



Child Care Policies Manual

Effective June 10th, 2019

Welcome to Hidden Valley Preschool!

OUR MISSION

Hidden Valley Preschool strives to provide a quality learning environment based on play which builds confidence in children and prepares them for Kindergarten. We focus on hands-on exploration and discovery, while supporting development of interpersonal relationships and emotional regulation. We do not discriminate against anyone based on race, creed, religion, sex, disability, or national origin.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hidden Valley Preschool (HVP) has a School Year Session and a Summer Session. Each session has its own application process and tuition schedule. The Child Care Policies Manual applies to both sessions.

Hidden Valley Preschool 2019 Summer Session is open:

- 8:00am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday (after care available until 5:30pm)
- Monday June 17th – Friday August 23rd, 2019
- **CLOSED THURSDAY JULY 4th and FRIDAY JULY 5th, 2019**

Hidden Valley Preschool 2019-2020 School Year Session is open:

- 7:00am – 5:30pm Monday through Friday
- Start dates coincide with Duluth Public School's first and last days. (This manual will be updated once the school district publishes the 2019-2020 calendar).
- **IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR:**
 - Open House: TBD
 - First Day of School: TBD
 - Closed for Thanksgiving: November 28th and 29th, 2019
 - Closed for Winter Break: TBD
 - Closed for Memorial Day: May 25th, 2020
 - Last Day of School: TBD

Each family is contracted for specific days. Fees are discussed on each family's Tuition and Policies Contract.

Hidden Valley Preschool has a C3 License through the State of Minnesota which enables HVP to care for up to 10 preschool age children and 4 school age children at a time. Five-year-olds are considered "school age" even if they are still in preschool. We will have at least 2 five-year-old preschoolers along with 10 other preschoolers giving us a ratio of 12:1. If there are more than 12 children in our care, there will be another teacher present. Hidden Valley Preschool begins at age 33 months or when a child is toilet trained.

YOUR ROLE: CLIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Please feel free to observe or help out any time at Hidden Valley Preschool. We need to work together to ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential. You will need to keep the teachers informed about any change in your child's schedule, routine, or home environment. The teachers will do the same for any changes here that affect your child. You will notify us of any allergies or other health issues and provide us with any special written instructions for the child as needed such as eating, napping, allergies, etc. You will provide any information about the child that will allow us to provide high-quality care, such as an I.E.P. (Individual Educational Plan) or other assessments. You agree to participate in an annual evaluation of our childcare/preschool program. You agree to follow the policies of Hidden Valley Preschool as described in this manual.

VISITS/COMMUNICATION/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Communication between parents and HVP is essential if your child is to receive consistent, nurturing care. It is important that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that affect a positive outcome for the child. Your child will be happy to have the experience of the special people in his/her life working together and getting along with each other. This will allow your child to develop a sense of security. We are willing to work with you regarding any special needs or situations with your child. Any information you share with the teachers or director will remain strictly confidential. If you have any questions at anytime, please do not hesitate to ask.

The teachers agree to communicate regularly about your child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. We will post a calendar on the wall by the door you enter through and there is a monthly calendar on our website. Your phone calls (to 218-348-6814) and e-mails (to katie.hiddenvlley@gmail.com) are welcome to discuss anything regarding your child. Please keep in mind that the children are our first priority so we may not be able to discuss items at length when you call. We would be happy to arrange a conference time (in person or by phone) where we can give you our full attention and discuss matters in detail. If we don't answer the phone, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. You may also call to talk with your child anytime. We are open to suggestions, advice, ideas, and concerns to help us improve the quality of care your child receives.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RECORDS/FILES

HVP is required by law to keep certain written records and permission forms in order to care for your child. We will provide these forms and ask that you update them whenever a change occurs. These include and are not limited to: admissions forms, immunization records, policies and phone numbers.

