



WELCOME

WE ARE PLEASED TO HAVE YOUR CHILD IN HAPPY HANDS PRESCHOOL!

THE TEACHING STAFF FOR THIS 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE:

Monday & Wednesday a.m. Class (9:00 – 11:15)

Aubrey Hicks	Lead Teacher
Sheena Johnson	Assistant Teacher

Monday, Wednesday & Friday p.m. Class (1:00 – 3:15)

Marla Schultz	Lead Teacher
Melissa Ackerman	Assistant Teacher

Tuesday & Thursday a.m. Class (9:00 – 11:15)

Paula Ellberg	Lead Teacher
Diane Smith	Assistant Teacher

Tuesday & Thursday p.m. Class (1:00 – 3:15)

Paula Ellberg	Lead Teacher
Diane Smith	Assistant Teacher

If you have a question directly related to your child's classroom participation, please call your child's lead teacher. The numbers are listed above.

Any questions or comments relating to the preschool program should be directed to the Director, Aubrey Hicks: Office - 815-875-2124 Cell - 815-876-0150

OUR PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Happy Hands Preschool is a non-profit weekday preschool sponsored by the Evangelical Covenant Church of Princeton. The director is responsible for the daily operation of the school. The director reports to the Happy Hands Board which has the responsibility for the basic structure and content of the program.

OUR PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

We love to see young children thrive, and we know that happens best in a warm, secure environment. Our program offers free-play periods alternated with directed activities designed to meet the needs of growing children.

OUR TEACHERS PARTNER WITH FAMILIES TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN:

- adjust well to new situations
- feel comfortable and secure with their environment
- learn how to reason and problem solve
- successfully communicate with others
- develop a positive self-image
- feel ready for Kindergarten

Our teachers are passionate about providing a quality education for every child in our care.



ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- A child must be three years old by September 1st.
- A child needs to be toilet-trained.
- A non-refundable registration fee must be paid.
- A completed medical form is due by the first day of class.

(See HEALTH REGULATIONS on page 6 for specific medical form requirements.)

TUITION FEES and PAYMENT PROCEDURE

Tuition fees for all classes are approximately \$16.00 per session and will be paid by equal monthly payments as follows:

Tuition

- 2 sessions per week class: \$109 per month
- 3 sessions per week class: \$162 per month

The yearly tuition is divided by 9 months so that the monthly payments are equal. Therefore, the monthly payment is the same regardless of holiday breaks or days off.

YOU WILL RECEIVE A YELLOW TUITION ENVELOPE AT THE END OF EACH MONTH.

Return the tuition in the envelope **NO LATER THAN THE 10th OF EACH MONTH.**

Payment by check should be made payable to HAPPY HANDS PRESCHOOL.

If payment is made in cash, you may request a receipt from the Director.

DELINQUENT FEES

There will be an **additional charge of \$20.00 for late payment** unless other arrangements have been made with the Director **prior to** the 10th of each month. Instructions on the envelope are:

“Please add a \$20 late fee to your monthly tuition payment if paid after the 10th of the month.”

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

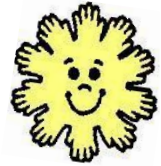
Please speak to the Director about scholarship availability if you need financial assistance. Happy Hands maintains a scholarship fund supported by the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Kay Wessel Scholarship Fund and private contributions. Anyone interested in contributing to a scholarship fund may receive more information from the Director.

REFUND POLICY

If your child is absent several consecutive school days **DUE TO ILLNESS**, you may contact the Director in regards to a partial refund. **Full tuition is paid regardless of occasional illness or family trips.** When a child is enrolled in school, the expenses to maintain the services reserved for the child remain constant although the child may be absent. There are no make-up days.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL

Please use the southwest door to enter the building. The Happy Hands logo → → hanging in the window of the southwest entrance indicates teachers are present.



PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD INTO THE BUILDING IF YOU DO NOT SEE THE SIGN. Children must never be left without direct transfer to an adult. The southwest door (by the alley) will be locked at 9:10 a.m. and 1:10 p.m. If you arrive after that you will need to use the front entrance where there is a doorbell.

