



Honey MacCallum
Christian Preschool

A Ministry of Patuxent Presbyterian Church

Parent Handbook

2026 - 2027

23421 Kingston Creek Road
California, MD 20619

Preschool Office | 301-863-8600
www.hmcpreschool.com

Church Office | 301-863-2033
www.paxpres.com

Pastor | Matt Pooley
Associate Pastor | Robbie D'Orazio

“Like” us on Facebook!!

Welcome to Honey MacCallum Christian Preschool! We are so glad that you have become part of our family. The teachers and I truly love our school and we hope that you will feel the same way. We take great pride in what we do and provide a loving, safe, Christian environment for your child to grow and thrive. If you are a returning family, we thank you for continuing to put your trust in us for the education and nurturing of your children.

Communication is very important between school and home. If you have any feedback, problems or concerns, please feel free to give me a call, email me or come by the office at any time.

Blessings,
Barb Darden, Director

Director

Ms. Barb Darden

hmcdirector@paxpres.org

Assistant Director

Ms. Tricia Sowa

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Mothers Morning Out 2s

Ms. Donna Dursee

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Ms. Carolyn Goldsborough

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Ms. Andria Hoffman

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Ms. Trish Murph

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Ms. Carrie Buckalew

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T/TH 3s

Ms. Kelly Humenick

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Ms. Donna Dursee

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MWF 3s

Ms. Heather Boynton

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Ms. Kelly Humenick

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PreK 4s Upstairs

Ms. Cherie Crescini

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PreK 4s Downstairs

Ms. Chrystal Godfrey

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2026-27 Calendar

(subject to change and current calendar found on www.hmcpreschool.com)

- For inclement weather, we follow SMCPs for closures. www.smcps.org
- For SMCPs 2 hr delay days, we start **10:00 AM (2s)** or **10:15AM (3s & 4s)**
- Visit our website for school closure updates: www.hmcpreschool.com.
- **SMCPs is OFF on Election Day (Nov. 3) but HMC Preschool is IN SESSION**

9/3	Thursday	ORIENTATION DAY
9/8	Tuesday	1 st Day TTH MMO & 3s, PreK 4s
9/9	Wednesday	1 st Day MWF MMO & 3s
9/25	Friday	No School – SMCPs Prof. Day
10/12	Monday	No School - SMCPs Prof. Day
11/11	Wednesday	No School – Veterans Day
11/23 - 11/27	Mon. – Fri.	Thanksgiving Break
12/21- 1/1		Christmas Break
1/4	Monday	HMC Resumes Classes
1/18	Monday	No School – MLK Day
1/29	Friday	No School – SMCPs Prof. Day
2/15	Monday	No School – Presidents' Day
3/22 - 3/29		Easter/Spring Break
3/30	Tuesday	HMC Resumes Classes
5/27	Thursday	Last Day T/Th MMO & 3s
5/28	Friday	Last Day MWF MMO & 3s, PreK 4s PreK Graduation

Our Philosophy

The preschool years are the most significant in the development of children. It represents a time when learning is swift and curiosity is at a peak.

The mission of Honey MacCallum Christian Preschool is to provide a safe, loving, and enjoyable Christian learning environment for your children.

The children will have an opportunity to develop an awareness of the presence of God in their world. The children will learn that God is loving and forgiving and that the church is a warm and inviting place where they can feel happy together.

For children to fully develop, they need to explore at their own pace in an atmosphere of security and love. Curiosity and wonder need to be stimulated to help build self esteem. During this formative time independence, creativity and thinking need to be encouraged.

Above all, children with the help of caring, loving trustworthy adults will come to know that God is loving, caring, and trustworthy.

Our Goals

To grow in independence | To help children grow and develop as unique individuals, learning to do things themselves and make right choices.

To learn to get along with others | Children need to learn to work together and to share.

To develop self control and self discipline | Children need to know there is appropriate behavior in dealing with each other, stressing good manners.

To encourage curiosity, wonder, and self esteem | Teachers need to listen to children, respect their needs and compliment them sincerely, thereby encouraging them to feel good about themselves.

To nurture faith | Children need the help of adults to develop an awareness of the presence of God in themselves and others.

To form healthy relationships | Children need to form healthy relationships by learning about family, self, and friends

Our Program

Honey MacCallum takes the “whole child” approach to learning. Intellectual skills are an important component of our learning program. We place great importance in social, emotional, and physical development. We also feel it is very important to enable the children to learn as small children do – through play! Our program is structured, but children also self direct, and we use teachable moments as available. These activities include art, music, movement, language, math, science, social studies, and devotions.

We are licensed by the MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education) as a childcare center. This means that we are inspected yearly and must remain in compliance with the MSDE regulations. A copy of these regulations and your rights in regulated childcare are available near the Preschool Room and online at MSDE or our website.