TERMINATION AND NOTICE PROCEDURE

If Hidden Valley Preschool finds that it can no longer care for your child or the school needs to close due to unforeseen circumstances, we will give you a one month written notice and you will no longer be bound to your contract.

INSURANCE

Hidden Valley Preschool carries child care liability insurance.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Children should arrive ready to start the day. The entrance for Hidden Valley Preschool is along the side of the house across from the garage. Please do not allow your child to walk in without you, even if they are arriving with an older sibling. The child must be picked up at the door and the provider must be told that he/she is leaving. If your pickup or drop-off time will be different, please make sure that your child is informed in advance. The children are very comfortable with their routines and aware of who comes and when; it can sometimes make them upset or confused when things are unexpectedly different.

In operating our preschool, our first responsibility is to protect the health and safety of the children in our care. When parents drop off and pick up their children, we want to make sure their children are transported safely. When a parent transports a child under the influence of alcohol or drugs or fails to use an appropriate car seat, it creates an unsafe transportation situation for the children. If, in the teacher's opinion, a child cannot be safely transported to or from our school, the teacher will ask the parent not to transport the child and will propose that either the other parent or the emergency contact pick up the child; a cab pick up the child and parent, the parent will pay for the cab; or if the parent has failed to bring an appropriate seat for the child, the teacher will ask the parent to drive home without the child and return with an appropriate car seat installed in the car.

LATE PICK-UP

The children must be picked up at or before 5:30pm (4:30 for Summer Session, unless signed-up for after care). If, for some reason, you are unable to be here by that time, we ask that you call the school to inform the teachers immediately. At 5:45pm (4:45 for Summer Session) there will be a \$20.00 late fee applied to cover the additional expenses incurred when staying open later. I will send out a bill at the end of the month if you have incurred late fees. Late fees shall be paid no later than the 15th of the following month. Regular tuition is still due by the 1st of each month (for School Year Session).

PARKING

We will have the orange driveway fence pulled across the driveway, creating two parking spaces at the end of the driveway. Please be courteous to other families and try to park towards one side or the other, so we can fit two cars. If these spaces are full, you may park on 44th Ave. East. **Please note that this road is in a residential permit parking zone enforced September 1st-June 15th, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm.**

MEALS AND SNACKS

HVP will provide two snacks daily. Our snacks consist of mostly organic snacks, including fruit and vegetables from the Lake Superior CSA, and recipes the students help prepare. You are responsible for labeling and bringing your child's lunch each day and providing a drink for lunch. Please do not send gum or lollipops/suckers. You may bring thermoses for warm items. We also have a microwave available, so a teacher can warm food for your child.

For birthdays, we ask that the children bring stickers or another non-food item to share to be mindful of allergies/food sensitivities and to avoid an excess of sugary treats.

CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

Children need to be dressed in clothes that they can get dirty. Although most of the supplies we furnish are washable and we provide smocks with sleeves, we will not be responsible for soiled clothing. We will also not be responsible for clothing that get holes/wear and tear from crawling around on the floor. Children should leave an extra outfit here in case of spills or soiling. We will be outside most days (weather permitting). The

proper outdoor clothing must be left for the child each day on the child's jacket hooks. **Please label all personal items.**

Year - Round Supplies

- Extra set of clothing
- Water bottle
- Sleeping bag from home
- Small pillow (optional)
- Stuffed animal/comfort object (optional)

Additional Summer Session Supplies

- Sunscreen
- Swimsuit
- Towel

Weather – Dependent Supplies

- Snowpants
- Winter boots
- Waterproof mittens (2 pairs)
- Winter hat
- Raincoat and rain boots
- Jacket
- Sun hat and/or sunglasses (optional)

DAILY ACTIVITIES

We, at Hidden Valley Preschool, believe that children benefit from having structure in their lives. Therefore, we will have a daily schedule that the teachers will try to adhere to. However, our schedule is flexible and may change due to weather conditions. Some of the activities we will be doing include early reading skills, beginning writing skills, math and science concepts, music, social study awareness, story time, outdoor play, indoor gross motor play, dramatic play, etc. We are a “television free” preschool. The children do, however, spend up to 10 minutes per day using the computer for learning purposes.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

At Hidden Valley Preschool we expect all children to know the rules of the preschool. Our teachers allow children to play and enjoy themselves, but we feel it is important to follow these rules to ensure safety. These rules are set up to provide the children with guidelines of expected behavior. These guidelines not only teach children safety and respect for themselves, but also for others. Please respect and discuss the school rules with your child.

