterized by their previous accomplishments, but rather by how prepared they are to meet whatever challenges are in store for them in the future. Young children who are permitted to develop fundamental concepts and capacities through developmentally appropriate play will be considerably better off in the long run than those whose learning experiences have been limited to rigorous instruction in specific academic areas. Learning to learn through developmentally appropriate play is key to optimal educational outcomes.”

*Taken from *The Power of Play*, a discussion about Early Childhood Education with Dr. Michael K. Meyerhoff.

Happy Harbour will always strive to provide a program that enhances each child's self-esteem and promotes their desire to make learning a life-long process.

PROGRAM GOALS

- To provide a loving Christian environment
- To provide developmentally appropriate, hands-on, child initiated experiences
- To inspire a sense of self-worth and a desire for lifelong learning
- To develop respect for self and others

GOALS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Happy Harbour is a ministry of Bay Harbour United Methodist Church. Spiritual growth is a key component of the goals for all children and staff. Christian beliefs will be expressed to the children as well as the importance of faith and trust in God. Chapel will be held weekly along with Christian education in the classrooms. Prayers are recited before the children eat and Christian songs will be taught.

GOALS FOR MUSIC SESSIONS

The Happy Harbour music program bases its goals on the educational, physical, developmental, and spiritual needs of the children. The children learn to:

- Hear music for quiet listening
- Hear music that tells a story
- Create vocal sounds by imitating sing songs
- Move and dance
- Play simple rhythms using musical instruments
- Repeat simple patterns with voice, movement and/or musical instruments
- Participate in rhythmic activities
- Develop coordination
- Acquire fundamental movement skills
- Develop spatial and directional awareness
- Formulate patterns
- Explore vocal sounds
- Explore imitation/recognition of environmental sounds
- Explore the difference between speaking and singing voices
- Explore rote singing of melodic patterns
- Sing action songs
- Recognize high/low, loud/soft, fast/slow, up/down, long/short, and smooth/jerky
- Hear short selections for expressive movement
- Perform gross motor movement to records and singing
- Move to express mood/meaning of music
- Move to express steady beat and body sounds Explore sounds
- Explore singing games
- Make choices
- Make decisions

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Enrollment is open to any child within the age range specified. Enrollment shall be granted without discrimination in regard to race, nationality, creed, sex, or handicapping condition, provided the school can meet the needs of the child.

Enrollment for Happy Harbour ECP is for children two years old through four years old. Children must be the exact age or older for his/her respective class on or before September 1st of that year. **Children in the three and four year old classes should be toilet trained. We do not have diaper changing facilities in the 3's and 4's classrooms.**

Enrollment is limited, so a system of priorities has been established with priority given to currently enrolled children or siblings of currently enrolled children and to children of active Bay Harbour United Methodist Church members. Finally, enrollment is open to children in the community.

Enrollment is contingent upon payment of the registration/supply fee and one month's advance tuition payment. A completed health statement and immunization record must be received in the office in order to secure a place in the program. Parents must keep the program updated on current immunizations.

Happy Harbour's teacher/child ratios are significantly lower than those required by the TDFPS.

Class	Age as of September 1st	Student to Teacher Ratio
Twos	2 years	10:2
Threes	3 years	14:2
Fours	4 years	17:2

TUITION AND FEES

A non-refundable registration/supply fee is required upon enrollment. This fee is used to purchase necessary equipment, materials and supplies for the operation of the school. Also required at the time of enrollment is payment of one month's tuition. This payment will be for the final month of the school year (May of the next year). The tuition payment will be refunded if the child withdraws from Happy Harbour on or before July 1st. After July 1st, the advance tuition payment is non-refundable.

If the advance tuition payment for the following year and/or tuition for the current year are not paid in full by May 10th of the current year, the child's spot for the next year will be forfeited.

While we do not refund May 2017 tuition after July 1st, the May tuition can be applied to the child's last month in the program (with the exception of April). The parent must give written notice of the child's last month attending prior to the 10th of the month in order to apply the May 2017 tuition. .

