



HELENA Methodist Preschool  
Parent Handbook- 2024-2025  
2035 County Rd. 58 Helena, 35080  
Phone number-205-620-0553.  
Email- [preschool@helenamc.org](mailto:preschool@helenamc.org)

## Welcome

Welcome to the Helena Methodist Preschool and thank you for entrusting your child to our care. With the help of parents, caring and qualified teachers, and guidance from God, it is our aim to make the early learning experience a happy and successful one for your child.

## Philosophy

At Helena Methodist Preschool, we strive to offer a happy, loving Christian environment. We want each child to develop and maintain a positive self-image knowing that they are special and unique.

- Learning – learning through building, creating and imaginary play.
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
- Chapel (Bible lessons) weekly
- Art activities and Music Class
- Staff are First Aid & CPR trained and background checks are performed on all staff.

## **Preschool Policies and Procedures**

### Enrollment Requirements

A registration form is required and enrollment fees for each child at the time of enrollment. Prior to beginning school, we will need the following documents:

- Current, original Immunization Form (from the doctor's office)
- Emergency Form
- Medical History Form
- Hold harmless/release form (states that you agree to HM Preschool policies)
- Photo release form
- Permission to share information (address; phone number; email)
- Authorization for child pickup

### Fees and Tuition

A registration fee is due upon registering your child. This fee is non-refundable and is a yearly fee for enrollment. **Registration Fee is \$110 a**

**child.** This fee will guarantee your child's spot in the classroom and will only be refunded if the class does not meet minimum enrollment requirements.

### **Activity Fees**

Infant/Toddlers: \$90.00

2K: \$90.00

3K & 4K: \$110.00

The Activity Fee covers the cost of the Curriculum, field trips, special snacks & activities.

### **Tuition**

Tuition is paid monthly by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. We offer Bright wheel online payments, or you may write a check to **Helena Methodist Preschool.** Using Bright wheel, you can set up auto payments each month. Please make sure that you write your child's name on each check.

**Discounts:** We offer a 10% discount for each sibling. The discount will be taken from the lowest tuition.

All months, even the holidays, have the same tuition rate. **A Late Fee of \$25.00** will be charged on the 16<sup>th</sup> on your account if you have not yet paid tuition. If you begin to struggle with paying tuition, please contact the Director to set an agreement with payment. If your child's account is delinquent for more than 2 months, we can ask you to forfeit your child's placement. Any returned payments will have a **\$35.00 fee** added to their account.

**A two week notice is required for withdrawal by email or a written letter.**

If we must close the school for a few days for any reason, we will be unable to refund any missed days.

## **Arrival and Departure**

Our school hours are 8:50 – 12:50, 8:50 – 1:50, 9:00 – 12:50 or 9:00 – 1:50 depending on which class your child is in.

**3K & 4K** drop-off is through **Carpool** that starts at 8:50. Pick-up through **Carpool** starts at 12:50 or 1:50 depending on the hours you signed up for. You may not enter the building before Carpool starts.

**Infants/Toddlers & 2K** drop-off & pick-up at the **Side Door**. The door will be opened from 9:00 AM until 9:15 AM for Drop-off. You may not enter the building before 9:00 AM. If you drop off after 9:15, you will need to come to the front door & ring the bell to drop off. **Please call the school or message your teacher if your child will be absent.**

**A late charge of \$1.00 per minute for the first 5 minutes will be applied to your account for each child starting at 1:00/2:00. After 5 minutes, your account will be charged \$5.00 per minute per child. This will be strictly enforced.**

**Please make sure to call (205) 620-0553 if you will be running late.**

**Drop Ins:** only available if we have room in the classroom. The fee is \$25.00 per day 9:00-1:00 & \$30.00 per day 9:00-2:00.

## **Sign-in & Sign-out**

**Infants/Toddlers & 2K:** your child needs to be signed in & out each day. There will be QR code by the door at each classroom. Please scan and follow the prompts. This feature is through Bright wheel.