CHILDREN MUST WASH THEIR HANDS WHEN THEY ARRIVE AT SCHOOL.

SCHOOL PICK-UP PROCEDURE

At the conclusion of each daily session, the teachers will bring the children to the southwest door where you will pick up your child. However, if we play on the playground or in the gym, we will dismiss from those locations.

PLEASE SHARE THE ABOVE PROCEDURES WITH ANYONE WHO WILL BE BRINGING OR PICKING UP YOUR CHILD.

PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than those authorized on the registration form, you will need to send a note or call the school to let us know who will be picking your child up.

SAFETY POLICY

Both front and back (Happy Hands) entrances to the church remain locked during the day, even when preschool is not in session. All visitors must come to the front door and ring the doorbell for admittance. Security cameras at both entrances help us to identify any safety risks connected to people desiring admittance.

The only time that the Happy Hands entrance to the church will be unlocked is during entrance and dismissal of students. A preschool staff member will personally monitor the Happy Hands entrance during this time. The door will be locked five minutes after class begins. Once class has begun, both doors to Happy Hands will be locked at all times.

WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSINGS

CLASSES AT HAPPY HANDS WILL BE **CANCELED DUE TO BAD WEATHER** WHEN NECESSARY. YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THESE CLOSINGS VIA TEXT MESSAGE.

HOLIDAY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Happy Hands will observe Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, Easter and a few other holidays throughout the year. Please consult the yearly calendar on page 8 of this handbook for this year's schedule of all closings.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate the various holidays by learning holiday songs, playing games, preparing special treats and doing special art projects. We feel that the low-key celebrations meet the needs of preschool children best.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held in February. Scheduling conferences mid-year allows the teachers to have time to get to know the abilities and needs of each individual child. However, if you have any concerns, you may request a conference at **any time** by contacting your child's lead teacher.



DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving positive verbal rewards. When a child demonstrates unacceptable behavior, teachers will try at all times to approach discipline with understanding of what the child's needs may be.

If necessary, children will be removed from the group for a period of time-out. This time-out is not a punishment, but rather a time when the child may calm down, remember what behavior the teacher is asking for, and decide for himself/herself when he/she is ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior. Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one minute per year of age. No child will be subjected to corporal punishment or verbal abuse.

If behavioral problems persist, the parent(s) will be asked to meet with the teacher to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way.

Any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of care offered by our facility, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be removed from the program upon consultation with the parent(s).

SNACKS

Parents are asked to provide **NUTRITIONAL SNACKS** several times throughout the year.



IF YOU FORGET YOUR SNACK DAY, please bring something for us to store in our cupboard. If someone else forgets, we will have snacks readily available from our supply.

For your convenience, the monthly sign-up sheets for snacks will be posted in the hallway by the entrance to the classroom.

HEALTH STANDARDS REQUIRE THAT ALL FOOD BROUGHT IN BY PARENTS MUST ARRIVE UNOPENED AS PACKAGED BY THE MANUFACTURER.

SUGGESTIONS for some nutritional snacks:

pretzels	pizza	apples
grapes	bananas	strawberries
veggie straws	graham crackers	pudding cups
prepackaged cheese	prepackaged popcorn	applesauce cups
vegetables & prepackaged dip	prepackaged crackers & cheese	

We serve 100% apple juice. If you would like to provide the apple juice or napkins in addition to the snack, that would be very helpful!

VSP DAY (Very Special Person)

Every child in Happy Hands will be chosen one day during the year to be the Very Special Person of the day. We try to schedule this day close to each child's birthday. Those with summer birthdays are also recognized even though it does not coincide with their birthday.

WE ASK THAT YOU HELP YOUR CHILD WITH THIS PROJECT WHEN THIS SPECIAL DAY IS NEAR. Your child may want to share some of the following suggestions with the class on that day:



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- a favorite book or toy
- pictures of a special vacation
- baby pictures or family pictures
- a pet (please notify teachers in advance)
- a family member (grandparent, sibling, etc.)



