

Staff Handbook

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|--|---------|
| Equality of Opportunity Staff Requirements Personnel Records | Page 2 |
| Confidentiality of Records Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment Benefits Attendance Policy Safety and You | Page 3 |
| Standards of Conduct and Corrective Actions Suggestions and Comments Administration Administrative Authority | Page 4 |
| Sanitation ABOUT KIDS: Observing Illness Injuries Punishment | Page 5 |
| Observing & Reporting Child Abuse Emergency Procedures Transportation | Page 6 |
| ABOUT STAFF: Staff Policies Continuing Education for Staff Evaluations | Page 7 |
| Core Job Descriptions Special Project Agreements | Page 8 |
| Staff Meetings Job Title and Description: Director | Page 9 |
| Job Title and Description: Teacher Job Title and Description: Assistant Teacher | Page 10 |
| Job Title and Description: Aide Job Title and Description: Kitchen Aide | Page 11 |
| ABC's of Teachers | Page 12 |

Equality of Opportunity

Mount Hermon Playschool is committed to providing employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment. We do not discriminate against any employee or applicant by reason of their race, color, sex, handicap, or on any other basis protected by law.

Individuals are accepted for employment based upon their qualifications and ability.

Staff Application Requirements

The following forms must be completed and returned to the Director by each staff member prior to the first day of employment.

Things needed in the personnel records:

- Mount Hermon Play School Staff application.
- Personnel Record (Lic. 501).
- Child Abuse Index (Lic. 198A)
- Health Screening (Lic. 503).
- TB test and date
- Criminal Record Statement (Lic. 508)
- Employee Rights (Lic. 9052)
- Documentation of Early Childhood courses (copies of official transcripts, certificates)
- Evaluation of Education (Lic. 9095)
- Child Abuse (Lic. 9108)
- Finger Prints – Live scan (Lic. 9163) Must clear before employment
- Staff Continuing Education Record

To teach or work at Mount Hermon Play School the staff member must meet the following requirements:

- There must be a physical examination with TB shot within 12 months prior to beginning work at the Preschool.
- The staff member must be free from any communicable diseases.
- The person must be physically able to work with young children.
- No licensee, employee, volunteer, visitor, or parent with symptoms of serious illness or a communicable disease transmitted through normal contact may be on the premises of Mount Hermon Play School.
- Continued employment is contingent on passing the Criminal Records background check.

Personnel Records

Important events in each employee's history with the School will be recorded and kept in the employee's Play School file. Regular performance reviews, change in status, commendations, corrective actions, warnings, and educational attainment records are examples of records maintained. Your Play School Employment file is available for your inspection in the Director's office.

Confidentiality of Records

The confidentiality of all records is the responsibility of all staff. Student records are open only to the child's teacher, the Director, the Licensing agency and the Child's legal guardian. Any other person or agency must get authorization in writing from the child's parents or legal guardian. A staff member must not discuss or disclose personal information heard about a child or read in a child's record.

Staff records are only open to the director, the licensing agency and the staff member.

Harassment, including Sexual Harassment

Mount Hermon Play School believes in human dignity and the protection of its employees from the possibility of harassment, whether sexual, racial, ethnic, or any other type. Harassment in any form, such as verbal, physical, or visual, is strictly against our policy and will result in corrective action up to and including discharge.

Benefits

These positions are hourly and do not come with sick leave or any health benefits. Check with the Human Resource Department of Mount Hermon Association concerning any questions you have in this area.

Pay Periods and Pay Checks:

You will be paid twice a month during the school year. Pay periods end on the 15th and the last day of the month. You are responsible to turn in your hours by the day after the pay period ends to the director in her office. Pay checks are issued approximately 9 days later and are automatically deposited into your account. Your State and Federal required withholding payments are automatically deducted from every paycheck.

Medical Leave Issues:

Any leave for issues that require long periods of recovery will be reviewed and decided upon individually and on a separate basis for each employee by the director. There is no pay for leave time.

Attendance Policy

The success of our Play School program depends to a large extent on you, the staff member of the school, and your being on time each day that you are scheduled to work. By taking on this important position you are making a commitment to your job.

