



Messy Hands Preschool Parent Handbook

WELCOME

Welcome! We are very excited to have you join our Messy Hands Family! This handbook was written to describe our program, policies and procedures. Please read through this handbook carefully and keep a copy for your reference. Once again, welcome!

OUR MISSION

At Messy Hands Preschool, we believe that children explore their world hands on through sensory, art and play. We aim to make learning and kindergarten readiness messy and fun throughout the entire day! In addition, we aim to partner with the family to provide the best care for each child.

OUR PROGRAM

We currently accept children aged from one year to five years old. We operate Monday through Thursday between the hours of 7:30am and 5:30pm. Please see attached current rate sheet for current prices. At most, we are able to have six children at a time. Messy Hands Preschool is happy to announce that we accept students of all abilities, races and backgrounds. We aim to create an inclusive environment, welcoming of all.

ENROLLMENT, TUITION & FEES

To provide the best care possible, we require a two day minimum for enrollment. This helps children to acclimate to the environment and routines, as well as providing consistency with care.

A registration deposit of \$50 is due to reserve your spot. This is a one-time, non-refundable charge. If a child is withdrawn then re-enrolls later, a second enrollment fee will be expected.

Tuition may be paid through check (made out to Ashley Goddard), cash, Venmo, or by bank account transfer (Brightwheel offers this transaction). Through Brightwheel, we offer a recurring payment option. There is a \$30 fee for returned checks or failed payments. Tuition is before care for weekly payments, unless agreed upon differently in contract. There is a \$30 late fee for all late payments.

Tuition is expected for days your child may be absent due to illness, family emergencies, doctor visits, hospitalizations, vacations, or any other reason. Please note that tuition rates do not change in the event of a week including a holiday. Price is subject to change, with at least a two week notice.

Contract renewals occur yearly (typically at the end of summer/early fall) and may include price increase and updated policies. You will be notified of these in advance.

CDC PAYMENTS

Here at Messy Hands, we are happy to accept CDC payments. In this case, we will be happy to calculate the amount the subsidy will cover. The remainder of fees will be due before childcare is provided. With the subsidy, we ask that you have no more than ten (business day) absences in a row, as this disrupts payments made from the subsidy.

COMMUNICATION

We strive to form strong parent-teacher communication. Please keep us notified of changes and relevant information regarding your child. This helps us give the best care possible. We utilize the app, Brightwheel, to provide parents with a real time update on your child. Through the app, you will receive updates, pictures and messages regarding your child. To help us provide the best care for your child, please feel free to message during the day regarding your child.

CURRICULUM

At Messy Hands Preschool, we focus our curriculum on school readiness and hands on learning through an individualized approach. We utilize Experience Curriculum (formally known as Mother Goose Time Curriculum) and their assessment tools through the Brightwheel app. If you'd like to learn more you can visit their website:
<https://www.mothergoosetime.com/>.

A weekly lesson plan will be posted on the parent board for your viewing. You will also have access to lesson plans within the Brightwheel app (learning tab). In these lesson plans, we explore art, math, sensory and play activities to develop emergent literacy, cognitive, physical and language skills.

In addition, we use the Ages & Stages Questionnaire to screen development. We do this about once a year to watch for developmental delays. If a delay is suspected, we will be happy to assist you by connecting you with the proper organization for assistance.

In addition to our great curriculum, we will be hosting conferences twice a year. This gives you the opportunity to sit down with Ms. Ashley and review your child's development and progress. Typically, these will occur in fall & spring.

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE

At Messy Hands Preschool, we believe that discipline begins at home. We seek to partner with your family to help children learn proper behavior through positive guidance, redirection and choices. With difficult behaviors, children may have some time in a safe space to calm down. We will not do any of the following:

- Hit, spank, shake, bite, pinch, or inflict other forms of corporal punishment.

