

Infant & Toddler Addendum

The contents of the Daycare & Preschool handbook also apply to infants and toddlers, unless stated differently in this addendum.

Educational Program

Our infant program provides a warm, welcoming environment where babies can grow from a bundle of joy to a bundle of curiosity. Each child's primary caregiver is a nurturing child development professional who is focused on creating experiences and opportunities that invite exploration and support the rapid and important development that is occurring in a child's first years.

More than just daycare, at HCS we are focused on keeping children happy, engaged, and secure. We personalize care for each infant based on his or her unique schedule, development, nutritional guidelines, and any other special attention he/she requires.

Warm and nurturing interactions with caregivers, days spent in a home-like environment for learning, individualized attention and experiences, and meaningful partnerships with parents are the cornerstones of our curriculum for infants.

Language & Literacy

From their very first cries, coos, and babbles, infants learn to use language to connect with their world, to develop relationships, and to get what they need. Our infant teachers encourage these skills through everyday experiences such as:

Singing lullabies and songs

Naming objects

Engaging in daily conversations

Exploring picture books

Playing rhyming and word games

Mathematical Thinking

Although it might seem surprising, mathematical concepts are indeed a part of an infant's early learning- from staring at the geometric shapes of a toy to exploring the space around her. Our math curriculum provides appropriate materials and activities that promote the development of early mathematical understanding. Some of the things your baby will have the opportunity to learn include:

Recognizing words that describe positions such as "up" or "under"

Becoming aware of space and variations in it

Understanding quantity concepts like "more"

Repeating an action to make the same thing happen again

Making choices from a group of items

Scientific Thinking

Science to infants is not found in elaborate experiments, but rather in real world and everyday moments as they move through their environment, manipulate objects, and explore with all their senses. Our infant teachers help curious babies begin the process of discovery by:

Providing a sensory-rich environment that encourages exploration in a safe way

Experimenting with volume by filling and dumping buckets filled with toys

Using safe toys and materials with varied textures, smells, tastes and sounds

Playing peek-a-boo

Exploring nature in safe, outdoor environments

The Arts

Exposure to the arts ensures babies are immersed in rich and diverse experiences that capture their interest, nurture their development, and excite their senses. At HCS, our infant teachers guide children to explore their creative side and to appreciate the beauty of the art world by:

Painting with large brushes, sponges, and fingers

Using rattles and musical instruments

Dancing and moving to varied beats, music, and tempos

Playing with puppets and dolls

Reading vivid picture books

Social and Emotional Development/Social Studies

Although they are our youngest citizens, infants can begin to understand the basic concepts that provide a foundation for becoming a happy, contributing member of society. Our infant teachers encourage a baby's exploration of the world around us by:

Looking at family photos with your child

Setting up safe spaces that encourage play near peers

Showing affection and compassion every day

Engaging in imaginative, caring play such as rocking a doll

Helping children distinguish themselves from others.

Helping children form an attachment to a primary caregiver

Helping children build relationships with other adults

Helping children express emotions

Helping children show empathy toward the feelings and needs of others

Giving opportunities for children to participate in group activities

Physical development and health

Our curriculum focuses on health and safety, and fosters a positive attitude about wellness. Babies are exposed to healthy habits and routines to help them build a foundation for lifelong health. Babies will have the opportunity to:

Enjoy physical activities both indoors and outdoors, in safe environments designed specifically for infants

Move parts of the body (turning head, grasping, kicking) and move the whole body (rolling, crawling, cruising, walking, running, balancing)

Identify and communicate his/her hunger needs

Become receptive to a variety of flavors and textures when he/she is ready for solid foods

Participate in routine health care when he/she is diapered and assisted with hand washing

While the developmental issues for infants and toddlers are similar, certain differences are addressed in the toddler program. Toddlers are more mobile, more capable, and experience significant language development. They are offered more challenging learning opportunities as they develop. Because toddlers' attention spans are short and rapidly shifting, the program is highly flexible and individualized.

Daily Schedule

Our day is designed to meet the needs of each individual child as much as possible in a group setting. Infants are fed, diapered and take naps according to their needs. The following Daily Schedule is a guide, and will be changed as needed to ensure the needs of the children are being met. The Daily Schedule provides only a framework for planning and organizing the daily routine and play activities for the children.

7:00 Center opens

7:30 Storytime, Finger Plays
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Diaper, Nap
11:00 Diaper, Eat
11:30 Neighborhood walk/outdoor play
12:30 Music & movement
1:00 Diaper, Nap
2:30 Diaper, Eat
3:00 Outdoor play, gross motor activities
4:00 Art activity/sensory play, fine motor activities
4:30 Eat, Diaper, Prepare for parent arrival
5:30 Center closes

Environment

It is a priority to keep the infant and toddler areas as clean as possible. We ask that everyone remove their shoes or wear shoe covers before entering the infant/toddler area. Kindly wash your hands, or use the hand sanitizer provided at each entrance before visiting your child's classroom. Daily and on an as needed basis, we use a bleach and water solution to clean surfaces, play equipment, etc. Toys that are mouthed are removed to be cleaned and sanitized after the child moves on to a different toy.

