

# Jenny Hart Early Education Center

## PARENT HANDBOOK

### PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Jenny Hart Early Education Center is an important aspect to understanding the focus of our program. Our educational environment is set up as a delicate balance of providing high quality education with a strong emphasis on developing healthy relationships. A child's sense of wellbeing stems from the social-emotional stages evident in preschool children. Developing trust, independence and initiative are crucial for a child's academic competence. Enriching relationships with peers, teachers and the community help children develop important communication skills and an interest in the world around them. It is our philosophy that early education needs to include the enrichment of social/emotional skills along with hands-on intellectual and physical development. Our early education center provides a balanced daily routine including teacher directed and child choice activities, professional/family style relationships, individual decision making skills and experiences working together. Combined with the love of Jesus and a child-centered Bible time, this helps the Jenny Hart children develop a sense of belonging, hope and Christian faith.

### PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to positive relationships. The Jenny Hart staff would like you to know that we welcome your ideas and concerns. We strive toward maintaining a line of open, honest communication between home and school. Our goal is to create a family environment where each family and staff member is accepted for their uniqueness and individuality. We ask that if you have a concern (or a compliment) to please share it with one of our staff members so that we can answer your questions, make the necessary improvements or continue meeting your needs. We may initiate parent/teacher conferences to discuss your child's development. If you would like to request a conference, please let us know so that we can make the necessary arrangements. Through the use of the your child's daily log, we will do our best to involve you in your child's day at Jenny Hart. We put out a quarterly, school-wide newsletter of events and reminders as well as special write-ups to involve families in the current events of Jenny Hart Preschool. We also have several special holiday events that we encourage family members to attend, like the Christmas Program, Mother's Day Luncheon and the Father's Day Hot Dog Lunch.

## **PRE-ENROLLMENT VISITS**

Since a smooth transition into our program will enhance your child's sense of trust and self esteem, we require that all families visit the school at least two times before your child's actual first day of school. Remember good feelings are contagious! If you are genuinely enthusiastic about your child's entrance into school, your child will look forward to it too. The first step is to make sure JHEEC is the kind of quality program you're comfortable with, so please feel free to ask questions and express your concerns.

## **OPERATING HOURS**

JHEEC will operate between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, 12 months per year. A late pick-up fee will be applied to any parent arriving after 6:00 pm and will be charged after 6:05 pm. Below you will find our observed holidays. Keep in mind each calendar year varies and our Professional Development day and floating holidays will also vary.

## **EVERYDAY ROUTINE**

Consistency is important for parents and children, so we highly recommend that you develop a daily routine for arriving and departing.

- It is best to arrive before 9:00 am if your child is in Pre-k or Kinder, and before 9:30 am if your child is in the 2's or 3's class. This is so that your child can participate in all the exciting activities and can become acclimated to the environment at their own pace.
- In your child's class or on the playground, you will find a classroom clipboard with "**SIGN IN AND OUT SHEETS**". It is a State requirement that you sign your child in and out each day with your full signature. Please be sure that your child's teacher is aware of his/her arrival and departure.
- You will find you child's daily log in their cubby file in the classroom. Please check and read the log for pertinent information regarding your child's day as well as other correspondence from our school. It is helpful to refer to the log when asking your child about their day. Specific questions result in accurate answers as well as show the child that you're interested in what they do at school (a real self esteem builder).
- You will want to place all your child's belongings in their cubby or backpack and check each day for artwork, treasures, soiled clothes etc.

## **CELL PHONES**

Please feel free to finish your phone conversations before entering the Jenny Hart facility. Drop off and pick up times are important bonding times to help your child not only feel safe and secure, but it is important for your child to be your primary focus during these home/school transitions.

## **MEALS**

Your child will need to bring a lunch consisting of nutritious foods each day. The school provides milk at lunchtime and a nutritious breakfast, morning and afternoon snack. The lunches are stored in each classroom and not refrigerated, please use an ice pack or thermos. Classrooms have microwaves for reheating.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Due to a variety of children with various food allergies, we have a policy which requires any child who has an EpiPen prescribed to keep at school in the case of a severe allergic reaction to any food, **to bring all food and snacks from home.** These children also need an "allergy action plan" on file to be filled out by the child's physician. We do not serve peanuts or peanut butter at school. However, children are allowed to bring these foods in their lunchboxes, as it is impossible to eliminate every allergy food from the school. Each class has a copy of the allergy alert list and has a separate table for lunches with nuts or peanut butter. If your child has peanut butter or nuts in their lunch, we ask that you affix a "NUTS" clothespin to the lunchbox handle. You can find the clothespins in your child's classroom.

## **NOTICE OF FIRST AID GIVEN**

If your child is injured while at school (scraped knees, etc.) you will be notified through a "Notice of First Aid Given" form, which you will find in your child's cubby at the end of the day. There will be two identical forms, one that you will sign and return the office and one, which you may keep. If a serious injury occurs we will first try to make contact with a parent and have the parent take the necessary medical actions. If the parent cannot be reached, we will take the child to the closest medical facility.

## **ILLNESS POLICY 24-Hour Rule\***

It is the parent's responsibility to verify that your child's health is adequate for his/her participation in program activities before bringing them to the school each day. Follow these guidelines in determining if your child is well enough to attend School.

