

May, 2024

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Thank you for inquiring about the **Harborcreek Presbyterian Preschool!** Our **non-denominational** Preschool/PreK is housed in a separate building behind the church, and is located at 6724 Buffalo Road, directly across from the Kwik-Fill gas station. We accept 3, 4, & 5 year olds. (Since we are not a daycare, the children must be able to handle their own bathroom needs.)

We offer several Preschool/PreK half-day program options to fit your particular schedule.

AM -- Our **Three-Day Morning session** is held **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings** from **9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** (Doors open at 9:00a.m.).

**** Our Three-Day Morning Session is now FULL but a “Waiting List” has been started.****

PM -- Our **Three-Day Afternoon session** takes place **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons** from **12:30p.m. until 3:00p.m.** (Doors open at 12:30p.m.)

*****Afternoon openings for all ages are still available!*****

School starts the beginning of September and ends the middle of May. We usually follow the Harborcreek school district calendar with respect to vacation days, “snow days,” etc.

Our Preschool is quite unique! We have four instructors at the Preschool, who teach different parts of our curriculum. **Each person deals with her own particular area of expertise, which is very beneficial for our preschoolers!** The four main parts of our curriculum include:

(1) math & number recognition, language arts, phonics, instructional kindergarten preparation, story time, sign language, printing, etc.; (2) music, rhythm instruments, science, social studies, & library; (3) art & fine motor skills; and (4) large motor skills, manners, and intro to Spanish.

Visit the Presbyterian church’s website at: <https://hcpresbyterian.org>; click on “Preschool” and take a virtual tour of the inside of the building and see the four classrooms. There is also a video on the website of all the staff introducing themselves and describing their particular role in our curriculum. So please be sure to check both of those out! If you would like an actual tour of our building, we would be happy to do that at a time when preschool is not in session.

We are proud to say that our Preschool has been in existence for well over **40+ years!** A listing of our staff (along with the number of years they have been at the Preschool, their particular area of expertise, and their homeroom) is as follows:

Mrs. Charlene Chmielewski (33 years) -- Director & Kdg. Readiness Teacher (Bear Room)

Mrs. Jenny Beskid (25 years) -- Art & Fine Motor Skills (Turtle Room)

Mrs. Marlena Smith (16 years) -- Large Motor Skills, Manners & Spanish (Whale Room)

Mrs. Daunice Scipione (28 years) -- Library, Music, Science, Social Studies (Songbird Room)

We are also very fortunate this year to have Mrs. Kristen Oshlick and Mrs. Stephanie Battista as our two assistants, who help out wherever needed. Our entire staff, including our subs, has their necessary clearances on file.

The children attending our Preschool are divided into different groups or “homerooms” according to their particular chronological age. These homerooms are affectionately known (from youngest to oldest) as the *Bears*, the *Whales*, the *Turtles*, and the *Songbirds*! (The number of students in each room usually ranges around 8 - 10.)

Monthly calendars and **weekly newsletters** are distributed during the school year in order to keep the parents informed of our daily activities. Individual “**student evaluations**” are done ***three times a year*** (*before Thanksgiving, at the end of February, and around the middle of May*) and each time a comprehensive and detailed progress report is sent home. Our **entire staff** meets together to complete each and every one of these evaluations. I also stay in contact with the local Kindergarten teachers from the neighboring school districts, so as to keep current with ***their*** expectations, in order to help the children be better prepared when they enter the “big school.” (*Numerous local teachers highly recommend our Preschool and we have been very fortunate to have had the privilege of educating many of their own children!*)

Each homeroom has an assigned **leader for the day**. He/she gets to wear a special “Leader” badge and has special fun activities/duties to do throughout the time period each and every day. Needless to say, the children just love being “the Leader” whenever it is their turn!

Our daily curriculum includes Language Arts, Phonics, Math, Fine Motor Skills, Large Motor Skills, Science activities, Social Studies, Art, Story time, Music, Rhythm Instruments, etc. Politeness and good manners are practiced each and every day! Our preschoolers are also introduced to some **basic sign language**, as well as **an introduction to Spanish**; both centering around alphabet letter names, colors, some simple words, songs, etc.. All this goes on throughout the entire school year, and the children quickly discover that “learning” can be “FUN!”

We also have an **in-house preschool library**. All the children look forward to their **weekly** “Library Day” at the Preschool because this is when they have an opportunity to select a book and take it home for a week. This practice helps to foster a love for books and “reading” and really prepares them for future library experiences at the elementary school.

There is also a portion of the library that is specifically reserved for our **Preschool parents**. There they can find books on parenting issues or books dealing with “special concerns” such as the loss of a tooth, the birth of a new sibling or, sadly, the death of a loved one.

