

Hornet Park Early Childhood Center Student Handbook & Family Guidebook 2022-2023

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A Child's Bridge to Tomorrow

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<https://www.bgcs.k12.in.us/o/hpecc>

Dr. Laura Hammack – Superintendent
Mrs. Erin Probus – Principal
Mrs. Tonya Reid - Assistant Principal

Board of School Trustees:

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Mission statement

The mission of the Hornet Park Early Childhood Center (HPECC) is to provide a safe and developmentally-appropriate environment in which children are nurtured in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth, while developing a love for learning and establishing a strong foundation from which students will build success in kindergarten and beyond!

Philosophy on teaching young children

Our philosophy for teaching young children is built upon developmentally appropriate practices and knowledge. We strive to create a loving and nurturing environment in which our students are successful and build a positive school relationship. We will provide our students with predictable routines, enriching activities, and a strong classroom community. We will build relationships with our students' families and invite them to participate in our classroom community. We will use our knowledge of early childhood development and ongoing training to provide a quality learning environment in which all students are successful!

Family engagement

We believe and strive to develop healthy and whole relationships with our families who enroll their children at our school. We encourage families to get involved in their child's classroom and display a healthy relationship with the classroom teacher. We would like to extend an invitation to any interested parents and school officials to visit the classrooms when it works best for your schedule and the classroom's schedule.

Visitors and Visitation (Policies 8400, 9150) Interested parents and school officials are typically welcome to visit. However, all visitors (including parents) must sign in at the Office and be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher and/or school administrator. Any adult who would like to be in the classroom for any purpose MUST have a criminal history check performed. This is done free of charge. Forms are available in the office for completion. This check would only include any type of felony convictions, not the usual traffic violations or other minor incidents. We are hopeful that we can resume visitors after the pandemic conditions pass.

Visitor Conduct Visitors to our office and school must use appropriate language, refraining from use of profanity, slurs, or inappropriate conduct. It is also required to maintain a calm demeanor, not engaging in shouting or threatening behavior.

Any behavior contrary to this policy will result in being dismissed from the property by school personnel and the Beech Grove Police Department, if necessary.

Adult Volunteers Typically, parents who would like to volunteer should contact their child's teacher. It is usually most beneficial for teachers and children if parents come for short periods of time, such as an hour or two on a regular basis, than for full days at a time. Younger children may not accompany adults while they are volunteering. While younger children may be well behaved, they are still a disruption to learning. There must be an approved Limited Criminal History Check on file for any volunteer. We ask that parents wait until at least 6 weeks of school has passed before beginning to volunteer to allow your child to settle into the routine at school.

Back to School Experience The Back to School Experience will be on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 from 4-6pm.. This is a great opportunity for parents to learn expectations of the teachers, class rules, and what their children will be learning this school year. Teachers will also answer any questions you may have and invite each family in for an individual visit prior to the first day of school.

Field Trips Field trips are planned at the discretion and planning of the classroom teacher. Field trips will occur during the regular scheduled school day. There may be some field trips where an extra admissions fee may be required to be paid by the parent/caregiver by a given deadline. Please work with your child's teacher if you need assistance in paying an admissions fee. Volunteer chaperones may be asked to attend the field trip. We ask that any children who are not enrolled in the class do not attend the field trip. Chaperones and volunteers MUST have a Limited Criminal History Check on file. Chaperones and volunteers will be required to ride the bus with the class to and from the field trip destination.

Communication

Parent contact information Please be sure to keep our office up to date with any address or telephone number changes. It is of utmost importance that we have the most current contact information. Please notify our office and staff as soon as any contact information changes.

Email communication Office staff and administrators can be reached by calling 317-780-5050. Teachers can also be reached via phone, but we ask that unless it is an emergency, you leave a message during school hours so as not to interrupt learning time. Email is the most efficient way to reach the classroom teachers. Teachers can be reached

via email address that is the first initial of their first name and last name @bgcs.k12.in.us Teachers will respond within 24 hours during the school week.

Staff communication Open two way communication between staff and families is extremely important to us to maintain. During registration, you will be provided with a form to fill out that tells us about your child and your family. We want to respect all cultures and be knowledgeable about the traditions within your family. The more information you can provide us with, the better care we can provide to your child and your family. We want to know what's important to your family, things your child enjoys in his/her life, and who is important and may be talked about at school.

If you ever have any questions about instruction or classroom practices, please feel free to schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher. If you have any questions or concerns about HPECC policy or procedures, please request a meeting with Hornet Park principal, Mrs. Erin Probus.