Tuition rates are based on an annual fee, which has been divided into nine monthly payments. Tuition is due and payable on or before the first day of each month. In order to cover our budgeted expenses, full tuition is due each month regardless of holidays or absences.

A late charge of \$20.00 will be assessed after the 10th of each month for any unpaid tuition. A NSF fee of \$30.00 will be assessed on any returned check. If the full tuition and any applicable late fee(s) are not paid by the end of each month, the child will not be allowed to attend school until it is

paid and your child's spot in the class may be forfeited. Please feel free to discuss any problems with the Director. *There is no refund of tuition for days missed during the month. This includes any unforeseen school closings due to hurricanes or other natural disasters, unscheduled CCISD school closings, or other unplanned events.*

Please leave your tuition payments in the tuition box located just outside the office.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you must withdraw your child from the program, please notify the Director **in writing** at least two weeks in advance. If you need to make changes in your child's enrollment, please consult the office staff.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Happy Harbour ECP offers financial aid scholarships each school year. If you are in a financially difficult situation this year, we encourage you to apply for one of the limited number of scholarships. The discount is up to 25% off the monthly tuition. Applications are available in the office. The deadline for submitting an application is the last Friday in September. A scholarship committee appointed by the Board of Directors will make award determinations. Discounts are applied to the October-April monthly tuition payments. There are no scholarship discounts for the first (September) or last (May) month's tuition payments. We want to assist you in continuing to provide your child(ren) with a wonderful preschool experience.

IMMUNIZATION RECORD

The Texas DFPS requires a physician's statement and current immunization records to be kept on file. A child who has not turned in this information will not be allowed to attend school until it is returned. Please supply a record of new immunizations to the office as they are received. If your child is under-immunized because of a medical condition, documentation from the child's health care professional is required. If your child is under-immunized because of family beliefs, you must submit proper documentation when enrolling your child. If we do not receive current updated immunizations, your child may not attend school until we receive the required forms.

** Immunizations must meet the most current "Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities" (www.ImmunizeTexas.com).

****All children who are four years old by September 1st require vision and hearing screenings. This is a requirement of the Texas Department of Health Services to which we must comply. Information about obtaining a screening will be sent home during the fall semester.**
We do not require any specific vaccinations for employees.

ARRIVAL AND SIGN IN

State licensing requires that children be signed in and out on a daily basis. You must sign your child in every morning with your full signature along with the time. We ask that you sign your child out each afternoon marking the time and your signature in the space provided.

Please make every effort to arrive on time as the teachers have planned activities for all of the children and begin the class promptly at 9:30 am. It can be disruptive to the class when a child arrives late.

It is normal for children to experience separation anxiety at the start of the school year. Our staff is accustomed to dealing with children and tears and will make every effort to help your child adjust. In order to help your child adjust, tell them goodbye and assure them you will return. Please allow us at least 30 minutes to divert your child's attention to the activities of the day. You will be notified if your child remains upset after that time to decide whether or not to pick up your child.

DEPARTURE TIME

Children are to be picked up promptly at 1:30 pm at their classroom door. A late charge of \$1 per minute may be assessed after 1:40 pm. Please cooperate with this policy and please notify the office at 281 538-1515 if you will be late to pick up your child. If a parent chooses to send a substitute to pick up a child, the office must be notified. **The child will not be released if the substitute is not listed on the registration form or the office has not been notified.** Photo identification will be required for such substitutes. If you need to pick up your child early, please come to the office to notify the office staff. You or one of the administrative staff members will then retrieve your child from the classroom.

CHAPEL

All age levels attend chapel together in the church sanctuary on Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 9:45 am to 10:05 am. All staff also attends. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend. The schedule for chapel includes:

- Opening song (the children will learn several through the year)
- Bible story and prayer
- Music –this time will be used to learn a new Christian song, or sing an old favorite.
- Birthday prayer for those celebrating birthdays that week. Birthdays during the holidays and summer will celebrate the last chapel day before their birthday, at the half year mark, or end of school year.