<b><u>SYMPTOM</u></b>	<b><u>YOUR CHILD MUST REMAIN HOME UNTIL:</u></b>
▪ Fever 100 or above	24 hours after the fever has subsided and the child's temperature has returned too normal.
▪ Colds / Flu	Thick yellow or green discharge is no longer draining from the nose and coughing has subsided.
▪ Diarrhea / Vomiting	Loose stools have subsided and the child has returned to normal eating without stomach upset.
▪ Lice	Until nits are no longer present.
▪ Conjunctivitis	There is no drainage and on antibiotics for 24 hours
▪ Rash	Until the rash is no longer present, or it is determined by a physician that the rash is not a contagious. <u>A clearance note is required upon return.</u>
▪ Communicable Diseases	Until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours or a physician states that the disease is no longer in a contagious stage.

### **If your child has a contagious illness, you must notify the Director**

**immediately so that precautions may be taken.** If your child is brought to school and his/her teacher or the director determines that he/she is ill, we will notify you by phone so that you or another authorized adult can remove your child from school as soon as possible. Please realize that we are doing our best to keep contagious illnesses to a minimum. Please have your child wash their hands upon arriving to school and before leaving for the day. ***\*24-hour rule clarification:** If your child is sent home from school in the middle of the day, they need to remain home the next full day regardless of when the 24-hr period ends, unless there is a note from your child's physician stating that your child is not contagious AND your child appears well enough to participate in activities.*

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

Authorization forms permitting our staff to administer medication can be found in each classroom. These forms must be filled out completely. All medication must be brought in the original container. Our staff will administer medication at or around lunchtime. **Please do not put medication in child's lunch box.** Medication that needs refrigeration may be stored in the class refrigerator, all other medications will be stored in the cupboard above the sink. Inhalers and/or nebulizers require a separate form that you can get from the JHEEC office.

## **CLASS CELEBRATIONS**

While we enjoy celebrating special occasions such as birthdays and "Child of the Week" with your child, we cannot host large themed parties at Jenny Hart. In order to ensure simple, stress free celebrations for the teachers, kids and parents, please help us follow these guidelines:

- Keep celebrations simple. Small snacks such as cupcakes, doughnut holes or rice crispy treats are okay. Birthday treats are usually served during afternoon snack.
- There is no need to provide lunch for the entire class. Pizza lunches are okay, but not necessary. If you do decide to have a pizza lunch, you will need to make all the necessary arrangements, including full payment and tip if you choose to have it delivered. Please also leave clipboards for school notices only. Parents are welcome to come by for lunch or snack to help celebrate.
- If you would like to invite children from the school to your child's Birthday party, the best way to give out invitations would be to mail them using the classroom directory. You may also give invitations to the office or classroom teachers so that they can deliver them to the cubbies, however we cannot be responsible for misdirected invitations. Please do not feel obligated to invite the entire class.
- Please NO GOODIE BAGS. This is due to various allergies as well as sibling anxiety at the end of the day.

## **PARENT RESOURCE TABLE**

We have a Parent Resource table located just outside the preschool office. School information as well as community resources and extra curricular activities can be found on here. The information provided is free for parents to take. You can find additional resources at [www.irvinechildcare.org](http://www.irvinechildcare.org). The Parent Resource table is also where you will find forms for special pick-ups, enrollment changes and statement requests.

## **VISITS OR OBSERVATIONS**

Jenny Hart has an open door policy for parents who wish to visit. However, if any visit or person visiting becomes upsetting to the child or disruptive to the classroom, at the discretion of the Administration, we may ask the visitor to either come at another time or not at all. All visitors, beyond picking up and dropping off children, must check in with the Jenny Hart office, sign-in on the visitor log and receive a name badge while in the building and for the duration of the visit or observation.

## **WHAT TO WEAR AND WHAT TO BRING**

### **WEAR:**

- Comfortable and washable play clothes.
- Sneakers, sandals with straps, or water shoes.
- Jackets and sweaters clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **BRING:**

- A complete change of labeled clothes to be kept at school in a backpack.
- A clearly labeled crib sheet & blanket for napping.
- A small pillow or stuffed animal if your child needs one.
- A large pillowcase to transport napping items to and from school.
- Diapers and wipes if needed.
- A healthy, nutritious lunch in a lunch box.

### **DO NOT BRING:**

- Clothing or items that will be upsetting if lost or dirty.
- Toys from home- Please do not have your child bring toys from home unless it is your child's designated share day. Toys brought from home may become lost and are often the cause of aggression as children have difficulty sharing.
- Any toy that resembles a weapon.
- Bottles or pacifiers of any kind.

## **HOLIDAYS /SCHOOL CLOSURE**

The school will be closed on the following holidays:

- Presidents' Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- New School Year Classroom Prep Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- The week between Christmas Eve through New Years Day
- 1 Professional Development Day (date varies from year to year)
- •Floating holidays may occur on the day/s before or after depending on the calendar year. You will be notified in advance.

**\*This copy of the parent handbook is for you to keep for your records and reference. Your signature of acceptance and acknowledgement of these policies is included in your child's enrollment paperwork file.**