



# Child Care Policies Manual

Effective May 24th, 2021

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## General Information

Our Mission .....	2
Our License .....	2
Ages and Numbers of Children .....	2
Contact Information .....	2
Tax Information .....	2
Hours and Days of Operation .....	3
Daily Activities .....	3
Daily Schedule .....	4
Philosophy on Teaching .....	4
Assessments .....	4
Philosophy on Electronic Media .....	5
Privacy Statement .....	5
Tuition and Fees .....	5-6

Allergy Policy .....	10
Birthdays .....	10
Quiet Time .....	10
Supervision .....	10
Expectations for Behavior .....	10-11
Discipline .....	11
Biting .....	11-12
Toys from Home .....	12
Rough Play .....	12
Toilet Training .....	12
Illness Policy .....	12-13
Hand Washing/Cleanliness .....	13
COVID Policy .....	13-15
Lice/Nit Policy .....	16

## Program Policies

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities .....	7
Communication with Parents/Grievances ..	7
Insurance Coverage .....	7
Student Records and Files .....	8
Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies .....	8
Parking .....	8
Late Pick-Up .....	9
Clothing and Supplies .....	9
Meals and Snacks .....	9

Sunscreen and Insect Repellant.....	16
Natural Disasters and Emergencies .....	16
Fire and Storm Drills .....	16
Weather and Utility Related Closures ..	16-17
Substitute Teachers .....	17
Field Trips/Transportation .....	17
Smoking/Drug Policy .....	17
Child Abuse/Neglect Policy .....	17
Termination and Notice Procedure .....	17

# 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, student-led exploration and discovery, while supporting development of interpersonal relationships and emotional regulation. We do not discriminate against anyone based on race, creed, color, religion, sex, disability, or national origin.

## OUR LICENSE

Hidden Valley Preschool has a Family Child Care License. Parts 9502.0315 to 9502.0445 of the State of Minnesota's Administrative Rules govern the licensing of day care residences. A copy can be made available to you upon request, or you may find them at <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/9502.0315>

## AGES AND NUMBERS OF CHILDREN

Our C3 License through St. Louis County 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.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Hidden Valley Preschool  
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School Phone: 218-368-6814

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**During the school day, we welcome you to call or text our personal cell phones. After hours or over the weekend, e-mail communication is best. Thank you!**

## TAX INFORMATION

During the month of January, Katie will e-mail you a receipt of payments made during the previous year for your tax purposes. If you should need a tax statement at any other time, just ask Katie.

## HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

Hidden Valley Preschool (HVP) has a School Year Session and a Summer Session. Each session has its own tuition schedule. During the admission process, preference is given to students enrolling in both sessions. This Child Care Policies Manual applies to both sessions.

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

Hidden Valley Preschool 2021 Summer Session is open:

- 7:00am - 4:30pm Monday through Friday (after care available until 5:30pm)
- **First day: Monday June 21st, 2021**
- **Last day: Friday August 27th, 2021**
- **Closed Between Sessions: Monday August 30th - Monday September 6th, 2021**

Hidden Valley Preschool 2021-2022 School Year Session is open:

- 7:00am - 5:30pm Monday through Friday
- **First day: Tuesday September 7th, 2021**
- **Closed for Thanksgiving: November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021**
- **Closed for Winter Break: Monday December 20th - Friday December 31st, 2021**
- **Closed for Memorial Day: Monday May 30th, 2022**
- **Last Day: Thursday June 9th, 2022**
- **Closed Between Sessions: Friday June 10th - Friday June 17th, 2022**

## DAILY ACTIVITIES

At Hidden Valley Preschool, we believe that children benefit from having structure in their lives. It is important that students have a routine and know what to expect next. However, it's also important that they can learn to be flexible and adapt to minor changes, such as having snack and stories outside sometimes, or extending a free play time so students can finish up projects. 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, and dramatic play.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00-9:15 Students arrive. Free play, individual/small group work time  
9:15 Morning Meeting  
9:25 Snack  
9:35 Choice time  
10:35 Outside  
11:50 Sharing. Story, game, and/or song  
12:00 Lunch  
1:00 Quiet time  
1:45 Free Play and art  
2:45 Snack  
3:15 Outside  
4:30 Summer Session day ends (after care available until 5:30 upon request)  
5:30 School Year Session day ends

## 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 on the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPS). A consistent schedule and structure are important to prepare the children for the skills necessary before entering Kindergarten. As 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, songs, books, 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 so students feel confident to follow their natural curiosity and foster this love of learning. We provide them with an atmosphere that includes humor, limits, love, and guidance. We support students and model strategies to encourage their emotional self-regulation, problem-solving skills, and perseverance. Focusing on their social-emotional development builds the foundation for a lifetime of successful learning.

