

**Parent Handbook
&
Operational Policies**

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979-849-4602**

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Mission Statement

The mission of Holy Comforter Episcopal School is to provide a learning environment that prepares young children for transition to their next academic setting. To this end, the staff and curriculum emphasize the development of each child's physical, social, spiritual, and cognitive abilities in a Christian setting.

History

Holy Comforter Episcopal School began in 1977 as an outreach ministry with one 4-year old class and one teacher. Annual enrollment averaged 17 students for six years. In 1983, the school population grew to 26 students and two teachers. In 1984, a 3-year old class was added and enrollment grew to 43 with a staff of three. We have continued to increase both enrollment and programming. As we celebrate 45+ years of service, we are blessed to serve up to 65 students with a staff of 13. We continue to meet the needs of our children and parents by offering a variety of programs including part-time and full-time preschool classes along with a summer program.

Diversity Policy

It is the policy of Holy Comforter Episcopal School to encourage diversity within student enrollment, employment, and the entire HCES community. HCES shall not discriminate based upon race, gender, or national origin. We believe diversity enriches the spiritual, educational, and social growth of the HCES community. HCES accepts enrollment of children of all faiths.

Learning Philosophy

Holy Comforter Episcopal School strives to meet the needs of each student by providing individualized instruction that encompasses a variety of activities and experiences which focus on each area of development. An integrated approach is used in introducing concepts, thus creating classrooms full of learning opportunities that involve child-initiated, teacher-led, small-group, large-group, and individual instruction and experiences. All activities reflect the loving, Christian environment that is the essence of HCES. Through consistency, creativity, patience, and flexibility we provide fun, challenging experiences that encourage both a love of God and a love of learning in the children we serve. All our efforts are focused on providing a stimulating and supportive environment for young children. The following words from Dr. Maria Montessori serve as our inspiration:

***“The most important period of life is not the age of university studies,
but the period from birth to the age of six...
for that is the time when intelligence itself is being formed.”***

Enrollment at HCES is open to the public based on a first-come, first-served policy. Children must be thirty six months of age and potty trained to begin classes and can continue until they enter first grade. Openings are filled according to the date of application. Registration is held annually and returning students and HCEC parishioners are given a two-week priority timeframe before we open enrollment to the general public.

Programs Offered

All programs operate on a 10 month calendar with the following options:

Please refer to the HCES school calendar for holidays and school closings.

PART-TIME PRESCHOOL:

These half-day programs offer curriculum designed to prepare your child for kindergarten. We currently offer 3-day and 5-day programs. Classes are from 8:00-12:00 each day.

LUNCH BUNCH:

This optional program from 12:00-2:30 provides our half-day preschool students the opportunity to work on social skills and table manners thus, preparing them for the transition to a full-day kindergarten program and a larger lunchroom setting.

FULL-TIME PRESCHOOL:

The full-time preschool program is an extension of our part-time program and is designed to combine our high-quality preschool curriculum with hours that meet the needs of full-time working parents. Hours of operation are 7:00-5:30.

KINDERGARTEN:

Taught by a certified and experienced teacher who will uphold the kindergarten TEKS set forth by the Texas Education Agency. Guided and individualized techniques will be used and your child will qualify for 1st grade at the end of the school year.

SUMMER PROGRAM:

An optional summer program is offered if sufficient enrollment supports it. Summer registration is offered to students enrolled in HCES currently or in the up-coming school year.

Visitors to Our Campus and Classrooms

Parents and guardians are welcome on our campus at any time and are encouraged to participate in Chapel on Wednesdays at 8:30am, as well as, activities and programs for the students. If you would like to visit your child's classroom please stop by the office and we will be happy to escort you. Volunteer forms with dates of special activities are distributed at the beginning of each school year and may be acquired through the office thereafter. We are happy to make accommodations for visitors with special needs. Breastfeeding mothers may have a quiet, comfortable and private feeding time, if necessary, in our church nursery. Please let us know of your needs, we want everyone to have a positive experience while on our campus.