Enrollment

- To enroll, a registration form must be filled out and submitted with a NON- REFUNDABLE registration fee of \$150 and September's tuition, if past June 1.
- Parents receive a folder of paperwork in late April/early May that must be completed and returned to HMC by mid-June.
- Each student is required to have a complete physical, a lead screening and all shots must be up to date.
- **If your child receives additional shots during the school year, please bring proof of immunization to the office to have your child's records updated.**

Withdrawal

- Parents must give written notice prior to withdrawal of their child, preferably 2 weeks.
- Tuition will not be refunded for partial months, however, a prorated payment may be arranged with the Director prior to the month of departure.

Tuition/Fees

- Regular tuition and fees are paid in full, regardless of your child's attendance or the number of days the school is open that month.
- A LATE FEE of \$25 will be charged if payment does not go through and is not received by the 15th of any month.
- Credit is not given for vacation, sick days, holidays or weather closures.
- Tuition is automatically drafted by ACH from your bank account on the 1st of each month October through May. September tuition is paid on June 1 or date of enrollment if after June 1.

Drop Off/Pick Up

- Drop Off MMO 2s: 8:55 AM - 9 AM
- Pick Up MMO 2s: 11:55 AM - 12 PM
- Drop Off 3s & 4s: 9:10 AM - 9:15 PM
- Pick Up 3s & 4s: 12:10 PM - 12:15 PM
- Pick Up for all classes is **PROMPTLY** at dismissal time.
- If you have an unforeseen delay for pick up, please call the preschool office and leave a message. We will check messages after 12:15PM if anyone has not been picked up.
- No child will be released to anyone other than parents, guardians, or those persons specified on the Authorized Release Form. We will ask for ID if someone we haven't met is picking the child up, including a parent.
- If you are aware in advance that someone else will be picking up your child, please email the Director and your child's teacher.

Late Arrival Policy

- School starts promptly at 9am for MMO 2s and 9:15am for 3s/4s. We close the doors at the start of the school day and late arrivals must go to the church office main entrance, ring the bell, and wait for a preschool staff member to escort your child to class. You may be required to wait with your child in the lobby until a preschool staff member is available to escort your child to class.
- CHRONIC lateness is disruptive to our staff and students at the start of each busy day. Some students have trouble transitioning into the school day and multiple late arrivals each day prevents the preschool office staff from providing the needed help.
- An OCCASIONAL unforeseen late arrival is understandable, but CHRONIC lateness is not acceptable. Late arrivals that are known in advance by the family should be communicated to the teachers/office staff through email prior to the occurrence. An example would be arriving late for school due to a dentist or doctor appointment.
- IMPORTANT: If your family is dealing with extenuating circumstances, please reach out to the Director. Our intent is to work with families for a successful school experience. We are understanding of special circumstances families may face. Please just communicate with us!
- If a family develops a repeated late arrival pattern, a Letter of Warning will be issued. If the pattern does not improve, the family could be subject to fines or dismissal from school.

Absences

- If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (vacations, etc.), please inform your child's teacher and the Director in advance via email.
- **If your child will be absent, we request that you email the child's teacher, Assistant Director and the Director in one email. (see emails)**
hmcadmin@paxpres.org and hmcdirector@paxpres.org

Illnesses

- If your child becomes sick during school, you will be called to pick him or her up immediately. A fever of 100.5 degrees orally or 101 temporally (forehead thermometer), vomiting, diarrhea, or suspected contagious rashes or pink eye are reasons to be sent home or be kept at home.
- **If your child has been home due to illness, they must be 24 hours free of fever, fever reducing medication, vomiting, and diarrhea, before returning to school.**
- If your child has contracted a communicable disease (i.e. pink eye, fifth disease, chicken pox, etc.), you must notify the school and be on medication or stay out of school for the state mandated “contagious” period.

Inclement Weather

- We follow the St. Mary's County Public Schools schedule for closings. If St. Mary's County Public Schools are closed, HMC is closed. **If there is a two hour delay, Honey MacCallum will begin drop off at 10AM for 2s and 10:15AM for 3s/4s.**
- Email notification from teachers may occur, but it **is not guaranteed**, due to unpredictability of weather situations.
- Check www.hmcpreschool.com, HMC Facebook page, local radio stations, local news or visit www.smcps.org to get current information regarding school closures or delays.
- Per school policy, we do not make up snow/inclement weather days.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

- HMC has an Emergency Preparedness Plan, and staff have been trained to handle various types of emergencies.
- Always update any changed contact information with the Director. Email is acceptable.
- **In the event that we have to vacate our building, your child will be taken to the Joshua House building behind the church on church property or to the church field on the property.**

Injuries/First Aid

- If your child has a minor injury, i.e. bump, small cut, parents will be notified at pick up time or you will be called, if necessary. An accident/incident report will be completed, signed by teachers and given to the parent to sign.
- If your child should become severely injured or ill, standard first aid will be administered, and parents will be contacted immediately. **All staff are CPR/1st Aid certified.**
- If needed, 911 will be called and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital. Please be sure that all contact information is kept current on your child's emergency form.

Medication/Allergies

- Make sure all allergies are documented in your child's paperwork.
- Only emergency medication will be administered at HMC. (i.e. EpiPen, inhaler)
- Parents must have a physician complete a state form called the **Medication Authorization Form**.
- Medication must be in the original container with your child's name, date, dosage, doctor's name, doctor's phone number and expiration date.
- Please be sure medication is not expired and replace it if it expires during the school year.
- All medication is to be turned in to the Director.
- DO NOT leave medication in your child's tote bag or lunch bag.