## ASSESSMENTS

We believe in observing students to make authentic assessments of their abilities and development. We do not have structured assessment sessions to “test” skills or knowledge, but rely on taking notes throughout the day of what we observe, so we can share information with parents.

## PHILOSOPHY ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA

With the amount of electronic media available to our children and ourselves, we feel that it is often overused and not monitored enough. The children will have limited exposure to a computer. Occasionally, the students will have computer time to play educational games on [PBSkids.org](http://PBSkids.org) or [starfall.com](http://starfall.com). They are limited to a 10-minute turn. We may supplement curriculum with electronic media when appropriate and enriching (ex. watching short videos of a NASA space launch and zero-gravity astronauts at the International Space Station during Space Week). Each website will be previewed prior to viewing for content.

Teachers will use cell phones and computers to play music, respond to parent e-mails, lesson plan, and to take pictures of students for our secret Facebook group (available to HVP families only) for daily updates.

## PRIVACY STATEMENT

By signing the Tuition and Policies 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](http://www.hiddenvalleypreschool.org). You should review these forms, and can always refuse the use of your child's image in these forums.

## TUITION AND FEES

Each family is contracted for specific days and the corresponding tuition agreement is written out on the Tuition and Policies Contract, that must be signed and returned to HVP. The following is a general overview.

## SUMMER SESSION

A non-refundable deposit it 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 at our mid-summer point. Cash or a check written to Hidden Valley Preschool is accepted. You may also choose to fill out a Payment Authorization Form that allows us to take online tuition payments from a bank account you provide. Weekly tuition is \$210/week. Daily tuition is \$42/day.

## SUMMER SESSION PAYMENT SCHEDULE

	Non-refundable deposit due with application	Payment due June 21, 2021	Payment due July 26, 2021	Total Cost
5 days/week	\$300	\$800	\$800	\$1900
4 days/week	\$250	\$625	\$625	\$1500
3 days/week	\$200	\$500	\$500	\$1200
2 days/week	\$100	\$350	\$350	\$800

## SCHOOL YEAR SESSION

A non-refundable deposit is required with your registration form to reserve your child's spot. The remainder of the annual tuition is then divided into 9 monthly payments. 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 1<sup>st</sup> (or pre-school visit or first day of school) and the last payment is due May 1<sup>st</sup>. Cash or a check written to Hidden Valley Preschool are accepted for tuition payments. You may also choose to fill out a Payment Authorization Form that allows us to take online tuition payments from a bank account you provide.

## SCHOOL YEAR PAYMENT SCHEDULE

	Deposit (Due with registration)	Monthly payment (Sep. 1st – May 1st)	Total Amount (Application Fee + Tuition)
5 days/week	\$300	\$825	\$7725
3 days/week	\$175	\$550	\$5125
2 days/week	\$100	\$350	\$3250

## PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

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 changes 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 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.

### COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GRIEVANCES

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 hold formal conferences twice a year, but encourage an on-going dialogue throughout the year. 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 and there is a monthly calendar on our website. Your phone calls, texts and e-mails 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, by phone, by Zoom) where we can give you our full attention and discuss matters in detail. If we don't answer the phone, please leave a voice message or text 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.

### INSURANCE COVERAGE

Hidden Valley Preschool carries child care liability insurance.

## STUDENT RECORDS AND FILES

HVP keeps the following forms on file about each child. We are required by law to keep some of these forms on file to care for your child. We will provide these forms and ask that you update them whenever a change occurs.

### Forms Required for Enrollment

- Family Child Care Admissions and Arrangements
- Liability Insurance Notice to Parents or Guardians (for new students this information is included within the Family Child Care Admissions and Arrangements form above)
- Child Care Immunization (or a print out of immunizations from a medical facility)
- Allergy Information Form (only required for students with allergies)
- Permission to Administer Medication
- Wading Pool Permission Form (summer session only)
- Photo Release Form
- Getting to Know Your Child Questionnaire
- Tuition and Policies Contract

## DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP POLICIES

Children should arrive ready to start the day. The entrance for Hidden Valley Preschool through the gate between the garage and the house. 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 child's pick-up/drop-off time will be different than their normal schedule, please make sure that your child is informed in advance. 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. Students are dropped off between 7:00am-9:00am, and generally picked up between 3:30pm-5:30pm. If your pickup or drop-off time will fall outside of these hours, please try to let teachers know in advance.

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.

## PARKING

There is room for two parking spaces in the driveway (including the gravel). 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 44<sup>th</sup> Ave. East, obeying the alternate side parking rule in Duluth. **Please note that this road is in a residential permit parking zone enforced September 1<sup>st</sup>-June 15<sup>th</sup>, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm.** (That being said, we've never had a parent receive a parking ticket here).