NUT-FREE POLICY

A number of children who attend Happy Harbour have severe allergies. Within this group are children who have a potentially life threatening allergy to peanuts and tree nuts. Therefore, they must avoid all products with peanut or nut ingredients or nut oils. Ingestion of a piece of nut-containing food as tiny as a crumb, or contact with toys and equipment which have been touched by others who have nut residue on their hands could trigger an anaphylactic, life-threatening allergic reaction.

As a result, the Board of Directors has created a peanut/nut restricted policy for the entire school. The Board and staff acknowledge that, despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee an absolutely allergen-free environment. The goal of this policy is to create an atmosphere that will reduce the risks to children with life threatening peanut/nut allergies.

Happy Harbour will not be serving any food items that contain peanut or tree nut ingredients. ***We ask that parents send only peanut/nut free items in their child's lunches and only send peanut/nut free store packaged products for birthday or other special treats.*** Popsicles make an excellent birthday treat that everyone can safely enjoy. ***No homemade snacks should be sent to share with the other children. It is crucial that when sending items to share with the class that you read the entire food label to make sure that all items do not contain peanut or nut ingredients and are not processed or manufactured in a plant that also processes peanuts.***

For a list of peanut/nut free treats for birthdays and lunches, refer to www.snacksafely.com or our printout of this information on the parent board in the hallway in front of the office. Several parents have used soy nut butter or sunflower butter as a peanut butter substitute.

We thank you for your cooperation in helping to make Happy Harbour a safe environment for all children.

SNACKS

Snacks will be provided by Happy Harbour. The cost for this is included in the monthly tuition payment. We will promote good nutrition and will serve a variety of commercially packaged snacks. Please let us know if your child has any allergies or restrictions so that we can post this information as a reminder to all staff. Due to the risks of food allergies, you may be asked to provide a separate snack for your child if they have multiple or severe food allergies.

LUNCHESES

Each child is to bring their own lunch and drink. We are not able to refrigerate or heat any lunch items, so pack accordingly. Lunch boxes, containers, etc. must be marked with your child's name. We also encourage children to learn independence, so please pack food in containers that your child can easily open. Please send utensils if needed. Your child's disposition and well being will benefit from eating a healthy and satisfying lunch.

Helpful Hints for preparing your child's lunch:

- All food should be appropriately cut up before packing. The following foods are considered to pose a high risk for choking: popcorn, grapes, hot dogs, and raw carrots. These foods should be cut into bite size pieces for your child's safety.
- Please refrain from sending the following items: carbonated drinks and candy.
- Utilize a 'cold pack' when sending foods that should stay cold.

Glass containers are not allowed.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays and holidays are special times for children. We encourage parents to bring special treats for their child's birthday. Your child's teachers will determine the best time to share the treats with the class based on that day's activities. Refer to the school's nut-free policy information for restrictions on the types of treats that can be shared with the class. No homemade treats may be shared with other children. Store-bought popsicles make an excellent and popular birthday treat. If your child's birthday falls during the summer, check with your child's teacher for a date to celebrate. If you would like to donate a book to Happy Harbour in honor of your child's birthday, we have a variety of bookplates available to place inside the book. Please check with your child's teacher or the school office for book suggestions.

HOLIDAYS & SPECIAL EVENTS

A parent volunteer and/or the classroom teachers will coordinate items needed for holiday parties and special events. Again, it is important to be sure that any edible treats shared with the class be in accordance with the school's nut-free policy. We sometimes need and appreciate some parent assistance at these parties. Check with your child's teacher if you are interested in helping. Several other events are designed to include and can accommodate all parents. Everyone is invited to attend our Fall Festival and rodeo.

TEACHER GIFTS

Our teachers are wonderful, and we understand that parents want to show their appreciation for the love and care they give. Please know that homemade and simple gifts that come from the hearts of your children are always treasured. If parents choose to collect for a group gift, we ask that the collection envelope be left in the school office in a secure location. The Office Manager will be happy to assist. This will help to reduce the congestion in our already crowded hallways during arrival and dismissal, and will provide a convenient and anonymous way for parents to participate if they would like to.