On occasion, circumstances may necessitate your being away from your position. If this happens, it is YOUR responsibility to notify the Director as early as possible (preferably as soon as you know that you are unable to work). It would help the Director to know why you are absent and when you expect to return to work. The Director is responsible for hiring a substitute or may ask you to call and secure a substitute. In the event that the Director is going to miss school he/she must notify one of the head Teachers and arrange for a substitute.

Chronic illness or frequent absence may result in your dismissal. Failure to call or report for your job will be considered as if you have quit, and your employment will be terminated, unless there was an emergency situation.

If you must leave work for any reason before the school day is over, you must inform the Director and provide a substitute to cover the class for you.

Safety and You

The safety of all employees is one of our major concerns. Safety must be practiced consciously every minute of each day by all employees. You are strongly encouraged to bring to the attention of the Director all practices and equipment which are potentially unsafe. Among the safety rules that have been established for your protection and which will be strictly enforced are:

- Mount Hermon Association and its grounds are considered a drug free area. There will be no smoking or drug use on or around the Play School.
- If you suffer an accident while working, or any other job related injury, and you fail to report any injury or accident you may lose your eligibility to receive worker's compensation benefits. You must make sure that an accident report is filled out. You must be on the clock and working to be eligible for benefits.
- In no case should you try to treat injuries, sickness, or give first aid other than what is covered in the section on children's health.
- Aisles, halls, and walkways are to be kept clean and free of debris and equipment.
- Horseplay is strictly forbidden.
- Always ask for instructions before using any type of equipment with which you are not entirely familiar.
- All work related injuries, no matter how small, must be reported.
- No employee shall leave the School premises with a child or group of children without a copy of the signed medical release form from their school folder. There should always be at least two staff with offsite trips.

Standards of Conduct and Corrective Actions

Groups of people who are working together for any purpose require certain guidelines pertaining to their conduct and relationships. Most employees will ordinarily not need to be reminded of them. We will strive to take a constructive approach to disciplinary matters to insure that actions which would interfere with operations or an employee's job are not continued.

Violations will result in one or more of the following corrective actions:

1. Oral Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Suspension
4. Discharge

Criteria to arrive at a decision for proper action will include, but not be limited to:

- The seriousness of the infraction
- Any previous infraction of the employee at our Preschool
- The circumstances surrounding the matter

We, the Mount Hermon Play School, cannot identify every possible violation of the standards of conduct. The following is a partial list of infractions which will result in corrective action, up to and including discharge:

- Falsifying employment application or personnel of other documents or records
- Fighting, horse play, practical jokes, or other disorderly conduct which may endanger other staff or the students in the school
- Engaging in acts of dishonesty, fraud, theft, or sabotage
- Insubordination or refusal to comply with instructions or failure to perform reasonable duties which are assigned
- Unauthorized use of the School's material, time, or equipment or property
- Damaging or destroying School or Church property due to careless or willful acts
- Conduct which the School feels reflects adversely on the employee or the School

Suggestions and Comments

Your suggestions are always welcome. More efficient procedures, shortcuts and other time saving techniques are eagerly looked for. Your helpful suggestions indicate an interest in your work. We want to know your ideas, opinions, or problems. Only then can we solve problems for the good of yourself and the entire Early Childhood Program.

Anyone having a complaint about a licensed preschool may submit that complaint to the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, 2580 North Street, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95131 by telephone, letter, or personal interview. The licensee may not discharge an employee because they reported violations to the licensing representative.

If you have any questions about your paycheck or how to do things please check with the director.

Administration

Mount Hermon Play School is an outreach program of Mount Hermon Association Inc.

Administrative Authority

The Director is the person in charge of the school. In the absence of the Director, the line of authority for decision making regarding the daily operation of the school passes to one of the Lead Teachers.

Sanitation

Hand washing is the best prevention for the spread of illness and disease. Staff will wash their hands after assisting with toileting, before handling food and after wiping noses.