## 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).

## 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 twice most days (weather permitting: no high winds, lightning, or below zero-windchills). You may provide your own rain suit, or we offer rain suits to rent for \$10/session. 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
- Face masks
- Sleeping bag from home
- Small pillow (optional)
- Stuffed animal/comfort object (optional).
- "Inside Shoes" (optional)

### Weather - Dependent Supplies

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

### Additional Summer Session Supplies

- Sunscreen
- Swimsuit
- Towel
- Water Shoes or Sandals

## MEALS AND SNACKS

HVP will provide two snacks daily. Our snacks consist of mostly organic snacks, including fruit and vegetables from the Bayfield CSA, and recipes the students help prepare. You are responsible for labeling your child's lunch box /thermos, 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. Students will not share items from their lunches.

## ALLERGY POLICY

We are able to work with parents to accommodate special diets and allergies. Depending on the severity of allergies of our students, some sessions we need to limit what food items are brought into the school for student safety. **However, for the 2021 Summer Session and 2021-2022 School Year Session we do not have any allergies that would require such a precaution.** We approach the subject of food allergies and sensitivities as just another example of how we are all different people, and how we all take care of each other. The students take a lot of pride in being responsible and helping keep their friends safe. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this matter.

## BIRTHDAYS

For birthdays, we sing Happy Birthday and conduct a birthday interview (each child gets to ask the birthday child a question about a favorite thing). If you would like, you may bring small non-food items (stickers, art supplies, etc) to give to friends. We ask that you not bring edible treats to share to be mindful of allergies/food sensitivities and to avoid an excess of sugary treats.

## QUIET TIME

We have quiet time everyday beginning around 1:00pm and lasting about 45 minutes. If your child falls asleep during this time, they will be able to nap for up to 2 hours. Please inform us if your child typically naps, because we will set up their spot in the Blue Room where it is quieter. Sleeping bags and pillows from home will be set up for each child, and they will rest, read, or draw quietly alone in their spots.

## SUPERVISION

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

## 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 what the problem is, what the options/consequences are, and then make a plan for what to do. 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.

**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.**

Some of our expectations:

- Stay in the school building, only go outside with a parent or teacher
- Running indoors must stay in the Welcome Room (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 (unless agreeing to rough play with friends)
- 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

## 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, how they might repair the problem, 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" or "Ouch! That hurts!" 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.

## TOYS FROM HOME

We allow some toys from home to 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 (not including comfort objects). 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.

## ROUGH PLAY

We encourage students to engage in whole-body gross motor play to support their motor development. At times, students may choose to wrestle and tumble with other students. We have found this to be helpful in their motor development as well as social emotional development. We have clear expectations for rough play and help supervise as children practice and develop their own boundaries. There are specific areas for this play, participating students must all agree to the play, they must tell others to stop if play becomes too rough for them, and they must stop as soon as another child asks. If children cannot meet these expectations, they will take a break. They may rejoin play when they have discussed a plan with the teacher and the other children feel safe with them returning.

## 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.

## ILLNESS POLICY

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 Permission to Administer Medication 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. They will rest in a room separate from other children, and the room will be disinfected after they leave. 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.

### 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, and after playing outside. We teach children to cover coughs or sneezes with tissues or the inside of their elbows. Then put used tissues in the waste basket, and wash hands after coughing or sneezing. Students have their own, labeled personal items (waterbottles, combs, etc) and do not share them with other students.

Teachers have a daily and weekly schedule for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. These disinfectants are EPA-registered. Cleaning materials will be kept out of the reach of children.

### COVID-19 POLICY

In addition to our standard illness and handwashing/cleanliness policies, we have added new procedures to help stop the spread of COVID-19. These procedures are based on recommendations from the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health.

#### POLICIES ALREADY IN PLACE

- We have a small student population that is separate from larger community groups.

- We have an illness policy that requires students to stay home with fever or illness. If students become ill during the day, they are separated from other children until a caregiver can pick them up. The room is then disinfected before use by other students.
- We have substitute teachers ready in case a teacher is ill.
- Students do not share food, drinks, or other personal items.
- Teachers model and guide basic hygiene with students. This includes covering coughs and sneezes, giving other students space, and avoiding touching their own faces.
- Teachers model and guide thorough hand-washing for at least 20-seconds before meal times, after outside time, and after hands have been contaminated by germs from cough/sneezes/ touching one's face.
- We try to conduct activities outside as much as possible.
- We have a daily and weekly cleaning schedule.