Each week we celebrate a different alphabet letter by doing **special “fun” learning activities**. *For example:* in past years during letter “**Pp**” week we have **popped popcorn**, created **purple paper hats** for our **parade**, and hosted a **pancake and pajama party**. (Teachers and students all wore their **pajamas** that day!) During “**Ss**” week we wear **silly socks** and also make and eat some **super ice cream sundaes**! We have watched raisins “**jump**” during “**Jj**” week and **volcanoes erupt** during “**Vv**” week. The children have seen worms tunnel through dirt and live caterpillars transform into beautiful butterflies in the spring.

We are “on the go” and try to schedule various **field trips** during the fall and spring months. **Transportation to and from each field trip event is the responsibility of parents, grandparents or babysitters, who must also remain with their child(ren) at the field trip site.** The following is a **partial list** of some of the various places that we have visited in the past: Asbury Woods Nature Center, Burch's Apple Farm, Children’s Discovery Museum, Port Farms, the Planetarium, etc.

We invite various "**guest speakers**" to visit the Preschool throughout the year. The Barber Center's "Kids on the Block" Program; Fire Safety, Bus Safety, and Bicycle Safety Programs, Mr. Yuk's "Poison Prevention," and the Dulcimer Musical Program are just a few of our many outreach programs. Free vision screening also takes place during our "Open House" in September.

All the **special holidays** (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, etc.) are celebrated at our school (complete with delicious treats provided by the Presbyterian Church and the Preschool!) and are always so much fun for the children and the teachers!

Our springtime **graduation ceremony** takes place in the middle of May prior to Memorial Day. Everyone "graduates" in our school -- no matter what their age -- since they will all be moving on to either Kindergarten or a different homeroom next year at Preschool. The children put on a program of favorite poems and songs, and receive a graduation certificate, along with some other surprises and treats!

PLEASE NOTE: **Many children return to the Preschool for a second or a third year.**

We, therefore, operate on a **THREE-YEAR CYCLE** so that our curriculum is **NOT** just a repeat of the year before but something **new and different each year!** We change our daily themes and have different art, science, & instructional activities each year.

SECURITY PROCEDURES: We are a **locked facility with a buzzer/intercom system located at our front door.**

Drop-off and pick-up takes place at each of our two doors: the main door at the front and the back door by the ramp. The door the children use depends on the homeroom to which they are assigned in September. Siblings or those children who carpool together use the same door even if they are in different homerooms.

Morning Session: Doors will open for arrival at 9:00 a.m. and are then re-opened for dismissal at 11:30a.m.

Afternoon Session: Doors will open for arrival at 12:30 p.m., and then again for dismissal at 3:00 p.m.

Our doorbell buzzer/intercom system (at our front door) allows you to communicate with the staff should you arrive after the doors are locked or need to pick your child up early.

During the school year, **photo identification** is required at **dismissal time** for anyone who is picking up your child. This **photo ID** is checked against a list of people that you have previously told us (in writing) have your permission to pick up your child at dismissal time.

TUITION & FEE INFORMATION: We require two different payments during the year.

- a \$200 non-refundable registration/supply fee **and**
- the Three-Day tuition -- paid monthly, semi-annually, or annually.

1) A \$200 non-refundable registration/supply fee* **must accompany your child's Registration form and Choice of Session form in order to secure a spot for him/her at our preschool.**

- * This combined fee covers both registration and all the various art/paper supplies used by your child on a daily basis during the school year. Each individual child has his/her own personal box of art supplies to use throughout the year.
- * This fee will be refunded if there are no Preschool spots available by September.*

2) Our **tuition** for the 2024-2025 school year is **\$160 a month (regardless of attendance)**

** **PLEASE NOTE**: A **double tuition payment (\$320)** (which covers the months of September and May) **will be due on or before the first day of school in September** for the 2024-2025 school year,

** **SIBLING DISCOUNT**: Please note that there is a \$45 a year (or \$5.00 a month) **reduction in tuition** for **EACH** child when siblings are enrolled **during the same year**.

*****Each child, however, must still pay the \$200 registration/supply fee.*****

Tuition can be paid monthly (September through May), quarterly, semi-annually (due Sept. & January) or annually (due September), whichever is most convenient for the parent/guardian.

****Monthly tuition (October through April)** is then **due by the tenth of each month**, unless you have made plans with the treasurer to pay by the semester or the year.

➡ **Now, on to our REGISTRATION information -- finally!!!**

Morning spots usually fill up the fastest! **All of these openings** are filled on a “**First Come-First Served**” basis. (Because of this, we always ask everyone who is registering to select **a First and a Second choice of session**.)

Our **Three-Day (M-W-F) MORNING session**: At the present time, we still **have a few** Morning spots available for each age group -- but these will go fast.