* VISITORS ARE WELCOME TO STAY IN THE CLASSROOM FOR
ONLY THE FIRST HALF HOUR OF THE SESSION.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Our daily schedules vary because of the need to be flexible with the different needs of each age group. All sessions include the following elements:

* **FREE PLAY** gives children an opportunity to learn how to make decisions, solve problems, use self-control and follow rules. Children learn how to make friends and get along with each other through play. We feel these life skills are an essential part of a child's education.

Our learning centers include: blocks, puzzles, manipulatives, sensory table, housekeeping area, library/quiet corner, writing/art table, science table and a counter top that we place educational toys and activities on that promote pre-reading and pre-math skills.

* **GROUP SHARING** offers a variety of listening and movement activities. Our stories, fingerplays and songs are related to the weekly themes. We have activities that get us moving and learning through music; learning to listen, focus and follow directions. FUN TIMES!

* **GROSS MOTOR FREE PLAY** involves large muscle activities either outside on our playset and/or in the fenced in area or in our gym located in the Community Life Center.

* **SNACK TIME** offers a delightful time to sit around the table and share stories and ideas. It is a time of getting to know one another and learning good table manners.

* **PREPARING FOR DISMISSAL:** We encourage children to become as independent as possible by teaching them how to put on their coats, hats and mittens. This is also a time that we can review what we have done during our time together.

EMERGENCIES

IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY DURING A PRESCHOOL SESSION:

- The staff will administer first aid.
- There will always be a staff member on site currently certified in Infant and Child CPR.
- The parent or authorized adult will be notified as quickly as possible.



IF IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION OF A SEVERE NATURE IS REQUIRED:

- The staff will call the local ambulance service, which will transport the child to the local hospital if necessary. A staff member will accompany the child until the arrival of the parent, guardian, or authorized person.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

The State of Illinois requires that a medical form be completed for each child showing that he/she is free from communicable disease and has all of the required immunizations. The medical form will be provided by a Physician or Health Care Provider and needs to be completed within six months prior to the first day of school.



CHECK YOUR CHILD CAREFULLY EACH DAY BEFORE TAKING HIM/HER TO SCHOOL.

IF YOUR CHILD SHOWS ANY SIGN OF COLD, OVER-FATIGUE, FEVER, OR OTHER SYMPTOMS OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASE, PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME.

STATE LICENSING STANDARDS REGARDING ILLNESS

Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists in which case exclusion from the preschool/day care center is required:

- A) Illness which prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;
- B) Illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- C) Fever with behavior change or symptoms of illness;
- D) Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness;
- E) Diarrhea;
- F) Vomiting 2 or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a noncommunicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- G) Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious;
- H) Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be noncommunicable;
- I) Purulent conjunctivitis (pink eye), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- J) Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- K) Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- L) Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
- M) Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
- N) Chicken pox (Varicella), until at least 6 days after onset of rash;
- O) Whooping cough (pertussis), until 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;
- P) Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Q) Measles, until 4 days after disappearance of the rash;
- R) Symptoms which may be indicative on one of the serious, communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code



- Plan to arrive at school NO MORE THAN 5 MNUTES BEFORE EACH SESSION.
- Pick up your child PROMPTLY AT DISMISSAL TIME.
AM classes: 11:15 and PM classes: 3:15
- Provide a backpack with your child's name on the outside of the bag where it can be seen.
- Send your child to school in play clothes so he/she can feel comfortable enough to enjoy playing without worrying about clothes becoming soiled with paint or glue. Tennis shoes or rubber-soled shoes are best for climbing and running.
- Water bottles, labeled with your child's name, are highly encouraged! Please make sure it is spill-proof with a cap your child is able to use independently.
- Mark outdoor clothing (coats, mittens, hats, boots) with your child's name.
- Encourage your child to be as independent as possible in putting on and taking off a jacket, mittens, boots, etc.
- Provide an extra set of clothes (slacks, top, underwear and socks) in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name. These will be kept at school should a change of clothing be needed.
- Children should not bring: gum, candy or toys from home to play with during the preschool session. Items can get lost or broken.