- Use any substance in a child's mouth such as, but not limited to, soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
- Restrict a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.
- Inflict mental or emotional stress, such as humiliating, shaming, threatening a child, or using derogatory remarks.
- Deprive a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Confine a child in an enclosed area such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar enclosure.
- Use time out for children under 3 years old.

If negative behaviors are present, we aim to work with parents to find a solution. If it becomes too dangerous for other children or if behaviors persist, a probation or termination notice may be given.

FOOD & NUTRITION

At Messy Hands Preschool, we serve breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. We take part in the Child and Adult Care Food Program through ACD. More information on ACD can be found at: www.acdkids.org. Through this food program, we aim to serve nutritious meals and promote healthy lifestyles. Our purpose with this food program is to have children to grow big and strong by eating a balanced meal. We utilize whole grains, proteins, fresh fruits and vegetables, correlating with MyPlate. We will post the upcoming menus on the parent board for your viewing.

If child has a food allergy, we are happy to assist in providing alternate snacks and meals. Please be sure to communicate these allergies on your child's *Child Information Record*.

NAPTIME

Every day we provide a time for your child to rest after naptime. During this time, we aim to have all children nap. Each child is provided a mat with a fitted sheet and blanket. A lovey or comfort item is permitted but will be kept in child's cubby during other times of the day. Each child is required to rest on their mat for a minimum of 45 minutes.

Afterwards, they will have access to quiet activities to do on their mat. We will not keep a child awake during this time. If a child doesn't sleep on their own accord, that is fine.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

If dropping off early, you **MUST** have prior approval. Doors will not unlock until 7:30am. There is an additional fee of \$15 per half hour (rounded up) for early drop off. We have a cut off arrival time of 9 am. This is to ensure that children are present for the educational opportunities in the morning, as well as maintain structure for the day. Exceptions will be made for appointments, but require a 24 hour notice.

Only individuals written on the *Child Information Record*, or with written (Brightwheel is fine too) permission from the parent, will be allowed to pick up the child. If person is unknown, we will ask for picture I.D. to ensure safety of all children.

If late to pick up, there will be a late fee of \$15 starting promptly at 5:30pm. For every 5 minutes, it will be an additional \$15.

HOLIDAYS & CLOSURES

We are closed on the following holidays & days:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- 2 Weeks during the summer (no tuition due, predetermined at beginning of year)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Week between Christmas and New Year's

All holidays, unless otherwise noted, are paid. If the holiday lands on a weekend, we observe right to observe the holiday on a consecutive day.

Additional days may be posted on each year's list. You will also be reminded of these days through Brightwheel and monthly newsletter.

CHILD SICKNESS & ABSENCES

Childcare is for healthy friends. Below are some (this is not an all inclusive list) reasons to exclude from care:

- **FEVER:** If a child has a fever of 100° F or above, they must stay home until fever and med free for 24 hours.
- **VOMITING:** Any vomit must stay home and be vomit free for 24 hours.
- **DIARRHEA or LOOSE STOOL:** Two or more diarrhea incidents in a 24 hour period must stay home until diarrhea and med free for 24 hours.
- **RESPIRATORY ILLNESS:** If a child has continuous runny nose, any color of drainage other than clear, difficulty breathing, difficulty sleeping, and/or a persistent cough (all with or without a fever), they must stay home. They may return once symptoms have cleared up. Allergies require documentation from doctor.
- **RASH:** If a child exhibits rash (exception is diaper rash) they must stay home until cleared up or have a doctor's note that it isn't contagious.
- **EYE INFECTIONS:** Any red, inflamed or suspected pink eye must be excluded from care. The child may return after swelling has reduced, drainage has stopped or 24 hours after prescribed eye drops have been applied.
- **LICE:** If lice are found on child or in household, they may not return until lice infestation is clear from entire household.
- **HAND FOOT MOUTH:** A child must be fever free, dried blisters or blister free and have mouth healed before return to care.