Arrival and Departure

In addition to signing your child in and out at the front desk each day, please fill out the top portion of your child's daily record sheet in his classroom each morning. At the end of the day this sheet is yours to take home and you will be able to review it for information such as feedings, diaper changes, and

napping times along with a teacher's anecdote regarding your child's day.

Transportation

Car seats are not required on buses in the state of Maryland as stated below.

MD Transp Code § 22-412.1 (2015)

Every motor vehicle that is used by nursery schools, camps, day nurseries, or child care centers for children with an intellectual disability to transport children shall be equipped with seat belts for each seat and shall be subject to any other regulations adopted by the Administration, unless the motor vehicle:

(1) Is a Type I school vehicle; or

(2) Was formerly registered as a Type I school vehicle.

The buses we rent are classified as Type I school vehicles. We will have a staff person hold each infant while traveling on the bus. Toddlers will be held or placed on a seat beside a staff person. If you are not comfortable with this arrangement, we ask that you transport your child in your personal vehicle or do not place your child in care at HCS during field trips.

Only HCS staff are permitted to hold or care for any of the babies in our care. For this reason, we ask that parents also refrain from holding children who are not their own while at HCS or on field trips.

Nutrition

Parents are expected to provide all formula, meals, and snacks for children in our Infant Room. When your child enters the Toddler Room, you may choose to utilize HCS-provided food for your child. All foods and bottles shall be labeled with the child's name. In addition, all milk bottles must be labeled with the date the milk was expressed or prepared. We ask that you provide a written feeding schedule. This written schedule will

be reviewed with you and updated as necessary, or at least every 3 months until your child is 18 months old.

HCS will provide bibs and spoons.

Breastfeeding Policy

HCS welcomes breastfeeding babies and is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. We are happy to assist parents with feeding arrangements to allow for continuation of a successful breastfeeding relationship after returning to work. Breastfeeding mothers are provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area has an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. A refrigerator is available for storage of expressed breast milk. Breastfeeding mothers may store their expressed breast milk in the refrigerator at HCS. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with child's name and date the milk was expressed.

Well-defined research shows that human milk or breastmilk, with its unique mixture of fatty acids, lactose, amino acids, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and other components necessary for digestion, brain development and growth, provides the most natural and beneficial first food. Breastmilk both nourishes babies and protects them from getting sick.

Exclusive breastfeeding is ideal nutrition and sufficient to support the optimal growth and development of infants until they are approximately six months old. Continued breastfeeding is recommended throughout the baby's first year and thereafter as long as is mutually desired.

Exclusive breastfeeding means that the infant receives only breast milk. No other liquids or solids are given – not even water – with the exception of oral rehydration solution, or drops/syrups of vitamins, minerals or medicines.

Breastfeeding benefits for the infant include reduction of the infectious disease risks that are greater in group child care

including diarrhea, lower respiratory illness, otitis media, bacteremia, bacterial meningitis, botulism, urinary tract infections, necrotizing enterocolitis, SIDS, insulin dependent diabetes, lymphoma, allergic disease, ulcerative colitis, and other chronic digestive diseases. Breastfeeding also is associated with enhanced cognitive development.

There are also a number of studies that indicate possible health benefits for mothers. Breastfeeding helps mothers to recover more rapidly after delivery including an earlier return to their pre-pregnant weight. Breastfeeding also helps to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer, premenopausal breast cancer, and hip fractures in the postmenopausal period.

All infant and toddler staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. HCS will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control in ensuring that breastmilk is properly treated to avoid waste and prevent foodborne illness.

Although breastfeeding is ideal, it is not the best for every family. Sometimes medical conditions exist that do not allow for breastfeeding. Each family must make their own feeding decision, based on all the present factors. All parents are welcome to stop in at any time to feed their child.

Rest Time

We ask that you provide a written napping schedule of your child's typical sleep patterns. Each child will have his own crib. HCS will supply crib sheets.

SIDS Risk Reduction Policy

Until a child is at least one year of age:

We always put infants to sleep on their back.

We avoid any loose bedding. We allow only a fastenable swaddle blanket or a sleep sack.

We closely monitor sleeping infants to make certain that they are not overheated.

We use only firm, flat crib mattresses for infants.

We make certain that the infant's head remains uncovered during sleep.