DISCIPLINE

***Please see the discipline and guidance policy for complete information.**

Our philosophy is to approach discipline as a learning experience for the child. When problems arise that need to be addressed, the teacher will communicate correct behavior to the child. If the child continues to act inappropriately, the child will be redirected. Continual behaviors will be addressed by the Director in the following manner.

- Notify parent of the problem
- Parent, teacher and director have a conference and complete first "Behavioral Incident Parent/Teacher Conference Plan" and have signed by those in attendance.
- If behavior continues, a second conference will be held and a second "Behavioral Incident Parent/Teacher Conference Plan" will be completed and signed by those in attendance.

- A third and final conference will be held and the “Parent/Teacher Conference Plan” will be signed with full knowledge that if similar behavioral incidents occur, the child will be dismissed from the program.

This policy is in place to maintain a safe and happy classroom so that all children can benefit from their preschool experience.

In the event of multiple or extreme behaviors that are harmful to other students as determined by the Happy Harbour Directors, a child may be asked to leave the program.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Any Happy Harbour policy or procedure changes will be either posted on the parent board outside of the office, sent home through the classrooms, or emailed to parents.

Emergency notifications will be handled as described in the policies. Please make sure that all of your contact information (i.e. phone, email, address, etc.) is current and that you notify Happy Harbour immediately of any changes.

ILLNESS

Individual Health Assessments

Should a child show signs or symptoms of illness or injury during the school day, an Individual Health Assessment form will be completed by school staff. Parents may or may not be called to pick up their child based on Director assessment, and a copy will be sent home to notify you and to communicate any action taken.

Children who, within the previous 24 hour period, show signs of illness such as fever (temperature of 99.8), acute cold, heavy nasal discharge, constant cough, diarrhea, or vomiting will not be allowed to attend school. A parent will be asked to come for a child should any of these symptoms occur.

Parents are required to notify the Director whenever a child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease such as impetigo, chicken pox, head lice, conjunctivitis, etc. Serious communicable diseases will require medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious before returning to school. Parents will be notified of serious communicable diseases in the facility as required by state law.

MEDICATION

We do not routinely administer medications. If your child requires medication, please time the dosage so that you can administer it before or after school. Exceptions are made in the case of severe allergies which must be treated immediately. If your child has a severe allergy, we require a medication form to be completed and signed by the parent as well as a Physician’s “Emergency Plan of Action” with clear directions for administering the medication. This form must be received by the first day of school and must also be accompanied by a ‘possible side-effects’ sheet that you may get from the pharmacist. This form will be kept in the office with the medication. According to TDFPS, all medication must be kept

in the original container and clearly state the following information: the child's name, the doctor's name, prescribed dosage, and date. No over the counter medication will be administered without a doctor's note. You will be notified if medication was administered to your child.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency, we will notify the parent by phone. If neither parent can be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts listed on the registration form. The program will provide first aid and take appropriate measures including contacting Emergency Medical Services. The program will arrange for emergency transportation to the preferred emergency hospital listed on the registration form or the nearest medical facility if necessary. When necessary, children will be transported by an ambulance or other such emergency vehicle.

*Please note: The severity of the emergency will determine the sequence of events. For children with severe allergies, we will follow the Physician's "Emergency Plan of Action". Teachers are required to have current First Aid and CPR Certification.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In order to provide the safest environment for your child, we have developed the following procedures to handle emergency situations.

- Threats from unauthorized visitors– building is locked from 9:45 am until 1:15 pm. Visitors must enter through the main door of the Church and check in with the school office.
- Weather related emergency-All staff and children will report to assigned areas until the danger passes.
- Fire or internal chemical/gas emergency-Observe normal fire drill procedures. Evacuate to South Shore Montessori School, if necessary.
- Environmental Threats- When officials advise us to shelter in place, all staff and children will re-enter the building, if outdoors. The heat or air conditioning will be turned off. All exterior doors will be locked.