Tuition

The Board of Directors sets the tuition for HCES. Discounts are not given for holidays or days missed due to illness or family vacations. Tuition agreements are signed annually and reflect your tuition payment agreement. A two-week written notice is required to withdraw your student from our program. Likewise, we will provide at least a two-week written notice of any tuition or program changes to you.

Tuition Rates

<p>3 Day Program Monday, Wednesday, Friday</p> <p>Tuition Bills Monthly</p> <p>8:00-12:00 \$195.00</p> <p>8:00-2:30 \$270.00</p> <p>8:00-5:30 \$355.00</p> <p>Early Drop-Off \$25.00</p>	<p>5 Day Program Monday-Friday</p> <p>Tuition Bills Monthly</p> <p>8:00-12:00 \$310.00</p> <p>8:00-2:30 \$430.00</p> <p>Early Drop-Off \$25.00</p>
<p>Full-Time Program Monday-Friday</p> <p>Tuition Bills Bi-Weekly</p> <p>7:00-5:30 \$345.00</p>	<p>Kindergarten Monday-Friday</p> <p>Tuition Bills Monthly</p> <p>8:00-3:00 \$450.00</p> <p>8:00-5:30 \$575.00</p> <p>Early Drop-Off \$25.00</p>

How & Where to Make Payments

Checks may be placed in the designated portion of your child's BEE Folder. Please include your child's name on all checks so that proper credit can be given.

Cash must be turned into the office.

We check BEE Folders daily but we do not search backpacks so please do not place any payments loose in your child's backpack.

Auto-draft forms are given at Meet the Teacher or can be requested from the office. Funds can be automatically debited from your credit/debit card or bank account on billing days set by HCES.

Online payments are available –request an account set-up from the school office.

Credit/Debit cards can be swiped in the office. We accept Visa, Mastercard, and Discover.

Fees

Supply Fee: \$240.00 is due for each student per school year. This fee will be charged in 4 increments if not paid in full, a schedule will be provided.

Mat Fee: \$40.00 will be billed to a student who is new to our full-time or lunch bunch program. This is a one time fee for the duration of a student's time at Holy Comforter.

Late Fee: A \$10.00 late fee may be charged for tuitions that are not paid by the 10th of the month for part-time students or by the Friday following a billing day for full-time students. A billing schedule will be provided for all full-time students.

Returned Check Fee: A \$25.00 fee will be charged for all returned or cancelled checks.

The Board of Directors may terminate a child's enrollment due to an outstanding balance or non-compliance with a special payment arrangement.

Holy Comforter Episcopal School will offer partial tuition assistance for families that might not otherwise be able to afford the full cost of high-quality preschool or kindergarten.

Families may qualify to receive Tuition Assistance for the following reasons:

Multiple Children: If you have more than one child enrolled your family is eligible for a discount of fifteen percent on each additional child.

Hardship: If you have a short term or long-term hardship such as losing a job, an emergency medical issue, or other financial hardships then you may qualify for up to a fifty percent discount. Documentation will be required and assistance may range from 15 - 50% and will be for a limited time.

Financial Need: If your family's gross income is equal to or below the state median income of eighty-five percent then you may qualify for *up to* a forty percent discount.

To be eligible for the Tuition Assistance program parents interested should submit an application as soon as possible and the required documentation. Families will receive notice of their application decision within 30 days. Once notified of the decision you may contact Annette Jones at 979 849-4602 if you have any questions. Any dispute will be taken to the Holy Comforter School Board and their decision will be final.

To request an application for the Tuition Assistance Program, please contact Sciobhan Short, email hces-1977@att.net or phone 979 849-4602.

Consideration for eligibility will be determined using multiple criteria: student meeting requirements for enrollment and assistance, available funds, level of financial assistance needed, classroom space, application date, and full-time students will be considered before part time students. Tuition assistance does not cover registration and supply fees.