- **ANTIBIOTICS:** The child must be on antibiotics for a full 24 hours before return to care.
- **LETHARGY:** When a child is unable to participate in our daily routine or is generally lethargic, please keep child home. Child may return once acting as normal self and no other symptoms are present.
- Any contagious sickness or disease not included in this list.

Child needs to be 24 hours free of symptoms without medications, such as Tylenol or Motrin.

In occasions of sickness or absences, please notify through phone call, Brightwheel message or text. Failure to notify us of a contagious illness may result in termination. If one sibling is sick, please be sure to keep the other child home as well. If an absence is due to sickness, it is vital that you tell us so that we may sanitize and help prevent the spread.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Any medication must be in the original bottle or container and prescription medications must include the original prescription label and instructions. Messy Hands will not administer any medications, creams or sunscreen without written consent from a child's parent. Please do not leave medication in child's cubby or bag, please give directly to Mrs. Ashley. Medication for fevers will not be administered, as this is against the sickness policy.

IMMUNIZATIONS

At Messy Hands Preschool, we require that every child be up to date on their immunizations. This is the best way to prevent preventable sicknesses. When your child receives a vaccination or shot, we ask that they not return the same day.

UNEXPECTED CLOSURES

If Mrs. Ashley gets sick or a contagious sickness is present in the household, we may close. We will give you as much warning as possible. Payment is still due, even with closure. If closed for an extended portion of time, more than a few days, tuition will be half the normal amount.

In occasions of funerals, power outage, extreme weather, "acts of God" and etc., we may need to close. In this case, we will notify you as soon as possible. Tuition will still be due during this time. Reopening will be judged on a case by case situation and you will be notified promptly. During such times, we may have to follow guidelines placed by local authorities. We will notify you of these changes as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your child becomes injured while at Messy Hands, first aid will be administered. We will use emergency contacts listed on the Child's Information Record to contact in cases

of emergency, whether medical or other. It is very important that all emergency contact information is kept up to date and correct. Please inform us immediately of any changes to keep your information current.

In matters of evacuation, we will evacuate and contact you for pick-up at that time. We do practice fire and emergency drills quarterly, to prepare for any such event. To see the plans, please consult the emergency plans posted near the parent board.

POTTY TRAINING

We encourage potty training in our program, but it must be started at home. When you think your child is ready, please inform us and we would be happy to go over the potty-training policy. We ask that your child be accident free for one week in diapers/pullups before coming in underwear. All diapers & pullups must have a side velcro closure. Your child will need at least two changes of outfits in case of accidents. We will provide wipes but ask that you supply diapers or pull ups if needed.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Due to the volume of messy & explorative play, we ask that every child come dressed in play clothing, which is comfortable and ok to get dirty. If dressed in skirts or dresses, please put shorts underneath. We also ask that your child have appropriate footwear, in which your child can run in, with socks when appropriate.

In addition, we ask that every child have one - two sets of spare clothing in their cubbies.

Please do not bring bulky diaper bags. Small bags to carry necessary items are welcome, but we do not have the space for diaper bags. We also ask that your child not bring toys, food or meaningful items. Naptime loveys are an exception but will only be allowed during that time. We would hate for them to get lost or damaged.

PETS

Being an in-home childcare provider, we do have cats. All cats are friendly and kept flea & sickness free. The litter box and food are both kept in a separate area of the house, away from the children. The animals are kept away from the children during meal times. We do aim towards educating children on proper handling, behavior and care for living things within our curriculum.

WALKS & TRANSPORTATION

During the summer months, we will walk to the elementary school's playground to play. Walks will take place with a stroller for the younger students and the older students walking alongside. When walking, an emergency bag will be taken with contacts, water and emergency supplies. A sign will be posted on the door, stating a contact number.

WITHDRAWAL & TERMINATION POLICIES

To withdraw from the program, a written two week notice is required to avoid any additional fees. Either the parent or the provider has the right to terminate care, for any reason, with a two week notice. At that time, the remaining two week payment is due. Failure to pay at any point will result in immediate termination of care and possible legal action if not paid.



