



Parent & Student Handbook

PreK Program



26423 NE Allen Street

Duvall, WA 98019

425-844-8608

www.hillsideacademy.com

CONTENTS

Hillside Contact Information	3
Staff Contacts	
Hillside Foundation	4
Our Mission	
Our Vision	
Our Approach	
Our Foundation of Faith & Character	
Non-Discriminatory Statement	
Pre-K Educational Philosophy	6
Operations, Policies, Procedures	7
Hours of Operation	
School Closures Due to Weather	
Child Drop-off/Pick-up Information	
Absentee Information	
Other Information	
Payment Terms & Conditions	
Tuition Responsibilities	
Appropriate Clothing	
Health & Safety	10
Illness Policy	
Medication Information	
Medical Emergency Preparedness Policy	
Obligation to Report	
General & Miscellaneous Information	12
Re-enrollment	
Snacks	
Field Trips & Volunteer Driver Requirements	
Open Door Policy	
School Communication	
Fundraising	
Volunteer Hours	
Discipline	14
Special Needs & Developmental Screening	16
Signature/Acknowledgment Page	17

Hillside Academy reserves the right to update or revise this handbook as necessary.

Hillside Contact Information

PreK Teacher	Ramani Manneboina ramani@hillsideacademy.com
Art Teacher	Badieh Bryant badieh@hillsideacademy.com
Music Teacher	Sylvan Lumsden music@hillsideacademy.com
Creative Movement Teacher	Dana Heyum dana@hillsideacademy.com
School Director	Sheri Martin Chen sheri@hillsideacademy.com
Office & Accounting Manager	Donneli Hinds registrar@hillsideacademy.com
Registrar & Operations	Layla Singh office@hillsideacademy.com
Fundraising & Marketing Coordinator	Hailey Hummel marketing@hillsideacademy.com

Our Mission

Hillside Academy's mission is to help students become future innovators and leaders. We focus on building confidence, creativity, and a love for learning. Through hands-on and project-based activities, we guide students in shaping strong character while helping them achieve academic success.

Our Vision

We envision a community where students are inspired to reach their full potential as compassionate, curious, and capable individuals who are prepared to make meaningful contributions to the world.

Our Approach

We focus on five important areas to help students grow:

1. **Academics:** Strengthening knowledge in subjects like math, science, language arts, and more through engaged learning.
2. **Critical Thinking:** Encouraging students to ask questions, think carefully, and solve problems in smart ways.
3. **Creativity:** Cultivating imagination and original ideas in all areas of learning.
4. **Social Skills:** Helping students build strong friendships, work well in teams, and communicate effectively with others.
5. **Character Development:** Learning to make good choices, show kindness, and live with purpose.

We are Hillside Academy: *Inspiring passionate, creative, and confident students!*

Our Foundation of Faith & Character

At Hillside Academy, we believe that each child has unique gifts and purpose. Our mission is to nurture every student's heart and character, fostering growth in knowledge, compassion, and resilience. We recognize that all children and families are on a journey and are honored to support each child as they discover their value and potential in our world.

Our guiding principles include:

Celebrating Beauty and Wonder

Whether in nature, music, or quiet reflection, we encourage students to connect deeply with the world around them, discovering beauty in everyday life and developing gratitude and curiosity.

Recognizing Inherent Worth

Each child is inherently valuable and deserving of respect. This belief forms a strong foundation for self-worth, empathy, and mutual respect among peers and educators.

Reflective Practices

We cultivate mindfulness, inner peace, and resilience through positive affirmations, moments of stillness, and prayer. These practices empower students to grow in clarity, self-awareness, and a sense of purpose.

Community and Traditions

Shared traditions such as our daily pledge, monthly chapels, and the Rose Ceremony at the beginning and end of the year celebrate milestones and strengthen our sense of belonging. These practices foster unity and a lasting connection to our community.

Living as Light

We encourage students to be a light in the world through their actions, guided by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

Together, these principles shape students who reflect God's love, bringing light, kindness, and purpose to the world around them.

*You are the light of the world... – Matthew 5:14-16

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."
– Galatians 5:22-23

Non-Discriminatory Statement

Hillside Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Hillside Academy has a policy to make reasonable accommodations to the physical or mental limitations of any otherwise qualified disabled child. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

Our school reserves the rights and protections granted to it in the areas of admissions and employment practices by applicable laws and constitutional provisions of its religious objectives.

Pre-Kindergarten Educational Philosophy

William Gates, Sr. (2007) said, “The first five years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out.” These early years are the fastest period of brain development in a child’s life. From birth, children are eager and ready to learn. Studies show that early brain development is strongly influenced by a child’s environment and experiences. The foundation for healthy brain development is built through positive relationships with adults and other children, along with quality learning experiences and interactions (NCEDCTL, n.d.).