Arrival & Departure

It is very important to establish consistent routines at an early age. This sense of responsibility will carry over into your child's future school years and ultimately throughout his life. The core of our preschool curriculum begins at 8:00 each day and regular attendance encourages success.

Day School Campus: It is best to drive through the alley beside the playground, turn toward the covered drive-thru and let a teacher help your child in and out of the car. **Drop off begins at 7:50.** If you prefer to park and walk with your child to the door please make sure you walk with them all the way. Pick up times are 12:00, 2:30, & 3:00 using the same method of drive-thru or walk up.

Extended Day Campus:

Arrival—Students in our full-time program that arrive between 7:00-7:45 will drop off at our Extended Day Campus whether their classroom is at Extended Day or not. A staff member is on the porch to assist your child out of the car.

Pick-Up—After 2:30/3:00 all full-time students will be picked up at the Extended Day Campus. A staff member will meet you at the door to help your child out of the building.

Early Sign-Out: In the event you need to pick up your child early you will need to come to the office to sign them out. A staff member will bring your child to you at that time or escort you to their classroom.

Late Pick-Up Fees: Out of respect for our staff and so that other programs can continue it is necessary that you pick up your child promptly according to their hours of attendance. Each family will be given one free late pick-up, after the first time a late fee will be charged to your account for each subsequent time. The late fee is \$15.00 for the first 10 minutes (according to AT&T time) and \$1.50 per minute beginning at the 11th minute.

Release of Children: Your application includes a list of individuals who are authorized to pick up your child from school. For the protection of your child the staff will ask for the driver's license of anyone they do not recognize before releasing your child to them. You may call the office or submit a note if someone other than the persons on your list must pick up your child. The office will then fill out an alternate child release form for you.

Health & Wellness

Required Records: Immunizations, Health Statement, Vision & Hearing, Emergency Medical Release

Prior to the first day of attendance, each child must have on file in the school office a health statement, emergency medical release, and proof of current immunizations as required by the State of Texas. Vision and hearing screenings for children 4 and older are also a requirement. Any known medical condition that may affect your child's behavior or performance must be reported to the office before their first day of school or as soon as diagnoses is made if it is after their start date. If your child has a food allergy we must have a food allergy management plan on file.

Medications

Medications administered at school must be in the original container and labeled appropriately for both time and dosage. We will only dispense medication (prescription and non-prescription) in accordance to the label directions for age and weight. Parents must complete an Authorization For Dispensing Medication form and give both the medicine and completed form to the lead teacher or office. All medication and forms will be turned into the office where it will be dispensed.

Epinephrine Auto-injectors: Holy Comforter does not keep an unassigned injector on hand. If your child's doctor prescribes one you may send it to school with the appropriate documentation stated above.

Illness

Illnesses spread quickly among young children and we appreciate your cooperation in maintaining high health standards for our school. If your child contracts a communicable disease, please refer to the detailed chart with exclusion requirements at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/school-communicable-disease-chart> and report the illness to the office or your child's teacher as soon as diagnosed. The State also sets forth the following guidelines under which a child cannot attend school:

- A) tympanic (ear) temperature of 100° or higher; oral temperature of 101° or higher
- B) child is unable to participate comfortably in activities, including outdoor play
- C) child requires greater care which would compromise the health, safety, or supervision of other children
- D) diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, breathing difficulty, or other signs of illness

In the event your child develops a non-emergency illness or symptoms while at school we will isolate them from other children and call a parent to pick them up.

Sunscreen & Insect Repellant

There are times during the year when sunscreen or insect repellant is needed when we go outdoors. A permission form for the application of these is provided at Meet The Teacher. Child and family safe products are always used but if your child requires special products you may send them labeled with their name.

Health Checks

The health and safety of our students is paramount. In the event one of our staff notices a bump, bruise, scratch or scrape on one of our students our policy is to first ask the student what happened. If it is determined that the incident happened off campus we may take a photo and document our findings. We may also inquire of the parent to ensure they know of the incident and to learn more about the situation.