One of HVP's goals is to teach children to develop their own set of internal controls, enabling them to control and guide their own behavior. The teachers will always talk to the child about why their behavior is not acceptable, discuss what the proper behavior is, and make a plan for the future. We believe in natural consequences and will use this method whenever possible. If a child is not playing with a toy appropriately, they will be asked to find something else to play with, and try again later. If a child is not playing well with others, they will be asked to find a quiet activity to play on their own, until they are ready to try again. We encourage the children to do their own problem solving.

Some of our expectations:

- Stay in the school building, only go outside with a parent or teacher
- Walking feet must be used indoors (except under teacher supervision)
- Feet stay on the floor (not standing on chairs, couches, or tables)
- Use kind words towards others and an inside voice in the school
- Keep your body to yourself
- Listen to others the very first time they ask you to stop
- Take care of our school (do not intentionally break anything)
- Have respect for others and their belongings

- Clean up after yourself
- Share all preschool toys
- At quiet time, you must be quiet and stay on your sleeping bag (not talking to others)
- Art supplies or teacher supplies must be used with teacher supervision in designated areas
- Outside shoes or boots must stay in the Welcome Room

If a child is struggling with these rules, we will communicate this with the parent and make a plan to help them meet expectations. If we feel that our school can no longer offer the care that a child's behavior requires and if a child's behavior continually demands too much of the teacher's attention, taking away from the other 11 students, we will have to ask the child to leave our program. This happens only when we've exhausted every effort to make it work for both the child, the rest of the children, and for the teachers.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline consists of natural consequences. The teachers will talk to the child about why the action occurred, what would be a more appropriate behavior, and make a plan for how to behave more appropriately next time. Under NO circumstances will a teacher spank or strike your child.

BITING

When a biting incident occurs the biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm NO. The bitten child is consoled and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, and then redirected. A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day. The name of a biting child is not released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult. We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior. We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner. We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress. We make special efforts to protect potential victims. The first time a child bites on any given day, the parent will be contacted by phone. The second time a child bites that day, the parents will be called to come pick up the child. We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child from the preschool program.

TOILET TRAINING

Children must be toilet trained to enter preschool. (This means we also do not allow Pull-Ups at quiet time). We anticipate that children ages 33 months – 5 years old will, undoubtedly, have the occasional accident. We require an extra set of clothes to accommodate this exact situation. However, if a child is still learning to use the toilet, this requires a level of attention on the part of the teacher that we are unable to provide in this setting.

SUPERVISION

Teachers are required to be within sight or hearing of the preschoolers at all times.

QUIET TIME/ NAPS

Please inform us if your child naps. Quiet time will be about 45 minutes every day. If your child falls asleep during the day, they will be able to nap for up to 2 hours. Usually our quiet time begins around 1:00pm. Sleeping bags and pillows from home will be set up for each child, and they will rest, read, or play quietly alone in their spots.

SUBSTITUTES/EMERGENCY BACKUP

Hidden Valley Preschool has emergency substitutes in place if necessary. If a teacher must leave for an emergency, there will be an adult that comes in and takes the teacher's place as long as necessary. All substitutes and emergency backup teachers have had complete background checks through St. Louis County. If the teacher is ill, one of our substitutes will teach that day. If no subs are available at the start of a day due to unforeseen circumstances, school will be closed. This is highly unlikely.

