PARENT HANDBOOK

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Introduction

Welcome to Heartland Child Care Ministry (HCCM), a non-profit childcare located within Heartland Community Church in Tippecanoe County. HCCM is a registered ministry that adheres to all State and County regulations and operates with an open-door policy for all families during normal business hours.

Purpose

The purpose of HCCM is to glorify God by providing a Christ-centered, safe, and nurturing environment for children ages 6 weeks through 5th grade.

Hours of Operation

HCCM is open from 7:00 a.m. – 5:45 p.m. Monday through Friday.
Your child's attendance may not exceed 10 hours per day.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up

Heartland Community Church is a secure building. All children will be dropped off and picked up in the airlock just inside the front doors. Children will only be released to pre-authorized adults on your pick-up list with proper identification. We will request a photo ID for anyone we do not recognize.

If a child will not be following their normal schedule, it is important to notify the Director of the schedule changes by 9:00 a.m.

Sign-In/Sign-Out

Parents are required to sign their child(ren) in and out ***daily*** via the Brightwheel App. This documentation is critical during emergency situations and necessary for accurate record keeping.

Any non-parental adult dropping off or picking up a child is required to sign the child(ren) in/out on the notebook provided in the airlock.

Enrollment Policy

Enrollment is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Your child is not enrolled until the enrollment fee is paid and all paperwork has been submitted.

Enrollment Fees

A non-refundable fee of $50 per child is due at the time of acceptance of your child into Heartland Child Care Ministry. This secures the child's spot, and covers expenses, supplies, educational material, and paperwork. This fee is due annually by June 1st for children attending the child care and the Before/After School program.

Tuition Policy

Normal weekly fees are due in full **Monday of each week** regardless of illness, holidays, building closures, bad weather, parents off work, etc. HCCM is required to pay rent, salaries, and all other operational expenses even when children are absent. There will be no tuition discounts unless the vacation credit, or the withdraw benefit is utilized.

Children that attend part-time and require care on an unscheduled day may pay for an additional day if there is space available. Switching days is not permitted without prior approval from the Director. Dropping a child off on an unscheduled day could result in the child being turned away due to lack of space or unacceptable child/staff ratios.

A late fee of **$20** will be added to your account for each late week up to two weeks. Any account more than two weeks past due, without special arrangements, will result in the loss of placement. New enrollment fees will apply at the time of re-enrollment. **(If a hardship arises, please bring this to the attention of the Director BEFORE the account is past due. Special arrangements must be made with the Director and agreed upon in writing.)**

All payments must be paid through the Brightwheel app.

An additional fee of 2.7% of the total amount paid will be charged for all credit/debit card payments. To avoid these charges, payment can be made through Brightwheel as an ACH payment.

Tuition Fees

Program	Full-time (4-5 days/week)	Part-time (1-3 days/week)
Infants (6 wks. – 1 yr)	$235.00/week	$185.00/week
Toddlers (1 -2 yrs)	$225.00/week	$180.00/week
Preschool (3-5 yrs)	$210.00/week	$175.00/week
Pre-K (M, W, F)	$210.00/month	NA
Before/After School Care	$85/week (AM & PM)	$70/week (AM **OR** PM)

***Fees are subject to change.**

Discounts (choose one):

- **Family:** 10% discount 2nd child (older of the two children)
  20% discount 3rd child (oldest of three children)
- **Heartland Members (Active Status):** 10% discount on tuition fees

Late Pick-Up Fees

Children picked up after 5:45 p.m. will be charged a late fee of $5.00/per minute/per child. If you will be late, please send a message through Brightwheel or call HCCM so that appropriate staffing arrangements can be made. If HCCM does not receive notification, emergency contacts on file will be called. Please make every effort to be on time. Our staff have families and appointment obligations to honor.

Preschool Policy

Preschool class is held from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday beginning the Wednesday following Labor Day though the Wednesday in May prior to the last day of school for Tippecanoe School Corporation. A complete calendar and supply list will be provided closer to the start of class. Children must be four years of age by August 1st to attend preschool.

Vacation Policy

A vacation credit is available to families whose child(ren) are enrolled for the full 12 months from January 1 through December 31. Children enrolled for less than 12 months (i.e. withdraw for the summer, Before/After School care, Pre-K) are not eligible for the vacation credit.