Our **Three-Day (M-W-F) AFTERNOON session**: Right now we have **many Afternoon openings** available for each age group (3, 4 and 5 year olds).

Once a session is full, we then start “**Waiting Lists**”. These lists are a very important reference for me! During the summer months, I sometimes am able to register some children from these waiting lists because oftentimes people who registered previously find that their situations have changed and, therefore, **new openings** are created. So (if your child is **not** immediately registered) it is very important to have his/her name towards the **beginning** of that list.

➡ **MAILING IN YOUR CHILD’S REGISTRATION**: The Preschool has a P.O. box, which is only checked occasionally; therefore, **ALL registrations MUST be mailed to MY HOME**

➡ **ADDRESS**. If you are planning on letting us care for and educate your child, please fill out **both** of the enclosed **registration forms as soon as possible**.

➤ Then **mail** them, along with the **\$200 non-refundable registration .supply fee**** per child, **to me at the FOLLOWING ADDRESS**:



Charlene Chmielewski
4740 Ridge Parkway
Erie, PA 16510-3242



**** (Check/Money Order made Payable to the Preschool!)**

➡ **PLEASE NOTE**: In order to try to be fair to everyone, **all registrations MUST be postmarked and MAILED to MY HOME ADDRESS on Ridge Parkway**. They **cannot** just be placed in my mailbox without being mailed.

Please do **NOT** mail them to either the preschool P.O. Box **or** the Presbyterian Church's address. If you do so, I may not receive them in a timely fashion. Remember, all preschool openings are filled on a "FIRST COME – FIRST SERVED" basis.



Registrations MUST be postmarked and mailed to my HOME ADDRESS.

Please Also Note: The payment of the **non-refundable \$200 fee** is the **ONLY way** to **guarantee** placement for your child for the 2024-2025 school year. **I MUST have BOTH the \$200 registration/supply fee AND the paperwork (2 forms) in order to hold a spot for your child for this coming school year.**

After I receive your child's registration envelope in my mailbox, I will then send you **written confirmation** of the particular session that your child is registered for. You will also be informed of important upcoming preschool dates (i.e.: Evening Parent Meeting, Open House, the first day of Preschool in the fall, etc.) as soon as they are determined.



*** **"REMIND" app:** to stay "in touch" with the Preschool and receive up-dates, I highly recommend that you sign up for the **"REMIND" app**, which is also used by many school districts as a means of communication with parents.

Visit remind.com/join and enter our class code : @83h94c along with your cell phone number. You'll get text notifications at the number you entered. Or you can also find the **"REMIND" app** on your cellphone.

Thanks again for expressing an interest in our Preschool and our 2024-2025 program! We are looking forward to providing a year of "fun-filled" educational and social activities for your son or daughter! If you would like more information about the Harborcreek Presbyterian Preschool, please feel free to call me at the Preschool (814-897-1401) or at my home (**814-899-0720**) and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Char Chmielewski
Preschool Director & Bears' Teacher
Preschool (814-897-1401)
Home (814-899-0720)



PLEASE NOTE: EVERY child is enrolled at the Preschool on a TRIAL BASIS, which lasts about three weeks.

Please know that in most (but not all) cases, it is usually our policy to allow a child sufficient time (about three weeks or so) to adjust to our routine and our curriculum. *(While the vast majority of children do very well at our Preschool and flourish there, a few children may experience difficulty handling the various class transitions and teacher rotations that occur in our daily schedule. These children are sometimes more successful in a totally self-contained classroom with fewer teachers and less distractions.)*



****Please Note:** We have a **NO Scent policy** at Preschool.

It has come to our attention that some students and staff members are **very sensitive** to the various smells associated with **perfumes, aftershave, hair gels, hair spray, lotions, etc.**

This sensitivity causes headaches, as well as severe throat and nasal congestion.

We, therefore, ask that, due to these potential allergic reactions, all preschoolers, as well as their transporting adults, do **NOT** come to preschool wearing **strong perfumes and/or scents** of any kind. ****We thank you, in advance, for your cooperation in this important matter!****

****For Your Information:** **KINDERGARTEN “AGE”** deadline requirements are as follows:

- child must be age 5 by May 31st for all **Harborcreek** public elementary schools;
- child must be age 5 by May 31st for **North East**, and **Fort LeBoeuf** public schools;
- child must be age 5 by June 1st for **Girard**, and **General McLane** public schools;
- child must be age 5 by August 31st for **Wattsburg**, **Fairview**, and **Millcreek** schools;
- child must be age 5 by September 1st for **Iroquois**, and **Erie** public schools.

The Preschool admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.
(As has always been the case, each class is dependent on a certain number of students.
If that number is not attained, that particular class may not be offered.)