#### DAILY DROP-OFFS

- Before you come to school each day, we ask that you take your child's temperature and make note of it. Alternatively, you may use the school's infrared thermometer upon arrival. If your child has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above, they will not be allowed to stay at school, as per the CDC's recommendation.
- After confirming that they do not have a fever, you will be asked to fill out a quick sign-in form every day. The form will have you record your child's temperature. Other symptoms of COVID-19 include cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste, and gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea. In some cases, children with COVID-19 have been observed to have rashes or discoloration similar to frostbite on their toes. If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms, please discuss with a teacher, preferably before coming to school.
- The students will then put away belongings in the Welcome Room, wash their hands, and put on their face mask. Then they may enter farther into the school to play.
- Parents may wash hands in the Forest Bathroom or use hand sanitizer provided.
- We ask that parents stay in the Welcome Room (or Forest Bathroom) to limit the number of people inside the school space. If you need to speak to a teacher and they are, for some reason, not there with you, we welcome you to ring one of the doorbells and we'll be right with you.
- Teachers will follow the same protocol for COVID-19 symptoms. They will check their temperature every day before school and disclose any symptoms. Substitute teachers will take over when needed.

#### FACE MASKS

- The current guidance from the State of Minnesota, is that child care centers require parents and teachers to wear face masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- Students will also wear face masks indoors as much as possible. They will not be required to wear masks outdoors, or at snack, lunch, or quiet time. When they take off their mask, they will each have a hook to hang it on. We ask that families wash student's masks regularly and provide a backup at school if possible. We have back-up disposable masks if one gets forgotten or dirty. We will be responsive to students social/emotional development, and as such, if they need to take a break from the mask for a bit, we will allow them to do so and find a spot to play by themselves for a few minutes until they are ready to try again.

- Teachers will wear cloth masks indoors as much as possible, especially when helping with snacks, lunchtime, and applying sunscreen. At times, teachers will need to remove masks to eat, drink, provide young students with a sense of security, or to provide social-emotional cues. This is particularly true for students who are new to our school. We want them to be able to see our faces and smiles and feel welcomed and safe. We will be teaching about masks to help them feel comfortable. Teachers will follow the CDC’s recommendations on mask wearing and cleaning.

#### OTHER PROCEDURES

- If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 at our school, we will contact public health in St. Louis County, as required by child care providers. We will follow their recommendations, which could potentially include temporary closure for a few days. In that event, we will try to provide activities and meetings in an online format. Families will be notified via e-mail if there is a confirmed case. We will also consult with our public health contacts with any questions or concerns that come up.
- We will use the [Decision Tree from the MN Department of Health](#) to decide what symptoms or contact require temporary exclusion from HVP.
- Teachers will follow our COVID-19 plan for increased cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting of surfaces.
- The developmental level of this age group means that they will likely be in close contact at times, so we have set-up procedures to reduce contact when possible. Teachers will help spread out students during hand-washing times, meal times, story time, and quiet time with activities and visual cues. They may also be grouped with certain students at times to limit exposure to others.
- All of these COVID-19 procedures are subject to change as more data and recommendations become available. We will continue to follow recommendations from the CDC, the MN Department of Health, and St. Louis County Public Health as they develop.
- As with all of our policies, please let us know if you have concerns, questions, or ideas regarding COVID-19.

#### COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

- [MN Department of Health: Schools and Child Care: COVID-19](#)
- [CDC: Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#)
- [MN Department of Health: Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth and Student Programs](#)
- [MN Department of Health: Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms](#)
- [CDC: COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [Kid-Friendly Introduction to Masks](#)

## 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 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 the [CDC’s Head Lice Information Page](#).

## SUNSCREEN AND INSECT REPELLANT

You will indicate whether or not you authorize the use of these products (or if you have any specifications about them) on the Permission to Administer Medication Form. Particularly during the summer session, we ask that you put sunscreen on your child before arriving at school in the morning. We ask that you bring your own labeled bottle of sunscreen to school so we can reapply in the afternoon before we go back outside. We have insect repellents (one with 7% DEET and one DEET-free lemon eucalyptus) that we can apply outside before students play outdoors. If you have a particular insect repellent that you would prefer for us to use please bring a bottle of it labeled with your child’s name.

## NATURAL DISASTERS 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 wait across 44<sup>th</sup> Ave East. If we need to evacuate the area, we will walk the children to the Duluth East High School. We 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. Our Emergency Preparedness Plans can be found in your enrollment information email, or upon request.

## FIRE AND STORM DRILLS

Each month we conduct fire and storm drills. The fire drill consists of the smoke detector being intentionally set and the children proceeding out the door with the teacher across 44<sup>th</sup> Ave East. For a storm, we go to the basement, to an area away from windows.

## WEATHER AND UTILITY RELATED CLOSURES

**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, wide-spread power outage, etc., Hidden Valley Preschool will also close. If Duluth Public Schools are on a scheduled break, we will look to Hermantown, Proctor, and Superior, WI for weather closures. We will send out an e-mail confirming the closure as soon as we

know of it. 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.

### SUBSTITUTES TEACHERS

If a teacher knows she will be absent, we will plan on covering each other's shifts, or scheduling a substitute teacher. We have 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.

### FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION

We do not transport children in vehicles. 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 you 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. A detailed description of what constitutes abuse is available at <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7634C-ENG>

### 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.