MHP Potty Training Policy & Tips

If you feel your little one is ready, I would like to share with you some tips and our policies regarding potty training. I've put in bold the most important points.

Let's define a potty trained child:

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following:

- 1) Be able to **TELL** the adult they have to go potty **BEFORE** they have to go. They must be able to say the words "I have to go potty" **BEFORE** they have to go.
- 2) Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
- 3) Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
- 4) Be able to get on & off the potty by themselves.
- 5) Be able to wash and dry hands.
- 6) Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are outside and away from the house.

Some things we do to get kids ready to train:

- 1) We start reading potty books and talking about going potty in the big girl or big boy potty during changing.
- 2) We have them sit on the potty during natural transition times (before and after meals/naps, and diaper changes)
- 3) We practice with them getting their pants up and down on their own and hand washing.
- 4) We will supervise them and watch for signs that they have to go or are going and get them to the potty.
- 5) We keep close communication with the parents about any indicators suggesting the child is ready.

Some things we don't do:

We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. It's very time consuming with little to no benefit. This may cause many problems with children not being able to hold much urine and having to constantly go to the potty further along down the line. They are not able to settle down at nap because once they relax and have a little bit of pee they have to get up and go. They can't do walks because they can't make it very long without having to come back to potty. The day pretty much centers around the potty which just isn't realistic in this setting.

We don't limit food or drinks to only be given at certain times. We maintain the same food and snack schedule during training.

We don't clean out poopy underwear. We will bag pee soaked underwear and return it to the parent at the end of the day but we will not do this with soiled underwear. We

must dispose of that immediately into the garbage. We don't do laundry of any soaked or soiled clothes. They are bagged and returned to the parents at the end of the day.

Some helpful tips to help you at home:

- 1) Be cheery about the potty. A happy experience each time they are on the potty will translate into quick training at home.
- 2) If there are two adults in the house have each adult "ask" the other adult if he/she can go to the potty at least four or five times a day. Your child seeing and hearing you "ask" if you can go will get the idea in their head that they need to do that too.
- 3) Praise the child on success for every step of the process but do not overdo it. You don't want them trying to do the potty thing fifty times a day to get your attention or get rewarded. A "way to go" or a "thumbs up" and big smile will let them know you are proud. We use the phrase "you go potty like the BIG boys/girls do!!!!" They love the idea of being BIG.
- 4) A little bribery can be a good thing but please try to reserve that as a last resort. Remember, going potty is a natural body function that is expected to be done. Kids hearing, "Good job little buddy... you go potty like the big boys do" is often a good reward for an expected developmental accomplishment. A sticker chart or small sticker to wear can help make it a positive new experience.
- 5) Let the child in the bathroom with you when you are going potty. This is really important for the same sex parent. Let them see how it works and you washing up afterwards.
- 6) No punishment or consternation for accidents. Just talk to them about them needing to ask to go to the potty next time. We say "next time you will go potty like the BIG boys do... okay?!!"
- 7) Give your child three or four minutes to get the job done. It shouldn't take more than a few minutes. Don't let it turn into an attention seeking time. It's only about going potty. If they don't go in a reasonable time tell them it's time to get off and we will try again another time.
- 8) Don't allow potty time to be a stall tactic to avoid doing something the child doesn't want to do. We see this here at toy pick up and nap time. Some kids will claim they have to go potty to avoid having to go to bed. If you see a pattern of avoidance have the child do the potty a little bit before you want them to do whatever they are avoiding so it doesn't interfere.
- 9) I don't encourage any toys or books during the training time. It really can backfire on you. Potty time will quickly turn into one to one attention and play time for the child. After a child has been trained for a few months you can add a book for them to look at if they are having a hard time going poop.
- 10) We train boys sitting down first. We switch them to standing up when they are tall enough to reach over the seat and adept enough to aim.
- 11) Be careful of public automatic flushing toilets. The noise of the flushing will scare some. If you bring a little post it note with you when you go out you can put it over the sensor so the toilet doesn't automatically flush right when your child gets off of it.
- 12) Have fun. Stay cool. It will all work out.