Newsletter A school newsletter will be published each month. We will email this information to our families unless we are informed that you do not have computer access. It will give announcements and information about upcoming events. Be sure to read it carefully and keep it available until the next newsletter. We will also share this newsletter via our Facebook page. Classroom newsletter will be shared by your child's teacher at their discretion.

Parent/Teacher Conferences There will be at least one parent/teacher conference during the year. One conference will be in October, and another optional conference will be in May. These conferences are a very important way for parents to get information about their child's progress in school. While it is best to come in person for the conference, phone conferences can also be held.

Attendance

It is extremely important that your child attends preschool on every occasion that they are able. Children thrive when a routine is set and followed and it is most beneficial for your child to attend preschool in the hours that you have enrolled and paid. Children are able to be the most successful in following the routine and expectations of the classroom when they are present and ready to learn. When children miss days of school, they miss out on the opportunities and activities provided that day. They may be sad to miss fun activities and their friends. We

highly encourage that parents and caregivers bring their children to school each and every day that they are able (exceptions being illness, family emergency, etc.).

Curriculum

All activities planned in the classroom will be aligned with the Indiana Early Learning Foundations. Activities will be planned based on current events, seasons, and most importantly, student interest. Activities will cover subjects such as language arts (letter recognition, identification and sounds), mathematics (counting, sorting, number identification), fine motor skills (cutting, gluing, fine motor manipulation), and process art projects. We will utilize the FrogStreet curriculum and supplemental materials.

Assessment

Your child will be assessed by his/her classroom teacher twice per school year, once in the fall before October parent/teacher conferences and once in the spring before school ends. Your child will be assessed on his/her knowledge of basic shapes, colors, numbers and letters. They will also be assessed on basic fine motor skills, self-help skills, and social emotional skills. If your child is participating in a voucher program or has an IEP (individualized education plan) they will also be assessed using ISPROUT (Indiana Student Performance Readiness and Observation of Understanding Tool). If at any time you have questions or concerns about your child's academic skills, please reach out to the classroom teacher.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Our staff will come out promptly at 8 a.m. to receive children out of the car rider line. Please be sure that your car is **turned off and not running**. This is for the safety of the children and staff members. Children will be brought out to cars at a dismissal time of 3pm.

Bus services are only offered to students who have transportation included in their Individualized Education Plans (IEPS). All other families will arrange transportation for their own children.

Daily Schedules

Routines and schedules are essential to providing your child with a feeling of safety and predictability within the classroom setting. Children thrive when there is a

routine to follow and when they are knowledgeable about what events are going to happen that day. A schedule is within each classroom so that children can become familiar and comfortable with the activities at school.

Preschool Day: 8am - 3pm

(BGCS staff have extended hours to accommodate contractual obligations.)

Learning opportunities are provided in both unstructured and structured settings. We believe that children learn through play and that rich classroom experiences can provide the best and most engaging learning to happen. A full day classroom will have 1.5 hours of unstructured, choice time for the children to engage in. This unstructured time can look like building with blocks, playing in dramatic play, engaging in an art project, reading books, scientific exploration, gross motor movement and so much more.

Structured learning will happen at circle time and during small group learning time. Circle time will be held daily and may consist of exposure to the calendar, current events happening in the classroom or your child's life (i.e. birthdays, celebrations, etc.), singing songs, reading a story, and interacting with a game or lesson. Music and movement may happen during circle time as well as calm classroom practices to help your child learn self-regulation. Small group activities will be planned according to theme, seasons, special events and child interest. These activities will be academic and provide your child with the opportunity to learn how to sit for a structured activity. These activities will provide instruction in language arts (letter identification, recognition and sounds), mathematics (counting, sorting, identifying shapes and colors), fine motor tasks (cutting, tearing paper, or gluing), art projects, and sensory exploration.

Children will be provided with at least 30 minutes of outdoor, gross motor time as long as it is weather permitting. Classes will only go outside if the "feels like temperature" is above 32 degrees and below 90 degrees. If weather conditions are not suitable, gross motor time can be held within the classroom or in the gross-motor space with indoor games. Children use a variety of skills while outdoors such as gross motor coordination, healthy exercise, and learning teamwork through large group play.

The HPECC is planning to open on 8/15/22 and then follow the same school days/calendar as the [Beech Grove City Schools Calendar](#).

Meal Time

Lunch and snacks are provided by the school. Children will be expected to sit at a table with his/her peers and teachers and engage in meal time. Meal time can be a wonderful time to build language and self-help skills. This is often a time where relationships are built and fostered both with their peers and with staff. Healthy eating will be practiced and talked about while at meals. Your child will practice appropriate eating habits as well.