We believe that for children to learn effectively, they need a warm, supportive, and safe space filled with love, empathy, understanding, fun, and creativity.

Our goals for the children in Hillside’s Pre-kindergarten programs are to help them gain the skills and knowledge needed for each stage of their lives. To achieve this, we plan theme-based, hands-on activities that help each child grow cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. These activities help children think through problems, try out solutions, and keep going when tasks are challenging. Our teaching methods include sensory table play, story time, singing songs, experiments, observations, and free access to art supplies. We provide open-ended experiences where children can explore, ask questions, and investigate the world around them.

We believe in the power of teamwork and community. When we work together, big or small, great things are possible. We also believe that even the youngest children can make a difference in the world. In our classrooms, we model and promote teamwork by offering help and encouraging children to ask for help from trusted adults and their peers. In the community, we work together on service projects to benefit individuals or local non-profits. These activities help us understand our roles in our environment and the world. Participating in these activities can also improve mental functioning and overall health, which is beneficial at any age (EarlyEdU Alliance, 2015).

By understanding how children grow and develop, partnering with families, and providing meaningful experiences, we aim to create a dynamic learning community. We want to inspire future innovators and leaders who are confident, passionate, and love learning.

References:

National Center on Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning (n.d.). [The Science of Child Development and Learning.](#)

EarlyEd U: An Alliance for Head Start and Early Childhood Teaching (2015), Doing Good Deeds for Others.

“William H. Gates Sr. - Ounce of Prevention Fund Luncheon.” *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, 2007, www.gatesfoundation.org/media-center/speeches/2007/04/william-h-gates-sr-ounce-of-prevention-fund-luncheon[Links to an external site.](#)

Hours of Operation

The school office is open from 8:00 am-3:45 pm, Monday–Friday.

Hillside Academy will be closed on the following holidays:

- **Labor Day**
- **Veterans' Day**
- **Thanksgiving Day**, including the day before and after.
- **Christmas Break**
- **New Year's Day**
- **Martin Luther King's Birthday**
- **President's Day**
- **Good Friday**
- **Memorial Day**

Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates.

School Closures Due to Weather

Hillside Academy follows the Riverview School District's late start & school closures due to inclement weather. If school is delayed (late start) due to weather, our morning part-time Pre-kindergarten classes will be canceled. Elementary and middle school classes will begin at the adjusted late start time (i.e., 1 hour, 2 hours late) as determined by the Riverview School District. If school is closed early or canceled for the day, any after-school activities (including Wildcat Club After Care) will be canceled. A notice of school closures or delays will be sent via our FACTS system (text alert & email) and posted on Facebook.

Child Drop-Off/Pick-Up Information

PreK AM 8:45 am – 11:45 pm

Lunch Bunch M-F 11:45 pm – 12:45 pm

Your Pre-kindergarten teacher will only release the student to the parent(s) and anyone listed as an authorized EC/PU in our school database. If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, they must present photo identification to the teacher. You must provide the school office with written permission for anyone to be added to your emergency information in our school database.

Absentee Information

If your child will be absent from Pre-kindergarten as a result of being sick, a doctor/dental appointment, or another reason, notify your teacher as well as the school office by calling 425-844-8608 or emailing attendance@hillsideacademy.com.

Other Information

Parents agree to:

- Provide via email, note, or phone call to the school office if they designate someone other than the parent/guardian to pick up their child. Photo ID must be provided by the designated person for pick-up.
- Provide all required immunization forms as needed by the Department of Health or have a *Certificate of Exemption* on file before the start of the school year.
- Notify the office of any change of address, phone, or other information as indicated on the enrollment agreement.
- Maintain open communication with the Hillside Academy staff and provide any information that might contribute to your child's growth and learning. For minor concerns, please speak with the teacher. For major or ongoing concerns, the Head of School is the point of contact.
- Make tuition payments as agreed upon by the first of every month.
- Pick up your child on time. (Hourly childcare will be charged for any extra time past the 10-minute grace period with a minimum charge of one hour.) The hourly rate is \$25.00.
- Pay for damages their child may cause to the school or others' belongings.
- Not send sick children to school or school activities. For more information, please see our Illness Policy.

Payment Terms & Conditions

Tuition is due on the first of each month. If the 1st falls on a weekend or holiday, then tuition is due the last business day before the 1st. As a non-profit, we depend on tuition to pay our overhead and teachers. Help us pay our bills by having your tuition turned in on time.

Parents sign our **Enrollment & Financial Contract** during their online registration in FACTS. A re-enrollment fee will be collected along with a newly signed tuition contract each returning year.

Your account must be current for a student to start school.

All families are required to have a credit card on file as part of your **Enrollment & Financial Contract**. Your tuition is considered late if it is not received by the close of business on the 5th of the month (or the last business day before the 5th if it falls on a weekend or holiday). On the 6th of the month, the credit card on file will be charged the amount of the tuition, late fee, and the 3.5% credit card processing fee.