- All staff members will wear latex free gloves and take other precautions when in direct contact with blood or other bodily fluids is anticipated, or when providing direct care to a child with an open wound, fecal incontinence, or diarrhea. The gloves will be removed and disposed of properly.
- All equipment, toys and surfaces will be sanitized in accordance with licensing regulations.
- Children who have soiled or wet their clothing shall be changed promptly from a supply that the preschool will have on hand.
- Change each child on an easily cleanable surface which is cleaned with soap and water and a disinfectant solution after each use with a chlorine bleach solution of one table spoon bleach to one quart of water, made fresh daily.
- Place disposable soiled diapers and gloves, if used, in a plastic-lined, foot activated, covered container immediately.
- Place parent-supplied soiled cloth diapers in labeled plastic bags which are kept separate from other clothing.

ABOUT KIDS:

Observing Illness

All staff are responsible for observing children for any symptoms of illness or injury and report them to the Director. The following procedure is to be used if a child has a sore throat, inflammation of the eyes, fever, lice, ringworm of the scalp, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or other illness or conditions having the potential to affect the health of other persons in the preschool:

- The child shall be isolated and given a mat to lie on.
- The child's parent, or an authorized emergency backup person when a parent cannot be reached, shall be contacted as soon as possible and arrangements made for the removal of the child from the preschool.

A child with a reportable communicable disease may not be admitted to or remain in the preschool during the period when the disease is communicable. The other parents will be notified by a note posted in the lobby at the check-in counter. A child may be allowed back when the parents provide a statement from the physician that claims the child is not contagious any longer, if required by the Department of Health.

The staff will not administer any medications except for allergic reactions such as a bee sting.

Any medicine administered will be recorded in the Preschool's Medical Log.

Injuries

Nothing but soap and water may be put on injuries along with band aids.

Any injury to a child will require an Incident Report to be filled in before the child leaves Play School. The staff person that witnesses the injury should fill in the Incident Report and should explain it to the parent at the end of the session, getting the parent to sign the form and then giving them a copy. The other copy is to be filed in the child's folder.

A daily record of injuries to the children shall be kept in the center medications and injury log book. Records of injuries shall be reviewed by the director with the staff at least twice each year in order to determine that all preventive measures are being taken. There shall be documentation in the log book that reviews have taken place.

Punishment

We do not think of discipline as punishment but rather as teaching self-control, Christian attitudes, orderliness and efficiency. We will never use techniques which are humiliating or frightening, such as physical punishment, verbal abuse, or forcing or withholding food. At Play School we use "Time away" and or "Time with a teacher" to help redirect and diffuse unacceptable behavior.

Observing & Reporting Abuse

All staff and volunteers are mandated by law to report all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect when there is reasonable suspicion or knowledge of such abuse or neglect.

- Abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual.
- Neglect is the failure, refusal, or inability, for reasons other than poverty to provide necessary care, food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.

Reporting is not a determination of abuse or neglect, which is done by the County Department of Human Services. Staff members who report in good faith are immune from civil or criminal liability. Staff members who intentionally fail to report the abuse are subject to fines or imprisonment under the law.

Procedures for reporting abuse:

If a staff member or a volunteer has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect she should:

- Notify the Director.
- Call: {CPS offices are open weekdays from 8 to 5. CPS workers respond to emergencies seven days a week, 24 hrs. per day, including holidays.} For Santa Cruz Co: Weekdays during office hrs. Call 454-2273, All other times call 426-7322.
- If there appears to be immediate danger and unable to reach Human Services, notify the police at 911.
- **DO NOT NOTIFY THE PARENTS.**

If there is disagreement among the staff as to whether there is reasonable cause, the staff member who suspects abuse or neglect shall report the abuse or neglect.

If allegations of child abuse or neglect are brought about a staff member, the same procedure will be followed. In addition State Child Care Licensing will be notified. The staff member will be removed from contact with children

All staff members will be trained in these procedures, how to recognize abuse or neglect, and how to document concerns in the medical log book.

Emergency Procedures

When evacuation procedures are practiced, or in the event of an actual emergency, the lead teacher will check attendance immediately from the daily sign-in sheet to ensure that all the children are accounted for. You will pick up the fanny pack containing basic first aid equipment (including bandages and other basic equipment) the emergency cards for each child and take them with you.