TOYS

A small number of toys from home can be brought to school if it does not cause problems. Students should not bring toys that resemble weapons. We ask that if children chose to bring a toy to school that they will share it with friends. If they do not wish to share the toy, then it should remain at home. We are not responsible for lost toys. If bringing toys from home becomes a problem, we may ask families to no longer bring items from home.

ILLNESS AND MEDICINE

The illness policy protects the other families and children as well as our teachers. If you wouldn't want another parent bringing their child to care in the condition your child is in, your child needs to stay home.

Please consider the health of other families and the teachers' families, as well. Additionally, if your child is sick, he/she would rather be in the comfort of their own home.

We will provide care for minor illnesses such as a minor cold. The teachers will administer some medications provided the Medical Consent form is completely filled out and a copy of the doctor's prescription is provided. However, we will not care for a child who has a contagious illness, diarrhea, vomiting, or has a temperature of 100 degrees or above. Children must be free of symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, temperature of 100 degrees or above, excessive fatigue, rashes that could be contagious, thick eye discharge, or frequent/persistent cough for 24 hours before returning to care.

Parents will notify HVP when the child is not attending due to illness. It is also important that you notify us if your child comes down with an illness while NOT in our care in order to inform other parents so they may be aware that the illness may be coming.

If your child becomes ill during the day, the teacher will notify you immediately to pick him/her up, and the teacher will make every effort to make him/her comfortable until you arrive. If a child becomes ill or is injured during preschool and the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact on the Admissions Form will be contacted. It is required that the child be picked up from care within one hour of the parent/emergency contact being informed of the ill child. If you have given your child any type of medications (over the counter or prescription) please let the teacher know at drop off time.

LICE/NIT POLICY

HVP has a “no nit” policy. If lice or nits (lice eggs) are found on a child, the child’s parents will be contacted immediately to pick up the child from school. The child cannot return to school until all lice and nits are removed. The Lice Lounge is a fantastic new option in Duluth to help you with a lice issue. We also require you to report to us if you find any lice on your child outside of our care. We will inform all parents whenever a case of lice in our preschool is reported. No names of children with lice will ever be discussed.

Please refer to these websites for additional information on lice.

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>

<https://www.thelicelounge.com>

HAND WASHING/CLEANLINESS

Each child and the providers will wash their hands with soap and water before eating or preparing food, after using the bathroom, or after playing outside.

FIRE AND STORM DRILLS

Each month we will be doing fire and storm drills. The fire drill consists of the alarms being intentionally set and the children proceeding out the door with the teacher across 44th Ave East. For a storm, we’ll go into the cellar room of the basement where there are no windows.

NATURAL DISASTER AND EMERGENCIES

In case of a natural disaster or a medical emergency we will make every effort to contact all parents.

Following a fire we will be across 44th Ave East. If we need to evacuate the area, we will walk the children to the Duluth East High School. We do have an emergency kit with all of the necessary supplies. If your child is the cause for the emergency, we will make all attempts to contact you first and then your emergency contact. The teacher will provide necessary treatment for your child which could include calling 911.

SNOW DAYS/SCHOOL CLOSURES/ UTILITY FAILURE

We will be closed on days that the Duluth Public School District is closed due to weather. We will also follow their 2-hour delays due to weather. If Duluth schools close in the middle of the day due to weather, power outage, etc., Hidden Valley Preschool will also close. We will not make up school closures due to weather. If we have a utility failure that affects the safety standards for the children in our care, we may close for the day and parents will be notified immediately. If your employer closes early or is not open because of inclement weather, please plan to spend the time with your child. If a STATE of EMERGENCY is issued, we will be closed.

FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION

We do not transport the children in a vehicle. Please note that walks around the neighborhood, are not considered field trips but a part of the curriculum. If we leave the school building on such a walk, we will leave a note in the Welcome Room to notify parents in case they arrive before we return.