No one, including parents, visitors and staff may enter or leave the building until an 'all clear' has been announced.

Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program has adopted the following protocol based on 4 actions that staff and students take during an incident or emergency.

The actions are :

- Lockout (Secure the Perimeter)**
- Avoid, Deny, Defend (For intruders in the building)**
- Evacuate (in the case of fire to the designated location)**
- Shelter (for Environmental Hazard or Severe Weather).**

*In the event the center must close, parents will be contacted by HH personnel by phone, text, and/or email and informed where to locate their children. Please keep all emergency contact information up to date.

**Bay Harbour United Methodist Church has been designated as a Red Cross Shelter.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather, stay tuned to radio and television stations and CCISD's website (www.ccisd.net) for announcements of school closings or delays. Happy Harbour will observe CCISD decisions to close on those days. Parents will be notified of delays by email or calls from staff.

PROGRAM CALENDAR AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Happy Harbour ECP classes are in session Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM until 1:30 PM. Two days, three days, four days, and five days per week classes are offered. School will begin in September and end in late May. The program follows the Clear Creek Independent School District schedule with occasional exceptions. Because our teachers are also moms of school-age children, we observe CCISD Early Release Days if scheduled by the district. Our release time will be 11:30 AM on those days. Please refer to the calendar for exact dates.

CONFERENCES

Anytime a parent needs to speak with a teacher or the Director, a conference will be arranged. In the event that your child's teacher feels the need for a conference, we will schedule one at the convenience of all parties.

Conferences for four year old children will be held prior to registration in late January or early February. Teachers will post a schedule for you to sign up for a time that is convenient for you.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

School will not be in session for two additional days in late January so that the entire staff may attend the Early Childhood Methodist Conference. Our staff benefits tremendously from this training and, in turn, is able to provide the very best program for your children. Teachers are required by TDFPS to obtain twenty-four (24) hours of training each year to improve their skills.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Meet the Teacher Day-Parents and children are invited to the classrooms prior to school starting to meet their teacher and get acquainted with the classroom.

Parent Orientation -On “Meet the Teacher Day”, we invite you to a brief meeting/chapel celebration. We will discuss important information about our program and celebrate the beginning of the school year.

Fall Festival - Held in October, this is a fun-filled day planned for the children by parent volunteers. There will be games and craft activities for all children to enjoy.

Open House– This is held one evening in the fall to allow parents and siblings to visit the classrooms.
Christmas Program – A musical program to celebrate this special time of the year is presented by the children of Happy Harbour during the school day. Parents and relatives are invited to attend this event.

Rodeo – Held in February or March to celebrate rodeo days, this is a one day event filled with rodeo activities and crafts. This event is organized and run by parent volunteers.

Volunteer Reception – A special event will be provided by the Happy Harbour staff in appreciation of our volunteers who work hard for us throughout the school year. This takes place in late spring.

Graduation – Graduation for four-year-olds is held in May. This is an evening event planned so families can attend. The Happy Harbour Board and staff organize the event. Individual cap and gown pictures will be taken earlier in the spring and are available to purchase prior to graduation night.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We depend on parents who help as classroom volunteers and special event volunteers. There are many opportunities to help. There will be sign-ups available for special events and committees that coordinate these events. We want your input and help and couldn't have them without you. Please see the monthly newsletter for volunteer opportunities.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Parents are welcome in our center. If you would like to observe your child or program activities please stop in the office for security purposes and we will direct you to an area where you may observe your child.

SECURITY

For your child's protection, Happy Harbour doors will be locked at 9:45am and will be unlocked at 1:15 pm. If you need to pick up your child early or are arriving after 9:45, please use the front door of the Church.

WEAPONS PROHIBITED

TDFPS State licensing prohibits firearms and other weapons on the school premises unless carried by a trained law enforcement official who is certified to carry weapons.

CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS

Because our program is designed to allow your child to develop through creative, hands-on, sometimes messy activities, please dress your child in appropriate play clothes. Children should wear closed toe shoes for safety and to take advantage of all large motor activities indoors and outdoors.