Injury

If your child is injured while at school, the staff will provide appropriate first aid and comforting. We will also document the incident and provide a copy to a parent. If the illness or injury requires immediate medical attention or is life threatening, the staff will:

- A) call 9-1-1 (parent is responsible for ambulance fee)
- B) provide appropriate 1st aid measures
- C) send for the Head of School or person in charge
- D) notify parent(s)
- E) Head of School or person in charge will accompany your child to the hospital if a parent is not available

Child Abuse - Preventing, Raising Awareness & Reporting

All staff members and regular volunteers are trained annually with the aid of the CDC's Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect materials. The following are recommendations from the CDC on increasing prevention that caregivers, families, and communities can act upon:

- Strengthen economic supports to families
 - Strengthening household financial security
 - Family friendly work policies
- Change social norms to support parents and positive parenting
 - Public engagement and enhancement campaigns
 - Legislative approaches to reduce corporal punishment
- Provide quality care and education early in life
 - Early childhood home visitation
 - Parenting skill and family relationship approaches
- Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk
 - Enhanced primary care
 - Behavioral parent training programs
 - Treatment to lessen harms of abuse and neglect exposure
 - Treatment to prevent problem behavior and later involvement in violence

Children under the age of 4 or with special needs are at risk of victimization. More information is available at cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect.

Phone numbers and information regarding suspected child abuse are posted on parent boards on both campuses and the school office.

The toll-free Child Abuse Hotline is available 24 hours a day at 1-800-252-5400 and can provide immediate help to you and your family.

Our curriculum consists of language development, reading, writing and math readiness, science discovery, fine and gross motor skills, art, creative expression, technology and spiritual development. Rather than aiming instruction at the presumed needs of an age-grouped majority, our goal is to individualize as much as possible within the time frame of school. A detailed description of objectives and supportive materials for each area of the curriculum is on file at the school office.

Dress Code

Students should dress casually in comfortable clothing that will be suitable for active involvement both indoors and outdoors. We take appropriate precautions during messy activities but spills and accidents happen so keep this in mind when dressing your child for school. *Their clothing should also allow them to use the restroom as independently as possible.*

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather each day and remember to label all coats, sweaters, hoodies, hats, etc. to help prevent misplaced items. To ensure the safety of our students proper shoes must be worn. Tennis shoes or other closed-toe, rubber soled shoes are best. ***Flip-flops, croc type shoes, and high-heels are not allowed to be worn at school.*** Sandals with a heel strap are acceptable but are very uncomfortable on the playground rocks.

All students must have a change of clothes stored in their backpacks in case of accidents

Physical Activity

Physical activity is important for a child's body and mind. We participate in both indoor and outdoor physical activity daily. Morning recess is 30 minutes long and takes place on our playgrounds, weather permitting. Afternoon recess is 45 minutes, also on our playgrounds. During mildly inclement weather we participate in physical activity under awnings located on both campuses. Classroom physical activity may be in the form of dancing, marching or stretching. Once a week our students attend a music and movement class that focuses on gross motor movements and coordination. See our dress code above for recommended clothing and footwear.

Snacks

HCES will provide morning snack to all students on campus and a late afternoon snack will be provided for all full time students. It is important that parents notify the office of any food allergies or dietary restrictions their child may have. In the event a parent would like to send snacks for a class they must follow the policies of Texas Health and Human Services which states that snacks must be packaged and sent in their original sealed containers. We cannot accept homemade snacks or drinks. Please see our guidelines for birthdays on the following page.