**3K & 4K:** the teachers will take attendance each day.

## **School Bags**

Each child will receive a link to purchase their bags from their teacher. Make sure that your child's bag has lunchbox, folder, and extra clothes each day. **PLEASE DO NOT PUT MEDICATIONS IN THE BAG.**

## Carpool (3K & 4K ONLY)

Wait to start carpool until a staff member prompts you. Carpool starts at 8:50 for drop-off and 12:50/1:50 for pickup. The carpool line starts by the playground and goes around the back of the parking lot. Your child needs to be unbuckled when you pull up to drop-off. When you pull up, put your vehicle in park. A staff member is required to get your child out of the car on the passenger side for safety reasons.

For pickup, you will line up and get prompted to move up just like drop-off. You will need to have your carpool number visible each day. You will be given a carpool number at the beginning of the year. Once you put your car in park, a staff member will assist your child into the vehicle. Stay in your vehicle while in carpool line. You will then pull up and buckle your child. You will be responsible for buckling your child up.

## Lunch & Snack

- **Infants/Toddlers & 2K** need to bring a lunch, water cup (or pre-made bottles for infants). The school will provide a morning snack.
- **3K & 4K** will need a lunchbox & water cup.

**NUT FREE SCHOOL:** No Nuts allowed in the building.

We do not microwave food, please send in a warm tumbler if needed. Make sure to send food that your child can feed themselves.

Please make sure your child eats breakfast before they arrive at school.

## Communication

Each class will be using the **Bright wheel App** to communicate with you. Please make sure to download the App. Teachers can send messages, pictures & more.

The Director will also post on the school Facebook page. Please join our FB group **Helena Methodist Preschool**.

**Infants/Toddlers & 2K children** will receive a Daily Sheet from the teacher each day. This daily sheet will let you know what they did, ate and potty time (diaper time).

### **Daily Schedule & Lesson Plans**

Each class will have a daily schedule and lesson plans. The teachers plan weekly themes and activities. Each class schedule includes Art, Music, Story Time, Bible, Snack (younger classes), Playground Time (weather permitted), lunch and inside free play. Each month you will receive a class calendar from your child's teacher.

### **Clothing & Personal Belongings**

Please send your child in comfortable play clothes suitable for indoor and outdoor play. Many of their activities will involve paint, glue, and other messy fun activities. Though we try to be careful, we cannot be responsible for damage to expensive or restrictive clothing. Your child needs to wear clothes they can pull up and down easily by themselves (2K for potty training; 3K & 4K)

**Please make sure ALL your child's belongings are labeled with their name on it.**

Please leave all toys at home. Each classroom has toys available for them to play with. Please have breakfast finished before coming into the building.

**\*\*All children must wear CLOSED TOED SHOES & shorts under dresses.**

### **Potty Training**

**ALL CHILDREN in 3K & 4K need to be potty trained & able to use the bathroom unassisted.** Your child needs to be able to express their needs to the teacher, manage clothing & clean themselves. I know 3K may need assistance at the beginning of the year cleaning themselves. Children in 4K go down the hall to the bathroom. We realize that a child may have an accident occasionally. If your child has a bowel movement accident or frequent accident, you will be called

to assist in cleaning your child. 3K & 4K children need to come to school in underwear/panties. NO PULL-UPS!!!

2K will work on potty training in partnership with the parents working on potty training at home. Older Toddlers can work on potty training if your child is showing interest. Children potty training need to be in comfortable clothes that they can learn to pullup & down. If your child is not showing interest in potty training, they need to be sent in refasten able side pull-ups.

### **Health (Illness)**

It is very important that you inform the school of anything to which your child is allergic. Please note allergies or medical information on your child's enrollment and medical forms. Children needing an EpiPen, or inhaler need a medical form filled out to keep at school if needed.

For health and safety of all the children & staff, please **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

- Covid-19 (we follow the CDC/ADPH guidelines)
- Pink Eye
- Infectious Virus
- Flu
- Undetermined rash or spots
- Fever
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
- Symptoms of illness

Your child will need a note from the doctor with the OK to return to school for Covid, Flu, Infectious virus, or request from the Director.

If your child gets ill during school hours, parents will be notified to pick up the child **immediately**. Children should NOT return to school unless they are **SYMPTOM FREE & WITHOUT FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION FOR 24 HOURS**. If your child has been vomiting or has diarrhea, they will need to be 24-hour symptom free.