This credit is to be used for planned absences such as family vacations not for unplanned absences such as illness, etc. You will be charged for the days your child is in attendance and vacation credit will be applied for the remaining days.

Children enrolled full-time for the full 12 months (Jan 1 – Dec 31) are eligible for up to two weeks (10 days) tuition credit for planned family vacations.

Children enrolled part-time for the full 12 months (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31) are eligible for up to one week (5 days) tuition credit for planned family vacations.

Parents must notify the Director via email or through Brightwheel at least one week prior to the date the child will be absent to utilize this credit.

Withdraw Policy

Should the need arise to withdraw your child(ren) for four consecutive weeks, a charge of one week's tuition per child must be paid in full before the withdraw begins to hold your child(ren)'s spot. If these charges are not paid prior to the withdraw date, the child(ren) will lose placement and will have to re-enroll if space is available.

The withdraw option is available a maximum of two times per year for a total of 8 weeks per year per child.

Parents must notify the Director via email or Brightwheel at least **two weeks** in advance of the withdraw date and provide a confirmed return date to utilize the withdraw benefit.
Families may not utilize both the vacation credit and the withdraw benefit. If a child is withdrawn for four consecutive weeks after utilizing the vacation credit, a charge of two weeks' tuition per child per month must be paid before the withdrawal begins to hold your child(ren)'s spot. If these charges are not paid prior to the withdraw date, the child(ren) will lose placement and re-enroll will be required if space is available.

When the time comes that you will no longer require the services of Heartland Child Care Ministry, we ask that you inform the Director in writing at least two weeks prior to the

withdrawal date so the vacancy can be filled. If possible, more than two weeks' notice is appreciated. **You are responsible for the full two-week payment even if your child does not attend HCCM for the duration of the final two weeks.**

Holiday Closures

Full regular tuition fees apply for all holiday closures except for the week of Independence Day and the week of Christmas Eve through New Year's Day. HCCM is closed for the following holidays:

Memorial Day
***Week of Independence Day** - (no tuition fees will be charged for this week)
Labor Day
Thanksgiving and the day after
Christmas Eve through New Year's Day - (no tuition fees will be charged for this week)

***Note:**
The child care will be closed the week of Independence Day. If Independence Day falls on a Saturday, the child care will be closed the week prior to July 4th. If Independence Day falls on a Sunday, the child care will be closed the week following July 4th.

Building Closures

If HCCM is unable to open due to severe weather, building issues, etc., each family will be notified through Brightwheel.

If the childcare needs to close early for any reason, staff will message parents through Brightwheel and will call the designated number on file to notify you of the closing.
You will have **one hour** to pick up your child.

Illness Policy

Heartland Child Care Ministry cannot be held accountable for children who become ill. Germs are everywhere providing many opportunities for exposure. However, the safety and well-being of the children and our staff are top priority. HCCM staff will work diligently to reduce the spread of illness in the child care. You will be contacted immediately if your child(ren) develop symptoms during the day or if a situation arises that may affect your family.

The act of bringing a sick child to our childcare facility has a multi-faceted effect:

First and foremost is the effect on the sick child. When a child is not feeling well, they often require extra attention and comfort from the teacher. If the teacher provides that extra attention, the teacher must redirect his or her attention away from classroom activities and the other children. That, in turn, compromises the quality of learning and care for every other child in the room, which is an untenable situation. If the teacher maintains focus on the entire class and activities, then the sick child does not receive the attention and comfort that would be

beneficial during illness. Making the choices necessary to manage the situation is often stressful and disruptive to the teacher, which can also affect the day's learning and the overall program.

Additionally, illness in the classroom increases the likelihood that your child's teacher will develop symptoms that require her/him to stay home until such time that they are symptom free and well enough to return to work. The illness policy is in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of all who attend, teachers and students alike. If safe child-teacher ratios cannot be maintained, the result is the closure of all affected classrooms. All tuition policies will remain as normal even in the event of closure. A sick child in the classroom is a losing situation for everyone involved.

Medicating a child prior to drop off only masks illness symptoms, it does not make the child less contagious. A proactive approach will help maintain a safe and healthy environment for all involved.

Children who exhibit any of the following should remain at home.

- Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher in the previous 24 hours or the morning of drop off.
- Diarrhea or loose bowels in the previous 24 hours or the morning of drop off.
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours or the morning of drop off.
- Yellow-green nasal discharge
- Goopy eyes (signs of pink eye or conjunctivitis)
- Constant cough, sore throat, or congestion
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigued, overtired, fussy, not their usual self.
- Rash
- Strep throat
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Symptoms of any communicable disease
- Circumstances requiring more care than the caregiver can provide.
- Inability to participate comfortably in the center's activities.

Children may not return to HCCM until they are fever and symptom free without the use of medication for at least 24 hours. At the discretion of the Director, a doctor's note may be required for a child to return. Depending on the circumstances, the Director may, in the best interest of the child care, require the child to take additional time at home before returning.

Illness Outbreak Policy

HCCM will make every effort to remain open in the event of a serious illness outbreak, such as H1N1, RSV, or COVID-19. If safe teacher-child ratios cannot be maintained, temporary closure or altered hours of operation may be necessary.

If a positive case of COVID-19 is confirmed in any staff member, child, or family of HCCM, all families will be notified and asked to monitor for symptoms. All positive cases will be managed case by case following the most current guidelines from the CDC and the County Health Department. All tuition fees will remain as normal even in the event of a closure or illness related absences.

Please notify HCCM if your child has a communicable disease. Likewise, we will keep you informed of exposure to communicable diseases.

Immunization Policy

HCCM will not enroll an unvaccinated child. All children must be up to date with all state mandated immunizations prior to beginning care. The State of Indiana requires that all children have the following immunizations:

- DTP (f dose series)
- Hib (series of 4 unless your child has received the Comvax or the Pedvax which are three-dose series)
- Polio (3 dose series)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (1 dose)
- Varicella (1 dose or date the child had chicken pox)
- Pneumococcal (1 dose)

Once enrolled, if a child's immunizations fall out of compliance, families have 30 days to update all immunizations and/or boosters. If all immunizations are not up to date within the 30-day period, the child will be dismissed from HCCM until they are compliant. Depending on the duration, re-enrollment may be required.

Medication Policy

Prescription medication administered by staff must be in its original package, contain a pharmacy label, and accompany the HCCM pink permission slip from a binder located in each classroom.

Creams, ointments, and other topical products (i.e. sunscreen) are applied on children if authorized by a parent with a written permission slip furnished by HCCM. The HCCM pink permission slip is in a binder located in each classroom.

Over the counter medications must be in an unopened container accompanied by a pink permission slip. Due to the threat of Reyes Syndrome, HCCM staff will NOT administer any medication that contains aspirin.

A medicine spoon, cup or syringe must be provided by the parent/legal guardian and accompany the medication.

Medical Treatment

A medical treatment permission form enables any necessary emergency care in the event the parents/legal guardians cannot be reached immediately. This form must be completed before care begins. Parents assume full financial responsibility for whatever treatment their child receives.

In case of minor injury, the staff will administer appropriate first aid. Parents will be contacted immediately if an injury is more serious. If necessary, an ambulance will be called. The Director or lead teacher in charge will make all decisions regarding medical care until a parent or ambulance arrives.

Change of Clothes

Each child, regardless of age, must have a complete change of clothes including socks, underwear, diapers, or pull-ups to be left at the child care in a container labeled with the child's name. It is a good idea to have at least two outfits on hand for toddlers. All clothing and personal items such as coats, jackets, blankets, pillows, etc. must be labeled with the child's name.

Diapers and Wipes

Parents/legal guardians of children who are not completely toilet trained must provide diapers/pull ups and wipes. The diapers and wipes should be labeled with the child's name and will be used exclusively for that child. Teachers will notify parents when supplies are low. In the event HCCM must use backup supplies or purchase supplies for a child, the parents will be charged for reimbursement.

Toilet Training

We assist families with toilet training to ensure all children have success. We ask that you communicate your desire for your child to begin toilet training with your child's teacher.

Children who are not completely toilet trained must wear a disposable diaper or a pull-up type training diaper. Children are not allowed to wear regular training pants or underwear until they are able to tell the staff when they need to use the bathroom for both urination and bowel movements. If your child is toilet training, please provide additional clean pants/bottoms in case of accidents. Indicators that your child might be ready to begin toilet training:

- Child can pull his/her pants on and off with little or no assistance.
- Child tells you when he/she is wet or has had a bowel movement.
- Child can sit without support for five to ten minutes.
- Child can follow simple directions such as "sit on the toilet."