Infants in our facility are supervised by a staff member at all times, even when the infants are sleeping.

At least one staff member in our infant room is trained in infant CPR.

Parents will be asked to sign a copy of this policy.

Diapering/Toileting

We accommodate reusable or disposable diapers. We typically don't begin toilet training before the child enters our two-year-old room, since our toddler room is not equipped with toilet facilities. For our toilet training policy, please see the Daycare & Preschool Parent Handbook.

Personal Belongings

All sippy cups and pacifiers must be clearly marked with your child's name or initials. We will make our storage of your child's extra clothes and diapers accessible to you. Please check your child's supply regularly and keep it stocked with clothing appropriate for the season.

Topicals

In order to administer any topicals, we need written permission from a doctor. Before your child begins at HCS, we encourage you to obtain permission for us to apply diaper ointment and sunscreen. We will keep this documentation in your child's file

and thus be authorized to go ahead and apply the topicals whenever needed.

Behavior Policy

Hampden Christian School always seeks to build quality character traits in the lives of the young ones in our care. We emphasize respect for oneself and others. We guide children through expressing emotions, both positive and negative, in a healthy way. We encourage and model developmentally appropriate social skills such as conflict resolution and problem solving skills. These lessons will begin with clear and reinforced expectations:

1. Kind words (when able), gentle touches
2. Use appropriate words to solve our problems. (when able)
3. Obey teachers.

Good behavior will be recognized and praised. If a child displays challenging behavior, the staff will converse with the child about acceptable/unacceptable behavior and redirect the child. Staff may use additional approaches including logical or natural consequences. No child will receive corporal discipline at the school.

We always strive to keep communication clear between caregiver, teacher, and director. Each child will be sent home with a report denoting what kind of day the child experienced; happy, sad, frustrated.

Biting

Children biting other children are unavoidable occurrences of group child care, especially with toddlers. It is a common happening in any infant and toddler program. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be scary, very frustrating, and very stressful for children, parents, and staff. Every child in the infant and toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bitten. It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is “mean” or “bad” or

that the parents of the child who bites are “bad” parents or they are not doing their job as parents to make this stop happening. Biting is a developmental phenomenon – it often happens at predictable times for predictable reasons tied to children’s development.

Why do they bite? Every child is different. Some bite often, and some may not bite at all. The group care setting is where the biting derives its significance. If a child has not been around other children very much, he probably will not bite because neither the cause for biting or opportunities have presented themselves. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by many others for hours at a time. Even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want that one particular toy. The children are learning how to live in a community setting. Sometimes that is not easy. There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

1. Teething

2. Impulsiveness and lack of control

Babies sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather, they are exploring their world.

3. Making an impact

Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions take place.

4. Excitement and overstimulation

Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don’t have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as preschoolers do.

5. Frustration

Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons – wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something,

or wanting a caregiver's attention. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. Biting will often be the quickest and easiest way of communicating.

What do teachers do in response to children who bite? It is our job to provide a safe setting in which no child needs to hurt another to achieve his or her ends, and in which the normal range of behavior is managed. Confidentiality is practiced. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child. The name of the child who bites will not be released because it serves no useful purpose and can make a difficult situation even more difficult. Teachers can try to minimize the behavior by:

- Letting the biting child know in words and manner that biting is unacceptable.

- Avoiding any immediate response that reinforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention. The teachers will tell the child that "biting hurts" and the focus of caring attention is on the bitten child. The biter is talked to on a level that she can understand. The teacher will help the child who is biting work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner, including using language if the child is able.

- Examining the context in which the biting occurred and looking for patterns. Was it crowded? Too many toys? Was the biting child getting hungry/tired/frustrated?

- Not causally attributing willfulness or maliciousness to the child. Infants explore anything that interests them with their mouths, and that includes others' bodies and limbs! When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence (a couple times a week) to a frequent and expected occurrence, it will be addressed with added precautions of recording location, time, participants, and circumstances of each occurrence.

-“Shadowing” children who indicate a tendency to bite. This technique involves having a teacher with a child who bites. This teacher would be able to then anticipate biting situations and to teach non-biting responses to situations.

Items to Bring

diapers

wipes

diaper rash ointment (with Doctor’s written permission; see Topicals Section)

food supply each day (see Nutrition Section)

sippy cup (when applicable)

extra clothes, at least 3 sets

extra pacifier (if applicable)

family photos poster (discuss with teacher)

written informational paper about your child; please consider including the following:

My child’s eating schedule is:

My child’s sleeping schedule is:

My child’s routine for falling asleep is:

My child’s preferred position for calming when upset is:

My child’s preferred position for burping is:

My child’s likes:

My child’s dislikes:

Any other patterns of activity:

Any other information that will better equip us to provide the best care possible