Amazon Wishlist

If you are looking for ways to support our program, we have compiled a list of frequently used classroom items and wishes! Please do not feel obligated to purchase anything. However, if you are interested in making a contribution, you can find the link by scanning the QR code below.



YEARLY CALENDAR

2026 - 2027



Mon. Sept. 7 - **NO SCHOOL** Labor Day
Tues. Sept. 8 - **NO SCHOOL** – Weekend
Wed. Sept. 9 - School Begins - Mon/Wed a.m. class &
Mon/Wed/Fri p.m. class
Thurs. Sept. 10 - School Begins - Tues/Thurs a.m. class &
Tues/Thurs. p.m. class
Mon. Oct. 12 - **NO SCHOOL** – Columbus Day
Wed. Nov. 25 - **NO SCHOOL** – Have a
Thurs. Nov. 26 - **NO SCHOOL** Happy
Fri. Nov. 27 - **NO SCHOOL** Thanksgiving!

NO SCHOOL - DECEMBER 16 – JANUARY 1 -- CHRISTMAS VACATION

Mon. Jan. 4- School Resumes
Mon. Jan. 18– **NO SCHOOL** – Martin Luther King Day
Mon. Feb. 15 - **NO SCHOOL** – President's Day
Tues. Feb. 16 - **NO SCHOOL**
Mon. March 1 - **NO SCHOOL** – Casimir Pulaski Day

NO SCHOOL - MARCH 25 - APRIL 2 -- SPRING BREAK

Mon. April 5 - School Resumes
Tues. May 18 - Last day for the T/TH Classes
Wed. May 19 - Last day for the Mon/Wed a.m. class
Last day for the Mon/Wed/Fri p.m. class

**Each month you will receive a Parent Newsletter that
will include the calendar of the month.
PLEASE put the monthly calendar in a place where
you can easily refer to it.**

HAPPY HANDS BOARD MEMBERS

The following people are responsible for the direct supervision and operation of the preschool. They stand ready to answer questions and receive comments from you. Any correspondence may be mailed to the church to the attention of any member.

Gloria Duffin – Chair
Linnea Campbell – Treasurer
Lori Schultz – Secretary
Aubrey Hicks – H.H. Director
Paula Ellberg – Lead Teacher

Marla Schultz – Lead Teacher
Kim Day
Mandy Hunt
Adrienne Erickson
Tad Smith

AN INVITATION TO CONSIDER

As a local church in the Princeton Area, we are pleased to offer Happy Hands Preschool to the community. We are passionate about the well-being and healthy development of children. This year marks our 59th year of pursuing these values, both as a preschool and as a church.

In order to build strong families and children, it is important to attend to their very real spiritual needs. We are a Christian church that takes seriously the need for everyone to find meaning in life. We believe that healing, purpose, forgiveness and wholeness are available to us as we get connected to God through Jesus Christ. If you are already part of a church, we encourage you to fully participate in it. If not, we welcome you to join with our congregation on our journey toward God. Even if you are not interested in being part of a church, our pastors are available to pray, to answer questions and just to talk about anything that is going on in your life! We pray for God's blessings upon you and your family in the coming year!



MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Mission Kids on Sunday mornings
Cov Kids on Wednesday evenings
Jr. and Sr. High Youth Groups
Prayer Gatherings
Small Group Fellowship
Camping Ministries
Vacation Bible School (summer)
✓ MOMCo

- ✓ *MomCo is a non-profit organization that brings mothers together, building community while encouraging and equipping them to thrive in every stage of motherhood.*

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING UP-TO-DATE TIMES FOR SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES AND WEEKLY PROGRAMMING, PLEASE VISIT OUR CHURCH WEBSITE.

www.eccprinceton.org

EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH STAFF

Derek Boggs, Sr. Pastor
Jessica Boggs, Pastor of Faith Formation
Alex Taylor, Pastor of Students and Outreach
Linnea Campbell, Office Administrator

The church offices are near the Happy Hands classroom.
You are invited to stop in or call 815-875-2124 for any information you may need.
Our church office staff will be pleased to assist in this.