For Earthquakes:

The children will be told to get under secure tables and stay there until the danger of falling items is over. Attendance is taken and you will then move the children out of the building. **DO NOT STOP TO PUT ON OR TAKE OFF CLOTHING.** Outside in the safe area the children's attendance will again be taken and checked against the daily attendance records. You are responsible for getting the children out of the building safely. You will stay with the children until the threat has passed and we are allowed to re-enter the building, or a parent arrives.

For Fires:

In case of a fire, the children will meet at the entrance door of the classroom. (fire drills will be practiced at either exit door in case one of the exits is blocked.) Attendance is taken and you will lead the children out to the designated safe area. **DO NOT STOP TO PUT ON OR TAKE OFF CLOTHING.** Outside in the safe area the children's attendance will again be taken and checked against the daily attendance records. You are responsible for getting the children out of the building safely.

Qualified persons will inspect the fire extinguishers yearly. During the orientation you will receive training in fire extinguisher usage.

Transportation

We do not provide any motorized transportation of children. Our only field trips are on foot. When taking the children off the Play School facility, we provide 1 adult to 10 children. This may be accomplished by including parent volunteers.

ABOUT STAFF

The members of the Preschool staff will significantly determine the effectiveness of the Early Childhood Program. It is important that all staff members be committed to the Christian Ministry of the Mount Hermon Play School and its Early Childhood Program

The Staff should:

- Be Christian by affirmation of faith and example.
- Have an up-to-date knowledge of child development and how young children learn.
- Be able to relate to young children.
- Be in good health.
- Be flexible and able to adapt to change.
- Be capable of managing a group of young children.
- Be able to work well and communicate with other staff.

Continuing Education

Staff members are required to attend weekly staff meetings to plan curriculum, to review new educational ideas pertaining to early childhood education, discuss current issues and have input on the solutions of current problems.

Continuing Education will be decided upon as a group each year and could include but not be limited to any of the following:

- Formal courses resulting in credits or continuing education units.
- Workshops, conferences, seminars, lectures, correspondence courses and home study courses.
- Training offered by the Preschool through the use of guest or staff trainers.
- Specific Health and Safety training

Continuing Education must be pre-approved by the Director.

The experiences may be in the areas of early childhood education, child development, child guidance, health, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), nutrition as it pertains to child development, supervision of staff or the business or administrative aspects of the operation of a preschool or in communication skills.

The director shall complete at least ten hours of training in supervision or personnel management within one year of assuming the position as part of the annual continuing education requirement, if they have not previously received that training.

It is each employee's responsibility to see that Continuing Education credits are turned into the Director, and that a copy is put into their file.

Evaluations

Every staff member is hired conditionally for a probation period of three months while performing the regular duties of the position. During this period the staff member will be evaluated in certain areas which could include, but are not limited to:

- fulfillment of job responsibilities
- compliance with state standards
- compliance with objectives and goals of the Preschool
- physical, mental, emotional and spiritual competence to care for the children
- dependability and reliability
- initiative in implementing the program
- willingness to share the work load
- relationship with other staff, parents, and children
- attendance and promptness
- appropriate appearance

A staff evaluation for a probationary employee will be conducted by the Director at the end of three months. Regular employees will have an annual evaluation conducted by the Director.

Core Job Descriptions:

Core hours of work for “full time” teachers will be ½ hour before the children arrive and ½ hour after the children leave. All teachers need to work together to get the core jobs done before other projects. The eating of meals should be done before or after the core hours. It is assumed that staff will eat snacks with the children during snack time, subject to director approval. Special staff treats will not be eaten in front of the students.