Please send diapers for two year olds who require diaper changes. For children in the twos classes who are beginning to potty train, please use Pull-ups. All ages need a small bag or backpack. The bag/backpack should have a full change of clothes (including shoes, socks, and underwear) as accidents sometimes happen. It is important to mark your child's belongings for identification. All personal belongings should be marked.

TOYS & PETS

All toys should be left at home unless they are requested by your child's teachers. We cannot guarantee the safekeeping of a special (or expensive) toy. In the beginning of the school year, younger children especially may be calmed by a special security object and this is allowed. Pets are not allowed.

Teachers may choose to bring animals or 'creatures' into the classroom to enhance the learning experience of the children. In those special cases, parents will be given notice so they are aware.

EXCLUSIONS

We do not offer field trips because of the requirements by TDFPS for these events. Teachers may suggest places of interest that families may take their children as a follow-up to classroom learning. Water activities such as swimming, sprinkler play, and splashing/wading pools are not offered at Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program because of the requirements by TDFPS for these activities. Water play may be incorporated in sensory tables and playground activities.

Transportation is not provided by Happy Harbour Early Childhood Program.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Child care personnel are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to Children's Protective Services. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns and to request information about child abuse and neglect from the teachers. When a person makes a report of suspected child abuse, he/she is immune from any liability unless a complaint is made with malicious intent or revenge.

There are three kinds of abuse:

1. Physical abuse: inflicting bodily injury on a child (beating, burning, etc.)
2. Sexual abuse: using a child in or exposing him/her to sexual activities, with or without the child's consent.
3. Emotional/Verbal abuse: demanding that the child do more than he or she is able to do, severely criticizing or humiliating him/her for not living up to demand, or placing upon the child unclear requirements that the child cannot understand.

There are two kinds of neglect:

1. Physical neglect: failure to provide enough food, clothing, shelter, or medical care; failure to provide adequate education, guidance or supervision.
2. Emotional neglect: failure to give a child the love and affection he/she needs.

To report suspected Abuse and Neglect: 1-800-252-5400 or www.dfps.state.tx.us. Instructions are also posted on the Parent Board.

Happy Harbour is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Happy Harbour adheres to the established Minimum Standards Code regarding child care.

A copy of Texas Minimum Standards Rules is available to review upon request. They are also available online at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

The most recent DFPS annual inspection report is posted on the Parent Board in the hallway just outside the office. The current licensing phone number is: 713 940-3009

Other inspection reports are also available upon request.

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Thank you for your cooperation with Happy Harbour's policies. We feel that these policies will help us provide a safe, healthy, and rewarding program for your child.

Please sign and return the following handbook receipt page to the school office.

HAPPY HARBOUR ECP PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My child has my permission to participate in water table play (yes___ or no___)

My signature below indicates that:

- I have received and read a copy of the Parent Handbook outlining the policies for Happy Harbour ECP.
- I agree to abide by the policies as outlined in the handbook.
- I understand that the registration fee and the advance tuition payment are not refundable.
- I understand that tuition is due on the 1st of each month. A late fee of \$20 will be assessed after the 10th of each month. Failure to pay tuition when due may result in termination of my child's enrollment in the program.
- A NSF fee of \$30.00 will be assessed for returned checks.
- I agree to give at least two (2) weeks' notice of withdrawal from the program. I understand that to apply the May 2016 prepaid tuition to my child's last month, written notice of withdrawal must be received by the 10th of the last month attending. I also understand that May 2016 tuition cannot be applied to the month of April.
- Parent/teacher/director conferences are available upon request.
- I understand that my child will attend Chapel one day per week.
- Happy Harbour ECP does not provide transportation or field trips.
- In the case of an emergency, I hereby consent for my child to be transported and supervised by the operation's employees.

PLEASE COMPLETE A SEPARATE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN WHO ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED AT HAPPY HARBOUR ECP:

Name of Child _____
(Please Print)

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

(Email address that we should use for Happy Harbour communication)