Meals & Snacks

Morning snacks will be served at 9:15 a.m., lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and afternoon snacks will be served at 3:00 p.m. Families will provide all snacks and a sack lunch for each child. Lunches that need to be kept cold will be stored in the refrigerator. Provide only what will be

eaten during lunchtime as staff are not allowed to serve uneaten food beyond lunchtime. Snacks must not require refrigeration.

Please provide a complete list of food items that may cause an allergic reaction for your child.

Naps/Rest Time

All children are expected to take part in daily rest time. Cots are provided by HCCM and are disinfected weekly or more frequently due to illness outbreaks.
Toddlers nap from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Preschoolers nap from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
If you plan to pick up your child during naptime, please notify HCCM staff ahead of time to ensure minimal disturbance in the classroom.

Parents must supply blankets and pillows labeled with the child's name. These items will be sent home each Friday, or as needed, for laundering.

Safety

Heartland Community Church and Heartland Child Care Ministry comply with all building and safety codes. The Child Care facility has been childproofed against accidents and hazards wherever possible.

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Tornado drills are practiced monthly during tornado season. Maps of exits and the emergency plan of action are in every classroom. In case of an emergency, each parent will be notified as soon as feasibly possible.

If an intoxicated or impaired adult insists on removing a child from HCCM, the staff will immediately report the incident to the local police.

The use of tobacco, toxic substances, and the use/or possession of alcohol or any illegal substances at the child care facility is prohibited.

Staff

The staff at Heartland Child Care Ministry strive to provide a Christian environment. They endeavor to show loving concern through patience and encouragement to each child and their families. All staff members are trained annually in Infant and Child CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions. Criminal History screenings, including background checks, are conducted along with a drug test.

Ratios

Group	Age	# of Children	# of Staff
Nursery	6 weeks to 12 months	10	2
Toddler 1	1-year olds	12	2
Toddler 2	2-year-olds	16	2
Preschool 3	3-year-olds	11	1
Preschool 4/5	4-year-olds/5-year-olds	13	1
Before/After School	6 years & older	20	1

Behavioral Expectations and Disciplinary Policy

We understand that part of a child's learning and growth involves behavioral coaching, correcting, and guiding. Behaviors that impact others must be addressed from time to time to maintain a safe, orderly child care environment and to help each child learn appropriate ways to interact with others.

Heartland Child Care Ministry provides loving, controlled, and respectful behavior correction and guidance to help a child regain control of their behavior, and for staff to maintain a safe environment. It is our policy to emphasize and praise positive behavior, give reminders, and redirect children to more appropriate behaviors. Other than monitored "time out" sessions, it is not our policy to administer physical discipline. We believe disciplinary measures are to be left to parents/legal guardians.

In most cases, simple verbal reminders are all that are required to help a child learn and exercise good social behaviors. However, continued behavior problems that routinely disrupt the classroom, including behaviors that put others at risk or causes injury (ex. a child who consistently bites other children) are the responsibility of the parent or legal guardians of each child. Such behaviors could result in termination of care. If a child bites another child and breaks the skin more than three times, termination of care *may* occur.

As we care for many children from a variety of family settings, we have found that Heartland Child Care is not for everyone. We may discover that we are unable to meet your child's needs. In such an event, the Director will discuss your child's needs and provide two weeks' notice for you to seek alternative child care.

Communication

We ask that you communicate to HCCM staff any changes within the home or family which may affect how your child(ren) feel or act while in our care. If you have any questions or concerns, please bring them to our attention as soon as possible.

Parents are not to communicate with the staff regarding attendance, scheduling, classroom situations or other students via text message, Facebook, or other social media. This policy is for your personal protection and the protection of all employees.

It is our desire that the description of our policies provides you with peace of mind while you are away from your child. We thank you for your cooperation and compliance.

We encourage you to ask questions and bring any ideas, suggestions, or concerns to the attention of the Director. Communication between the staff and parents helps Heartland Child Care Ministry run smoothly. We look forward to serving you.

May God Bless,
Katie Houser, Director

Fees are subject to change

Please sign and return to the Director at Heartland Child Care Ministry

HEARTLAND
Child Care Ministry

3900 E 300 N
Lafayette IN 47905

I have read the Heartland Child Care Ministry Parent Handbook in its entirety and agree to comply with ALL policies.

_____

Parent/Guardian #1 Printed Name Signature Date

_____

Parent/Guardian #2 Printed Name Signature Date