Core Work Before:

- Prepare craft or project area for which you are scheduled
- Help prepare snack
- Put warm, soapy water in the paint area, and project room.
- Plus soapy, warm water & paper towels outside front door.
- Put out class sign-in sheet
- Check that cubbies names are up on cubbies
- Meet at 8:50 to pray with all staff
- Greet children and staff work areas at 8:58 AM

Core Work After:

- Vacuum as needed
- Sweep as needed
- Mop as needed
- Clean toilets & sinks, using “gray label spray bottles”, found in the locked custodial closet.
- Refill all paper dispensers
- Clean kitchen & do dishes
- List snack items needed to buy on supply list in kitchen
- Empty all garbage
- Clean table tops with “yellow label spray bottle”. Wipe dry.
- Clean toys as needed
- Turn down thermostats
- Check and lock all doors
- Turn off lights

Core Work during School:

- Before Snack, during big circle
 - Clean table tops with “yellow label spray bottle”. Wipe dry.
 - Get snack on the tables
- Before Lunch, during big circle
 - Clean table tops with “yellow label spray bottle”. Wipe dry.
 - Get lunch on the table

Weekend Conference Turn-around jobs in addition to the above list:

- Turn selected shelves around
- Pull special toys out of the room and lock in Craft Closet
 - Train cars
 - Manipulative (ask head teacher or director)
 - Dress-up clothes
 - Play House dishes
- All paint and brushes, cleaned and put away
- Puzzles
- Theme Books, replace with weekend books

Special Project Agreement:

For all special books and projects, the staff will collaborate and plan together to accomplish the project. An agreement will be filled in and signed by all involved with the special project.

Staff Meetings

Weekly staff meetings will be set by the Director and staff. Staff that are hired to work 5 days a week are responsible to be present for these meetings. If you do not attend them you are risking termination of your employment.

1. **Plan:** upcoming events and themes using the plan book and weekly theme cards. Projects and themes are decided by the staff together at the beginning of school during the staff planning days.
2. **Review:** The staff will share the days events and any challenging behavior that occurred during the day. They will make plans for helping the children and staff and program to meet the needs of all the children.
3. **Present:** Staff training topics can include but is not complete;
 - Child Abuse
 - Discipline
 - Safety & Health Issues

Job Title: Director/Lessee/Teacher

- Person to whom responsible: Director of Children's Ministries of Mount Hermon Association
- People for whom responsible: Teachers, assistant teachers, aides, volunteers
- Duties and responsibilities: The Program Director should:
 - Be able to effectively supervise a group of adults.
 - Be capable of handling financial and management responsibilities.
 - Be able to adequately communicate with parents and be able to relate to their concerns and needs in a private, safe setting.
 - Have the educational background and experience in Early Childhood Education as prescribed by the State of California.

Job Description

The Program Director should:

- Conduct interviews of prospective staff .
- With the aid of the teachers, plan a curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate.
- Plan and implement a safety program and plan and conduct disaster and fire drills.
- Provide for regular staff supervision and development.
- Plan for equipping age-appropriate indoor and outdoor areas for the children
- Be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program.
- Maintain an active system of parent-school relationships including monthly newsletter.
- Contact agencies and make referrals to help children with special needs.
- Supervise classrooms, building, and equipment maintenance.
- Represent the Early Childhood Program in the community.
- Keep student and staff attendance and tuition records.
- Keep all records required by the state.
- Assist with the preparation of the annual budget.
- Operate the school within the budget.
- Provide information to the Director of Children's Ministries of Mount Hermon Association on the ongoing progress of the program and staff.
- Evaluate the staff and program annually.

Job Title: Teacher

- Person to whom responsible: Director
- Person for whom responsible: Aides, and volunteers
- Duties and responsibilities: The members of the teaching staff should:
 - Be able to plan and implement an age-appropriate activity and or craft.
 - Be able to develop lesson plans.
 - Be able to work cooperatively with the Director, and other teachers and assistants.
 - Be able to positively communicate with parents.
 - Bring all concerns about students to director and NOT to parents.
 - Have the educational background and experience in Early Childhood Education.
 - Provide nurturing so that children feel comfortable in the center, especially at transition times.