## **Safety**

Doors are **LOCKED AT ALL TIMES**. After drop-off, you will need to come to the main school entrance & ring the bell for service.

Parents are not allowed in the classrooms.

We practice Fire, Weather & Lock Down drills throughout the year to prepare for emergencies.

We will check IDs for those we do not recognize at pickup.

If there is a custody issue or someone is not allowed to pick up your child, we need a copy of the papers for their files.

Please refrain from cell use during carpool, drop off & pick up.

## **Weather Policy**

It is the family's responsibility to keep informed about the weather. However, Helena Methodist Preschool will make every effort to inform parents of school closing or delays.

**We will follow Shelby County Schools policy for inclement weather days. Should Schools be forced to close early, Helena Methodist Preschool will CLOSE 1 hour earlier than Shelby Co Schools.** This allows our staff to pick up their own children and get home safely. **If Shelby Co Schools are delayed (open late), HM Preschool will OPEN 30 minutes later than Shelby Co Schools.**

Example: If Shelby Co Schools open at 10:00, we will open at 10:30.



## **Field Trips**

Field trips will be taken in accordance with the units of study in the classroom. A field trip permission slip must be signed for each Field Trip for your child to participate. The trips will be announced in advance, and we require at least one guardian to assist as a chaperone. Parents, you will be responsible for driving your child on the field trip.

For field trips, your child's activity fee will cover their fee. We ask that parents pay their own way. For safety reasons, we ask that **siblings not accompany** parents who chaperone a field trip. Please understand the importance of this and to plan for your other children.

Infants/Toddlers and 2K will have a field trip at the school. They will have a Pumpkin Patch in the fall and have visits from the fire station and police department.

## **Birthdays and Parties**

Please make sure that you plan with your child's teacher if you intend to send a special snack for their birthday.

## **Assessments & Conferences**

Each teacher will do an assessment on your child to show what they have been working on and how your child is progressing in class.

If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher or the director, please call the school so we can get an appointment set up.

## **Behavior**

Maintaining discipline is an important factor in providing each child with a warm, safe, and happy environment. Positive reinforcement and redirection are used to guide the child to the appropriate behavior. "Cool Down" period will be used if necessary. If your child continues not making the appropriate behavior choice, then the parent will be contacted.

Our teachers strive to maintain consistent and open communication with families regarding the progress of their students. You may be

notified of minor behavior incidents in the following ways: a note, email, phone call or in person.

A Behavior Form will be required for more serious incidents that involve child safety such as, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, throwing objects, destruction of property and biting. In this situation, the director will call to discuss the situation.

If a child's behavior is a consistent challenge, a parent/guardian will be contacted and will result in a conference.

It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive and successful experience for a child. However, if, after the above process has been completed, the behavior continues, we will require that you withdraw your child from Helena Methodist Preschool.

### **No SMOKING or VAPING**

It is the policy of Helena UM Preschool to provide a smoke-free environment. The preschool does not allow smoking or vaping on church/preschool grounds. Because of the concern relating to the effects of secondhand smoke, it is the policy of the preschool for employees not to have the smell of smoke on their clothing while at work.

### **Child Custody**

Regarding custody issues, the custodial parent should submit the most recent valid copies of all court ordered documents relating to child custody and visitation rights. It is the parents' responsibility to update these forms as changes are made. Should a situation arise, Helena Methodist Preschool will follow the document on hand.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of Helena Methodist Preschool to provide the most professional and positive work environment for its employees. Sexual harassment of any employee will not be tolerated. Unwelcome physical advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment.

### **Helena Methodist School Board**

The board oversees the Preschool ministry. The board is made up of church members who meet on a regular basis. We try to make your child's experience here a pleasant and worthwhile one. Any concerns should be brought to the child's teacher, then the Director. If the problem cannot be resolved through these means, please feel free to call the grievance person on the committee. They will contact the committee chair and a meeting will be arranged to try to satisfy those involved. The grievance person on the committee can always be reached via the church staff liaison, Danielle Williams at [Dwilliams@helenamc.org](mailto:Dwilliams@helenamc.org)

Thank you for sharing your child with us. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you to make your child's preschool experience a happy and successful one.

"Train up a child in the way they should go..." Proverbs 22:6