Lunch

Children participating in full-time preschool or the optional lunch bunch program should bring a nutritious READY-TO-EAT lunch to school everyday. Make sure to include a drink and any necessary utensils. Also remember to include an ice-pack to keep foods appropriately chilled and thermoses are great for keeping foods warm. ***We are unable to refrigerate or microwave lunches.*** We recognize that mornings can be hectic and occasionally lunch is forgotten. If this happens we will try to notify you as soon as possible to bring a lunch to school. If we are unable to reach you or you are unable to bring a lunch for your child we will provide a lunch and add a \$5.00 charge to your account.

Nap & Rest Time

State minimum requirements mandate a period of quiet rest following the lunchtime meal. Children are not required to sleep but the room will be conducive to sleep and they must lie still and quiet on their mat. Bringing a small pillow, blanket, and comfort item such as a small stuffed animal from home helps a child feel more secure while they rest. Children who are awake after one hour of rest time will be given an alternative quiet activity to do while the other children are sleeping.

Class parties: Class parties or special treat days are held to celebrate holidays. Your child's teacher will notify you of all plans and times. In respect for the teachers and other classes please do not arrive before the scheduled time if you wish to attend class parties.

Birthdays are a special time and we encourage you to coordinate with your child's teacher if you wish to send a special snack. As with all snacks we are unable to serve any homemade treats or drinks. All food items must be prepackaged and in their original containers.

Classroom Pets

Classroom pets are a great way to teach students how to care for and respect small animals. In the event one of our teachers would like a pet for their classroom (aside from a fish) a permission form will be sent home with each student in that class. The decision must be unanimous with all parents in agreement for the pet to be present in the classroom.

Parent Notifications

HCES uses mass notification in the form of Remind and Class Dojo platforms. Each parent/guardian is added to these platforms when their child begins school. Parents may access these via mobile app or website. Notifications may include school closures, reminders of activities/events or emergencies. Parents may communicate with the school office or teachers using these platforms.

Emergency Preparedness

All students and staff at Holy Comforter practice emergency preparedness plans monthly. Fire drills are practiced once a month at different times of the day to ensure all persons on campus know how to evacuate in the event of fire and where to go. During fire drills our meeting locations are set on campus but far enough away from the buildings. Other emergency drills practiced are severe weather, shelter in place and lockdown; these are practiced 4 times per year for each type of drill. In the event of an actual fire or other catastrophic situation on our campus all students and staff will relocate to First Presbyterian Church, 130 S. Arcola St. Parents/guardians will be notified via Remind with instructions on how to pick up their child.

Regulations

HCES is fully accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). As such, we are recognized by the Texas Education Agency as meeting all requirements set forth for early childhood education.

HCES is a state-licensed facility and meets all governmental fire, health and safety requirements along with annual inspections required by the state of Texas and City of Angleton.

HCES is a Christian outreach ministry of Holy Comforter Episcopal Parish operating under the auspices of the church vestry. A Board of Directors shall handle the directions and management of school affairs and the control and disposition of its assets. HCEC Vestry shall govern the Board of Directors.

In the event of any policy changes parents/guardians will be notified in writing within 14 business days of the change. Questions or concerns regarding any policy may be directed to the Head of School, 979-849-4602.

Minimum Standards & Inspections

Texas Health and Human Services Minimum Standards for Licensed Child-Care Centers and our most recent inspection report are available for your review at anytime by contacting the Head of School or accessing them online at hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations

Our goal at HCES is to encourage appropriate self-control in each child. Our policy is one of understandable boundaries and positive redirection that allows your child to develop acceptable behavior patterns and control their own actions. This accomplishment lays an important foundation toward a productive, successful future. This goal is best achieved through consistent, individualized guidance from both teachers and parents. In the event a child is not able to function successfully in the group environment we will discuss this individually with the parents to come up with a solution. If progress is not made or chronic destructive or abusive behavior continues, HCES reserves the right to require immediate withdrawal from our program without refund of tuition.

Godly discipline is the responsibility of every parent. Teachers and administrators, as part of their professional responsibilities, take upon themselves the task of assisting parents in this process. It is therefore the expectation of every teacher and administrator that parents will support the school in upholding disciplinary standards and will actively reinforce the student's understanding of the teacher's authority in the classroom. Parents who disagree with supporting the discipline policies of HCES should consider other educational alternatives for their child.