Job Description:

The Teaching staff should:

- Under the direction and supervision of the Director, plan, implement and evaluate the Curriculum in accordance with the purpose and philosophy of the Early Childhood Program.
- Set up and maintain an appropriate classroom environment for younger children.
- Attempt to meet the needs of each child.
- Provide written guidelines in the plan book for substitute teachers.
- Give guidance and direction to teacher assistants and volunteers.
- Attend staff meetings and special functions of Play School.
- Take part in professional growth activities.
- Review and help carry out fire, and earth quake drills.
- Fill out accident forms as needed and give them to the Director and parents to be signed and file in children's folder.
- Assist with sanitizing toys, cleaning of restrooms, tables, kitchen area, and the Preschool classroom area.
- Assist with the turn around and set-up of the school room when needed.
- Supervise bathroom use and appropriate hand washing especially before snacks.
- Overall supervision of children's emotional and social needs including awareness of safety, health and hygiene.
- Responsible for daily housekeeping and general maintenance of the classroom, yard, materials and equipment.
- Supervises the set-up, serving and clean-up of meals and snacks.

Job Title: Assistant Teacher

- Person to whom responsible: Teacher/Director
- Person for whom responsible: None
- Duties and responsibilities: The Assistant Teacher should:
 - Be willing to work under the direction of the Director and a teacher.
 - Have some experience working with young children.
 - Have the educational background and experience in Early Childhood Education as prescribed by the State of California.
 - Provide transcripts to show course work that would fulfill the requirements for an assistant teacher permit.
 - Be able to positively communicate with parents.
 - Bring all concerns about students to director and NOT to parents.

Job Description:

The Assistant Teacher should:

- Recognize that the teacher is in charge.
- Never alone with children at Play School
- Assist the Teacher in general supervision and management of a group of young children.
- Assist the teacher with the daily classroom activities.
- Assist in preparing the learning environment, setting up interest centers and preparing needed materials and supplies.
- Help prepare and serve snacks.
- Help with general housekeeping tasks.
- Attend to the needs of individual children.
- Attend required staff meetings.
- Assist the teacher in any way needed.

Job Title: Teacher Aide

- Person to whom responsible: Teacher/Director
- Person for whom responsible: None
- Duties and responsibilities: The Assistant Teacher should:
 - Be willing to work under the direction of the Director and a teacher.
 - Have some experience working with young children.
 - Have the educational background and experience in Early Childhood Education as prescribed by the State of California.
 - Provide transcripts to show course work that would fulfill the requirements for an assistant teacher permit.
 - Be able to positively communicate with parents.
 - Bring all concerns about students to director and NOT to parents.
 - Never be alone with children at Play School.

Job Description:

The Assistant Teacher should:

- Recognize that the teacher is in charge.
- Assist the Teacher in general supervision and management of a group of young children.
- Assist the teacher with the daily classroom activities.
- Assist in preparing the learning environment, setting up interest centers and preparing needed materials and supplies.
- Help prepare and serve snacks.
- Help with general housekeeping tasks.
- Attend to the needs of individual children.
- Attend required staff meetings.
- Assist the teacher in any way needed.

Job Title: Kitchen Aide

- Person to whom responsible: Director/Teacher
- Person for whom responsible: no one
- Duties and responsibilities:
 - Inventory snack needs and list on supply list in kitchen
 - Buy snacks and supplies for the kitchen as needed
 - Fix the snack and light lunch
 - Clean tables before and after each meal.
 - Clean under the tables
 - Do the dishes
 - Take care of left overs
 - Stack chairs
 - Empty the kitchen garbage
 - Take out compost
 - Work on misc. prep as directed with any time left in your contracted time.

ABCs of a Christian Preschool Teacher

Allows each child to develop at their own pace

Begins the day with prayer

Cares for children with gentleness and respect

Devoted to making each child feel special

Encourages each child to discover who they are

Faithfully devoted to Biblical principles

Gives unconditionally

Happy to help

Invites children to express their feelings

Jesus is their best friend

Kind at all times

Looks at life through a child's eyes

Makes learning fun through a planned environment

New ideas are shared among teachers

Open to suggestions

Promotes positive growth through frequent praise

Quick to hug and give love

Reads stories with enthusiasm

Sings songs with joy in their heart

Teaches children about God's love

Understands the fear of being away from parents

Values each boy and girl as a special child of God

Warm and friendly

X-tra time is spent on many projects

Young at heart

Zealous about each day as a preschool teacher