SMOKING/DRUG POLICY

Hidden Valley Preschool is a non-smoking building which means that no one is allowed to smoke on our premises. This includes in the home, yard, or driveway. No use of drugs or alcohol or abuse of prescription medication will be allowed by the preschool provider or any others who have contact with preschool children

during preschool hours. The director, employees, and volunteers in our preschool will not use mood altering drugs during the hours of day care operation.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The teachers and director are required to immediately report any suspected physical or sexual abuse, or neglect of any child in our care, according to Minnesota Statutes, Section 626.556

TAX INFORMATION

Please email me at katie.hiddenvalley@gmail.com or let me know if you need a tax statement at any time.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

By signing this contract, parents are acknowledging that their child's photo will be taken and shared with the preschool. Photos may be used in projects, hung on the wall or shown to touring prospective clients. Any photos may be shared with other parents whose child also appears in the photo. These photos will not have personal information on them and they are not posted on the internet. Parents phone numbers and addresses will not be given out to other parents or prospective clients without prior permission.

We have additional permission forms for the use of pictures of students beyond what is described above. One is for a private Facebook group for parents/grandparents that provides daily updates of our school day. The other is to consent to photos to be used for promotional purposes, including but not limited to our school's public Facebook page and at www.hiddenvalleypreschool.org. You should review these forms, and can always refuse the use of your child's image in these forums.

PHILOSOPHY ON TEACHING

Hidden Valley Preschool provides preschool for ages 33 months through 5 years of age. Lessons are research-based, developmentally appropriate, and based partly on the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. A consistent schedule and structure are important to prepare the children for the skills necessary before entering Kindergarten. While we are a Kindergarten prep school, we know that children learn through play. We provide the plan behind the play, by offering hands-on exploration and purposefully chosen games and activities on a wide-variety of topics.

Children need to have a relationship with our teachers to develop a love of learning. The teachers will provide an environment of security, encouragement, and variation in order to foster this love of learning. We, at Hidden Valley Preschool, find that it is easier to teach children while providing them with an atmosphere that includes humor, limits, love, and guidance.

PHILOSOPHY ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA

With the amount of electronic media available to our children and ourselves, we feel that it is overused and not monitored enough. Therefore, we do not have a television in the preschool. The children will have limited exposure to a computer and we will use the internet to add to our curriculum. Each website will be previewed prior to viewing for content.

TUITION AND APPLICATION FEES

SUMMER SESSION

A non-refundable deposit is to be paid at the time of registration for the Summer Session. The remainder of the Summer Session fee is divided between two payments, one on the first day of Summer Session, the other on July 22nd at our mid-summer point. Cash or a check written to Hidden Valley Preschool is accepted. Weekly tuition is \$210/week. Daily tuition is \$42/day.

	PAYMENT		SCHEDULE	
	Non-refundable deposit due with application	Payment due June 17th	Payment due July 22nd	Total Cost
5 days/week	\$300	\$800	\$800	\$1900
3 days/week (M W F)	\$200	\$500	\$500	\$1200
2 days/week (T Th)	\$100	\$350	\$350	\$800

SCHOOL YEAR SESSION

A non-refundable application fee is to be paid at the time of registration. This fee is in addition to tuition payments. It is used to hold your place, and once the school year begins, it is applied to our snack budget. It amounts to about \$1.50 per day for your child to provide healthy organic snacks throughout the year. Tuition is a flat rate monthly rate and is determined by how many days per week you are enrolling. Tuition is due on the first of each month. The first payment is due on September 1st (or at the open house) and the last payment is due May 1st. Cash or a check written to Hidden Valley Preschool are accepted for tuition payments at this time.

SCHOOL YEAR PAYMENT SCHEDULE

	<u>Application Fee</u> (Due with registration)	<u>Monthly payment</u> (Sep. 1st — May 1st)	<u>Total Amount</u> (Application Fee + Tuition)
5 days/week	\$300	\$825	\$7725
3 days/week (M W F)	\$175	\$550	\$5125
2 days/week (T Th)	\$100	\$350	\$3250