Students at HCES have a daily folder where behavior reports may be communicated with parents (both appropriate and inappropriate). Parents should check the folder daily. Please discuss happy, as well, as sad days, reinforcing the behavior that is expected by parents and teachers.

Steps for Resolution of Negative Student Behaviors:

If a child's behavior is 1) harmful to himself or others 2) threatening to others 3) wasteful of instructional time for other students 4) bullying 5) disrespectful of others, and has not been lessened through classroom discipline procedures of the teacher, she will notify the Head of School.

The Head of School, as the designated campus discipline officer, will work with the teacher to record instances of misbehavior and then meet with the teacher and parent to discuss the problem. This conference with the parent(s) will be used to discuss the problems the student is having and to plan procedures to put in place in the classroom to hopefully reduce or end the discipline issues.

The discipline plan designed during this parent conference will be implemented in the classroom for a reasonable length of time during which the child's behavior will be documented on a daily basis. This reasonable length of time will be decided on mutually by the Head of School, classroom teacher, and parents. This time allotment should consider the age of the child and the effect the behavior is having on others in the classroom. At the end of this designated length of time the Head of School, classroom teacher, and parents should meet again to review the status of the student's behavior. If there is no positive change in the behavior of the student the following steps of exclusion may be implemented following the approval of the HCES Board of Directors:

1. Short-Term Exclusion— The student will be excluded from school for 3 full class days. Upon their return their behavior will be documented to determine if progress has been made. If there is no improvement, or if after a "respite" period negative behaviors resume; Step 2 will be implemented.
2. Expulsion— Separation of the student from HCES. If this step is necessary, the child may not return as a student until the beginning of a new school year.

At HCES the same standards for behavior are expected from all adults associated with our students. There will, therefore be no tolerance of harmful, threatening, disrespectful, or bullying behaviors by teachers, parents or staff.

Conflict Resolution

It is the policy of HCES to resolve any and all conflicts at the lowest possible level of administration with those who have a firsthand interest in the conflict. If this cannot be successfully accomplished, then the conflict can be taken to the next level of administration.

- Level 1: Classroom Teacher
- Level 2: Head of School/Director
- Level 3: Board of Directors
- Level 4: Parish Vestry

Should any level be missed, it is policy to send the parties involved back to the level skipped. If the conflict personally involves the Head of School or a member of the Board of Directors (but not the Rector) then the Rector may act as mediator.

Policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable disease by employees

(746.3611 Minimum Standards for Childcare)

Protecting students in our care from vaccine-preventable disease spread from employees is essential.

(1) The specific immunization needed as an adult vary on such factors including age and overall health, as well as, persons they are in close contact with. Some immunizations given during adulthood may include:

Influenza (Flu)

HepA (Hepatitis)

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

While these and other vaccines are important, it is Holy Comforter Episcopal School's standing that this is a decision to be determined by the individual (employee) and their physician based on the level of risk the employee presents.

(2) If a physician indicates a specific vaccine is needed then it would be required for only that specific employee.

(3) It would be the responsibility of the individual to report this to the employer (Holy Comforter Episcopal School).

(4) For an employee to be exempt from having the physician indicated vaccine the employee must:

(A) Have a medical condition identified as contraindications or precautions by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); or

(B) For reasons of conscience, including a religious belief.

(5) An exempt employee must use protective medical equipment which may include gloves or a mask.

(6) An exempt employee will be protected from discrimination or retaliation. Required use of protective medical equipment, including masks and gloves shall not be considered retaliatory action for purposes of this section.

(7) A statement will be signed that indicates the employee is not placing a child at risk of exposure to disease by not having preventative vaccines or exemption.

(8) Any employee that fails to comply with this policy may be removed from the classroom until compliance is met.