Clothing/Personal Items

- ALL jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, and rain jackets should be labeled with your child's name. Painters tape works great if you do not wish to write on the clothing itself.
- Children should wear clothing that will not be ruined if paint, glue or other materials used in class were to get on them.
- **Sneakers are the best shoes for school due to the playground mulch.**
- **NO sandals or shoes with holes are permitted.**
- Send sweaters, coats, gloves, and hats for outdoor play. **All items should be labeled with your child's name.** We go out every day except for extreme cold or rain, etc.
- If you wish for your child to have sunscreen on for outdoor play, please apply before they come to school.

Label Everything

- Please label ALL items belonging to your child.
- This includes any layer of clothing that may be taken off, such as a sweater, sweatshirt, coat, raincoat, mittens, scarves.
- This also includes your SNACK CONTAINER AND SPILLPROOF DRINK BOTTLE!
- If you do not want to write on the actual item, use a sticker or painter's tape.

HMC Backpacks

- All students receive an HMC embroidered canvas backpack at Orientation or upon enrollment. This cost is covered by the Registration Fee.
- We request that you continue to use this backpack as long as you are at the preschool. We are able to replace it at any time if zipper breaks or bag tears.
- ALL MMO 2s students need a change of clothing (changed for seasons) and shoes, 3 diapers and baby wipes in their backpacks.
- 3s and PreK 4s are recommended to provide a change of clothing (changed for seasons) and shoes in their tote bag in case of an accident or mess.

Snack Time

- Pack a healthy snack each day in a washable metal or plastic container - no lunchboxes.
- NO peanut products or perishable dairy products. (NO yogurt, cheese is OK)
- All drinks must be in a **spillproof** container.
- **Do not send sweets or candy as snacks.**
- Avoid snacks that spill. (i.e. applesauce or fruit cups vs. pouch or fresh fruit)
- Include a napkin and any necessary utensils.

Birthdays

- Birthdays are special, and we try to make your child's birthday special at school too.
- We invite you to donate a new hardcover (3s&4s) or Board (2s) book on your child's special day to add to our lending library.
- You may inscribe inside the cover "to HMC in honor of child's name on his/her birth date."
- Bring it wrapped and your child may present it at circle time. (The class will sing Happy Birthday regardless of whether a book is donated.) We will read the story and then add it to our lending library for all the children to enjoy.
- We do NOT allow food treats on birthdays, however, a treat bag to go home is ok. This is due to potential allergies of other students. Please arrange this in advance with your child's teacher.

Field Trips

- We do not transport the children to and from field trips. Parents provide transportation.
- Please check your email for notification of canceled field trips due to inclement weather.
- Your teachers will give prior notice and dates will appear on the calendar in your child's folder.

Scholastic Book Orders

- Reading to your children is SO very important!
- HMC offers a monthly Scholastic book order flyer to parents.
- Orders may be placed online and books will be delivered to school.
- HMC also hosts a Scholastic Book Fair each fall.

School Rules

We try to limit our rules to just a few, aimed at ensuring a safe and pleasant school environment for your child.

1. Be a friend
2. Listen
3. Share
4. Walking Feet
5. Help Clean Up

HMC Discipline Policy

- At HMC, we base our discipline policy on the approach outlined in the book, 123 Magic by Dr. Thomas Phelan and the concept of Conscious Discipline by Dr. Becky Bailey.
- Rules and boundaries mean love to a child. The goal of discipline is self-control. At HMC Preschool we use this general method of correcting misbehaviors.

1. Discuss the misbehavior with the child to make sure he/she understands what the rules are and why the rules are necessary.
2. Redirect unacceptable behavior as first approach.
3. Use 123 counting as per the book discipline approach for 123 Magic.
4. When appropriate, a child may be given a “break” from his/her play, not to exceed one minute per year of the child’s age.

If a child exhibits serious misbehavior which cannot be corrected by the above procedures, parents will be notified and be asked to assist us to correct the behavior or withdraw the child from the school. Our goal is to discipline a child while supporting him emotionally and guiding him toward self-discipline and self-control.

Parent Resource Library

- A Parent Resource Library is available in the Director’s Office.
- Please stop by if you need a special book or information about behavior issues, parenting, childhood diseases, grief, and more.

Parent/School Communication

- Each classroom provides a monthly newsletter/calendar via email and a hard copy. Each class has a private, closed Facebook group where information and photos are also shared. It is not required, but is a good way to connect with other families and the teachers. This is limited to parents, regular caregivers, and staff only.
- Our website is a great resource for the school calendar, email addresses for teachers and the Director, church mailing address and more. (www.hmcpreschool.com)
- If you would like to discuss concerns about your child’s progress or other questions, please feel free to email your child’s teacher or the Director to schedule a phone or in-person conference.

Screen Time Policy

Honey MacCallum Christian Preschool does not use any passive screen time in our programs. Videos are used occasionally for special programs in a limited quantity.