Please don't expect the same performance here as at home:

I've seen both ends of the spectrum with kids' ability to be "trained" here and not at home and vice versa. I've had kids who have been successful at home and are unable to do it here for a number of reasons:

- 1) Kids are not trained at home to tell the parents they have to go BEFORE they have to go but rather are allowed free access unsupervised to the bathroom in their home. Again, here they must tell us BEFORE. They can't leave the playroom without an adult and go into the bathroom without supervision.
- 2) There are many more distractions here with a larger group of kids, toys, and bustling activities.
- 3) They need one to one attention throughout the day in order to keep up with the toileting. Here we have multi-level aged children who have various needs and supervision requirements. We can't focus on one child but must divide our attention with all the kids. This is another reason your child must tell us he/she has to go. They need to bring it to OUR attention.
- 4) Parents are putting the child on the potty in small time increments (example: every 20 minutes). We don't do this here so the child will wet themselves many times throughout the day if this is being done at home.

We don't put children into underwear until they have been COMPLETELY accident free HERE for one full week. This is an absolute non-negotiable policy.

The reason we have this policy is because over the years we are training many kids. We have to set up policies that maintain infection control standards for the childcare and protect the carpet, furniture, and inventory of the day care. Due to licensing, we have to have higher standards than a parent has at home to avoid having to do frequent carpet and furniture cleaning and replacements.

Naptime training:

Sometimes kids nap train right away when they are awake time trained. Most children are not able to do this and it is many months and sometimes years before they are nap trained. We require nap diapers/pullups until the child has slept through nap for one full month without a pee accident.

What to wear during training:

Children should wear easy on and off pants during training. We prefer sweatpant like bottoms until they are physically capable of doing snaps and buttons. Please don't send them in anything that requires us to remove the top to get to the bottom. We don't allow overalls, kid costumes, union suits, one piece jammies, or shirts with snaps at the crotch while potty training. Diapers and pull-ups are both okay for training.

***If the child has regular accidents in the underwear, we will switch them back to regular diapers/pull-ups and try again at another time.

Thank you and let me know if you have any questions or want to discuss this further. If it's done at a time when the child is truly ready it should go very easily and quickly.



Messy Hands Preschool POLICY AGREEMENT

I have read the Messy Hands Preschool Parent Handbook & Potty Training Policy and agree to abide by all the policies and procedures therein.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Ashley Goddard, Owner,
Messy Hands Preschool

Date



Messy Hands Preschool PROVIDER AGREEMENT

1. Child's Name: _____
2. Childcare will be provided on the following days and times:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Drop off time _____		Pick up time _____	
1. The fee for childcare will be \$_____ per week due prior to service. There is a \$30 fee for late or failed payments.
2. Drop off must be before 9am. Exceptions will be made for appointments with a 24-hour notice.
3. If late to pick up, there will be a late fee of \$15 starting promptly at 5:30pm. For every 5 minutes, it will be an additional \$15.
4. Child care program may terminate at will. Two week notice needed for withdrawal.
5. Date of admission to childcare: _____

I understand the terms of this contract and have received complete written program information at this time of enrollment. In addition, I agree to update emergency contact/parental consent form information whenever changes occur or every year at a minimum.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Ashley Goddard, Owner,
Messy Hands Preschool

Date



Messy Hands Preschool PHOTO RELEASE FORM

Throughout the program, your child may be photographed or video recorded during activities and events. If you would like your child's photo to be displayed on the childcare social media or website, please sign and return this form.

- ☐ YES, I give permission for my child's picture and/or video to be posted on the school's social media or website.
- ☐ NO, I do not give permission for my child's picture and/or video to be posted on the school's social media or website.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Child's First & Last Name