Appropriately timed, nutritious meals and snacks in a quantity sufficient to meet the needs of the child will be provided through Chartwells Food Service.

Additionally, drinking water is available at all times.

Nap time

Children will be provided with cots that they use for an entire week. Parents are asked to provide a small blanket or mat that they can lay with. Pillows and small stuffed animals or toys are not permitted. Blankets and mats will be sent home at the end of each week. Please wash these and send them back to school on Monday. Blankets may be sent home midweek to be washed if the need arises. Children will be required to rest for at least 30 minutes. In the second nine weeks, children who have shown that they consistently do not nap will be provided with some small, quiet activities after the required 30 minutes of rest time.

Proper attire

Please see Beech Grove City Schools Policy 5511 on Dressing and Grooming for the complete wardrobe policy.

Please send your child in closed-toe or safe shoes that your child is able to walk, run, and play in without the danger of tripping or hurting themselves. All classrooms are extremely active during the day so proper footwear is very important.

Please consider sending your child in clothes that are able to get messy, dirty and even stained. While the classrooms always try to use washable paints and supplies, accidents do happen and stains can occur. There will be special events in which

your child may wear clothes that you do not wish to get messy, and teachers will plan the day's activities accordingly. Be sure that the articles of clothing you are sending your child in, they can easily manipulate for restroom breaks or to change clothes if needed.

Birthdays and celebrations

Birthdays Birthdays are a wonderful celebration for the classroom community to take part in. Parents may provide a small treat for the entire class. Treats need to be store bought and have an ingredient's list easily accessible on the packaging in the event that allergies are present within the classroom.

Classroom celebrations Classrooms will have at least 2 celebrations per school year that parents will be invited to attend. Most of these celebrations may be a winter party and an end of the year celebration. Classroom teachers will be responsible for communicating the details of these events to parents in a timely manner.

Please let your child's teacher know if your child is unable to participate in certain celebrations that may happen in the classroom and alternate arrangements will be made.

Payments and fees

HPECC full-day programming rates are \$140/week with an annual \$50 registration fee. This calculates to \$28/day and we only charge for the days we are in session. This means that if the school is closed for a holiday or break, you will not be charged for those days.

We qualify for CCDF vouchers and are working to open up additional options to our families. CCDF (The Child Care and Development Fund) is a federal program that helps low-income families obtain child care so that they may work, attend training or continue their education. The purpose of CCDF is to increase the availability, affordability and quality of child care. Visit the [Childcare Assistance website](#) and click "Apply for Childcare Assistance."

Additionally, we are a Paths to Quality, Level 3 school. This allows our families to explore On My Way Pre-K Grants for free tuition. On My Way Pre-K awards grants to 4 year olds from low-income families so that they may have access to a

high-quality pre-K program the year before they begin kindergarten. Visit the [On My Way PreK website](#) and click to apply for this grant assistance.

Payments may be paid annually or monthly (by the 1st of each month). We accept cash, check, money order, credit card or parents can sign up for automatic electronic payments. You will be asked to designate your preferred payment schedule when you make your first payment. Please contact the Hornet Park office at (317) 780-5050 with any questions about payment of fees.

- **Cash payments:** Parents may pay with cash by visiting the school office. Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on the envelope.
- **Check payments:** Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on the envelope. Please make the check payable to Hornet Park Early Childhood Center. A NSF fee of \$25.00 will be charged for all returned checks, in addition to replacement funds for the returned check. You may also place the check in an envelope and send it to school with your child. Please make sure the envelope states your child's name and the teacher's name.
- **Money Order payments:** Parents paying with a money order (payable to Hornet Park Early Childhood Center) can be delivered to the office. Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on the envelope.
- **Credit Card payments:** Parents paying with credit card can visit the school office between 7:15 am and 3:15 pm to make a credit card payment in person. Credit card payments may also be made over the phone.
- **Automatic Electronic payments:** TBD

If a payment is not received within two business days of the established and agreed-upon due date (1st of the month), a past-due notification will be submitted. Payments not received by 4 pm on the fifth business day of the established and agreed-upon due date will be considered late, and a collection fee and/or interruption to your child's enrollment may follow. *Enrollment will be terminated at the discretion of the school for non-payment of required registration fees.*

Behavior policy

We understand that preschool is often a child's first experience in an educational setting. We want this experience to be the most positive that it can be and to create a desire to learn and grow within a child. Even though the children are small, they can have big feelings that can cause big behaviors, especially as they are

learning new routines and expectations. We approach each situation of challenging behavior with kindness and understanding. Redirection is a technique used most often by our staff to help gently correct and guide children to a more appropriate behavior. Corporal punishment is never exhibited by any school staff members and is not permitted by parents on school property.