Withdrawal conditions apply. Refer to your **Enrollment & Financial Contract** for conditions for withdrawal.

A \$35 fee will be charged for any NSF checks.

Tuition Responsibilities

The annual tuition for our Pre-kindergarten programs is divided into 10 monthly payments (June – March). You can make monthly payments or pay the full amount by May 1st and receive a 3% discount.

Monthly statements will be emailed to families on or around the 21st of each month for tuition due on the 1st of the following month. The links to these statements do expire, so if you need them for tax purposes, please save a copy for your records.

There are several options to pay your tuition:

- Pay in person at the school office between 8:00 am and 3:45 pm.
- Drop your payment in the tuition box located in the front office.
- Mail your check to 26423 NE Allen St, Duvall, WA 98019
- Use your bank's online bill payer system to set up automatic payments to Hillside Academy. Use your child's name as the "account number".
- Make payments on our website at www.hillsideacademy.com/payments/. We do have to pass along the 3.5% credit card processing fee.

Appropriate Clothing

Make sure to send your child with rain gear and winter gear during bad weather months. Students will play outside at all recesses regardless of the weather (within reason). Parents must provide a change of clothing in their child's backpack for use as needed. Soiled clothing will be returned, and a new change of clothes should be provided for the next day.

Potty Training

All Pre-kindergarten children **must be potty trained** before attending our Hillside Academy Pre-kindergarten programs.

Our Pre-kindergarten programs are not set up for the sanitary changing of "accidents," so if your child has a potty accident while at school, you will be contacted to come to school and change your child.

Health & Safety

Illness Policy

Children **will not** be allowed to come to Hillside Academy with any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea (three or more watery stools or one bloody stool within 24 hours)
- Vomiting within 24 hours
- Open or oozing sores, unless covered with cloths or bandages
- For suspected communicable skin infections, such as pinkeye, the child may return 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
- Lice, ringworm, or scabies. Individuals with head lice, ringworm, or scabies must be excluded from the premises beginning from the end of the day the head lice, ringworm, or scabies is discovered. Students should not return to school until they are nit-free (head lice).
- Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, or one or more of the following conditions: earache, headache, sore throat, rash, or fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.

If a student becomes ill during the day, the student may be sent to the school office where they may remain until either the parent/guardian is contacted or they return to class.

Hillside Academy reserves the right to contact a parent or guardian if there are ANY questions or concerns regarding a child's health while in our care.

Hillside Academy reserves the right to refuse service to anyone if there is a question or concern regarding the health and well-being of a child to ensure a healthy environment for all the children in our care.

When in doubt, consult this resource from Seattle and King County Public Health, as it aligns with WAC 110-300-0205: [Link here](#)

[COVID and Respiratory Virus - parental guidance](#)

Medication Information

Medication is given only with prior written consent of a child's parent/legal guardian. Complete the necessary paperwork if you need Hillside Academy to dispense medication to your child. Further information about our medication policy can be found in our Health Policy located at the front office.

Medical Emergency Preparedness Policy

To maintain a safe and responsive environment, Hillside Academy requires parents/guardians to provide all prescribed emergency medications (such as EpiPens, inhalers, or seizure medications) along with a current Emergency Action Plan completed by a healthcare provider.

- The school must have this medication available **before** the student attends classes, before- or after-school programs, or field trips.
- If a required medication is **not provided**, the school cannot guarantee the ability to administer life-saving treatment during an emergency.
- In such circumstances, staff will act promptly and reasonably according to training, which may include calling **911** and contacting the student's emergency contacts.

- The responsibility for providing accurate medical information and necessary medications rests with the **parent or guardian**.

By enrolling your child, you acknowledge and agree to provide all required emergency medications and understand that failure to do so may limit the school's ability to respond to medical emergencies and may release the school from liability related to such situations.

Obligation to Report

All injuries that occur while students are at school will be recorded, and an incident report will be sent home to parents.

Hillside Academy teachers, staff, and volunteers are required by law to report all cases of child abuse to Child Protective Services according to RCW 26.44.030, which states the following:

Upon receiving reports of abuse or neglect, the department or law enforcement agency may interview children. The interviews may be conducted on school premises, at daycare facilities, at the child's home, or at other suitable locations outside of the presence of parents. Parental notification of the interview shall occur at the earliest possible point in the investigation that will not jeopardize the safety or protection of the child or the course of the investigation. Before commencing the interview, the department or law enforcement agency shall determine whether the child wishes a third party to be present for the interview and, if so, shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the child's wishes. Unless the child objects, the department or law enforcement agency shall make reasonable efforts to include a third party in any interview so long as the presence of the third party will not jeopardize the course of the investigation.