Our biggest importance to working with challenging behaviors is that the child and the adult have a positive relationship. This allows the child to feel safe even while displaying their emotions. When a strong relationship is not established between the child and adult, situations can quickly escalate. Staff work quickly to de-escalate situations in an appropriate manner and focus on teaching children calm down and self-regulation strategies that they can use independently or with help from an adult. Staff uses PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) as well as restorative practices.

Children that exhibit more severe behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, etc. will be gently removed from the area if other students are present so that no one gets hurt, for a brief period of time to allow them to calm their body. Behaviors will be addressed in the way that the student's IEP outlines and is most appropriate for the student and the situation. Again, corporal punishment is never used by staff or permitted by parents on school grounds.

Special Education Services & Referrals

Special Education: Person with a Disability The American's with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but all individuals who have access to the Corporation's programs and facilities.

The law defines a person with a disability as anyone who: A. has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; B. has a record of such an impairment; or C. is regarded as having such an impairment.

The Corporation has specific responsibilities under these two laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

Free and Appropriate Public Education Students are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment." The School provides a variety of special education programs for students identified as having a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A student can access special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedure. Parent involvement in this procedure is required. More importantly, the School encourages the parent to be an active participant. To inquire about the procedure, a parent should contact Amy Reeves, Quality Coordinator, at 317-788-4481.

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for IDEA may be served within the regular education program with an accommodation plan developed through an interactive dialogue between the School, the student and the student's parent(s). Parents who believe their child may have a disability that interferes substantially with the child's ability to function properly in School, should contact the Hornet Park Intervention Team at 317-780-5050.

Parent Referrals Parents are able to request that their child be evaluated for special education services if they have concerns about their child's development, behavior, or speech and language skills. Parent referrals will be completed within 50 educational school days of a parent returning all necessary and required paperwork. Parents will be contacted on 3 separate occasions if they fail to provide the required paperwork and then the referral will be considered close and the parent will need to start the process over and begin a new 50-day timeline. We recommend discussing any issues or concerns you may have about your child's development and needs with their classroom teacher before parent's reach out for a referral for special education services. Some of the concerns parents may have may be a typical, age-appropriate concern.

School Referrals There may be some instances in which a classroom teacher and staff members have concerns about a child's development, behavior or speech and language skills and feel that they may benefit from receiving special education services. In these instances, a plan will first be developed with the classroom teacher, parent, and other supporting staff members to collect progress monitoring data and implement interventions. Your child will continue to receive general education services in addition to the interventions determined by the team. If the student is still needing more support after the interventions are in place for a significant amount of time and with increased intensity, and the child is still not receiving enough support as monitored by the progress monitoring data, an evaluation to determine if the child qualifies for special education services may be necessary. The parent or caregiver has a right to decline the evaluation,

but these evaluations are made in the best interest of the child to help them be the most successful student that they can be.

Service Animals (Policy 8390) A student's need for and use of a service animal must be addressed in the student's individualized education program (IEP) and/or Section 504 Plan. A service animal that meets the definition set forth in Policy 8390 shall be permitted to accompany the student anywhere on the school campus where students are permitted to be; however, the service animal must be at all times under the control of the student or the service animal's handler. The principal will review and determine whether the documentation required by Board policy has been provided for the student's service animal.

School safety

Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drill (Policy 8420) Hornet Park Elementary, as well as all Beech Grove City Schools, has a Crisis Management Plan and Team that prepares the school to deal with a variety of emergencies such as tornado, fire, earthquake, flood, chemical spill, unauthorized intruder, hostage situation, or terrorists. This plan is updated each year with the cooperation of the Beech Grove Police Department, the Beech Grove Fire Department, and the Mayor's office. The plan is in the Office and all classrooms in the school.

State law requires that the school hold periodic fire and tornado drills to practice what to do in case of a fire or tornado. State law also requires building lock down drills. The proper procedures are discussed with the students and will be practiced periodically throughout the school year.

Emergency School Closing Emergency delays or school closings are sometimes made due to severe weather. Even though decisions to delay the opening of school will be announced by 6:00 a.m., a decision could still be made to close school after the delay has been announced. Continue to listen to local radio and television stations to determine if Beech Grove City Schools have been closed. In addition, an automated telephone message/text message/email may be sent via our Skylert messaging system if your information is correct and updated in Skyward Family Access. Parents should not call the school because this can tie up the school's phone lines that are needed to notify employees, bus drivers, and media.

Security Measures Below are the security measures that have been instituted here at Hornet Park to ensure your child's safety. Parents and guests, please do your part to follow

these measures. We think you will appreciate these efforts:

1. All doors will be locked during the school day. Staff members and children are prohibited from opening a locked door to individuals not wearing a Visitor Badge.
2. **EVERYONE** entering the building must show a photo ID to be buzzed through the camera door system, report to the Office, and pick up a Visitor Badge/sticker.
3. **ALL parents/guardians must pick up students at the Office. No parent can go into a teacher's room without the teacher being notified in advance and agreeing to see the parent. This includes walking students to class when dropping them off.**
4. Staff members are required to report to the Office any individual(s) not wearing a Visitor Badge.

Use of Tobacco by Visitors (Policy 7434) Beech Grove City Schools buildings and grounds are smoke-free. For the benefit of our students, smoking is not permitted in the car rider line, on grounds, or anywhere on campus.

The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco presents a health hazard that can have serious consequences for the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the Board.

For purposes of this policy, "use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including a cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, as well as electronic, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes.

In order to protect students and staff from the adverse impact of tobacco smoke on indoor air quality and encourage students to not use tobacco in any form, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco within any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board.

The Board also prohibits the use of tobacco anywhere on the campus of any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, including, but not limited to, practice fields, playgrounds, football fields, baseball fields, softball fields, pool areas, soccer fields, tennis courts, and all open areas and will remain in effect at all times. Furthermore, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco in all vehicles owned or operated by the Board, including, but not limited to, school buses, special purpose buses, vans, trucks, and cars.

The Superintendent and Building Principals shall ask an individual who is smoking in violation of this policy to refrain from smoking and cause to be removed from Corporation property an individual who is smoking in violation of this policy and fails to refrain from smoking after being asked to refrain from smoking.

Staff Trainings All staff that is in or around the classroom will be trained in and certified in CPR, First Aid, SafeSleep practices, and prevention and signs of abuse or neglect. Staff members will receive training in these areas each school year and maintain an up-to-date certification. At least 12 hours of continuing education that is approved by the Office of Early Childhood and Out of school Learning (OECOSL) and related to the age appropriate educational development, care and safety of children will be provided to all staff members each year.

Health

Health Services There is a nurse at Hornet Park Elementary School. She will notify parents if children have injuries that are more than routine cuts, abrasions, and bumps from the playground or if they become ill and need to go home. Additionally, students will be sent home if they have a greater than, or equal to 100 degrees. Parents must complete the required forms in order for the nurse to see their children. Children should NOT attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever, chills
- Red, matted eyes
- Rash with fever
- Open sores
- Head lice/nits
- Excessive coughing
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

Children must wait 24 hours before returning to school after symptoms of fever, seizure, diarrhea, and vomiting have ended. They should also stay home for 24 hours after starting an antibiotic, or eye drops for pink eye.

CDC guidelines will be followed for Quarantine and Isolation:

Guidelines are located here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

Please see Beech Grove City Schools Policy 5320 and AG 5320 for the complete immunizations policy.

Please see Beech Grove City Schools Policy 5330 for the complete policy on use of

medications. Medications will be kept in a locked cabinet and must be transferred adult to adult.

Students must be fully potty trained prior to starting HPECC unless accompanied by a doctor's note or an included component of his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within Special Education.

Abuse and neglect

School staff members are mandatory reporters of any suspicion of abuse and neglect. If child abuse or neglect is suspected, school staff are required to contact Indiana Child and Family Services. As required by law, the parent or caregiver will not be contacted by the school when a report has been made suspecting abuse or neglect.

Equal opportunity

Equal Education Opportunity (See Policy 2260) It is the policy of this Corporation to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that the Corporation, a school, or any staff person has discriminated against a student on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information, has the right to file a complaint. A formal complaint may be made in writing to the School Corporation's Compliance Officer listed below:

Steve Bair, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (317) 788-4481 The complaint procedure is described on Form 2260 F2.

The complaint will be investigated and a response, in writing, will be given to the concerned person within 10_ days. The Compliance Officer may provide additional information concerning access to equal education opportunity. Under no circumstances will the Corporation threaten or retaliate against anyone who raises or files a complaint.

Appendix (Other Supporting Information)

Complete policies from Beech Grove City Schools can be found in the Hornet Park Student Handbook.