General & Miscellaneous Information

Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment information for the upcoming school year will be made available in January. If you have any questions about re-enrollment, please contact the registrar at registrar@hillsideacademy.com. All Re-enrollment is done through your FACTS account.

Snacks

The teacher will ask families to contribute bulk snacks to the classroom. Depending on the class, there may be requirements or requests for certain snacks (e.g., free of certain allergens). Snacks must be in original containers with the ingredient information listed. Each day, a small snack from these contributions and/or school-purchased food is provided for our Pre-kindergarten students.

Field Trips & Volunteer Driver Requirements

We incorporate field trips into our Pre-kindergarten curriculum, which may include walking trips or vehicle transportation. Parents will be informed in advance if a classroom teacher plans to use the Community Van for local field trips. We encourage parents to participate as chaperones or drivers whenever possible.

Volunteer Driver Requirements:

- **Communication:** If you are interested in driving and/or chaperoning a field trip, please communicate with your Pre-kindergarten teacher.
- **Paperwork Submission:** Parents interested in driving for a field trip **must submit the appropriate paperwork to the school office before the trip.**
- **Driver's Abstracts:** Must be obtained and reviewed **annually** for any volunteer driving a personal vehicle for school-related purposes. Abstracts must be updated each year. Volunteers can obtain their **Driver's Abstract** through the Washington State Department of Licensing at <https://www.dol.wa.gov>.
- **Proof of Insurance:** All volunteers driving for school business must submit **proof of personal vehicle insurance annually**. Acceptable proof of insurance is a copy of your auto insurance Declarations Page that includes the limits on your policy.
- **Safety Policy:** The **use of cell phones, handheld electronic devices, and Bluetooth devices while driving is strictly prohibited** to ensure the safety of all passengers.

For questions or to submit the required documentation, please contact the school office.

Open Door Policy

An Open Door Policy is in practice at Hillside Academy. This means that while a child is enrolled, parents are welcome to stop by the school at any time.

For some children, it is difficult for them to say goodbye to a family twice. Please talk to your child's teacher before dropping by unexpectedly if this is the case. When you let the caregiver know you are coming, they can help prepare your child for your visit.

School Communication

Hillside Academy communicates to our parents through multiple avenues such as weekly teacher emails, social media, and schoolwide communication through FACTS. Parent forms and other school-related resources are available on our website at www.hillsideacademy.com.

Why Fundraising is Important

At Hillside Academy, tuition covers 80%-90% of our total operating costs. To bridge the remaining 10%-20%, we rely on the generous support of our families and community through various fundraising efforts throughout the year. Your participation in these initiatives helps us continue to provide an exceptional educational experience for all our students. By contributing, you are directly supporting the programs, resources, and opportunities that benefit every child at Hillside Academy.

Several fundraising opportunities take place throughout the school year, such as our Wildcat Walkathon in October, Giving Tuesday in November, and a Spring fundraiser. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, several companies will match monetary donations, and some will even match volunteer hours. Your assistance in procuring donations, volunteering services, providing sponsorships, or giving tax-deductible monetary donations is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our school's mission.

Fundraising

All PreK and Pre-kindergarten families are expected to donate \$100 (or procure items of equivalent value) towards classroom or school-wide fundraising projects. These contributions will be used to create silent auction items for an event organized by Hillside Academy. An example of this would be a themed auction basket that is assembled by a classroom.

Volunteer Hours

All pre-kindergarten families are required to commit to 10 volunteer hours per school year. Hours will be tracked using the Volunteer Sign-in sheet that can be found at the front desk of the school office. It is the family's responsibility to sign in & out at the time they volunteer. Hours will be logged in the FACTS student information system.

If the family's volunteer hours are not fulfilled, a rate of \$30 per unfulfilled hour will be assessed and must be paid at the end of the school year.

Discipline

Child Guidance, Child Restraint, and Corporal Punishment

We will guide the children using positive reinforcement, positive redirection, and modeling appropriate actions and conversation. Time-outs, while rare, will only be used as a means to separate a child from a situation that needs more attention and will then be used as a teachable moment to help correct future events. This is done through conversation and open-ended questions that will allow a child to think through the event and encourage a self-driven solution.

A child will only be physically restrained if the child's safety, or the safety of others, is threatened. This restraint must be limited to holding the child as gently as possible, limited to the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation and be developmentally appropriate. Bonds, ties, blankets, straps, car seats, highchairs, activity saucers, or heavy weights will **never** be used to restrain a child.

We will never use corporal punishment to discipline a child. It is strictly forbidden, and its use will result in notification to the authorities for investigation and/or prosecution.

Expulsion

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to ask that a child be removed from our program either on a short-term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) to prevent this policy from being enforced.

When a Child is Having a Problem in the Classroom:

- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior to positive behavior.
- Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriate activities, and supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- The child will be given verbal warnings.
- The child will be given time to regain control.
- The child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality. (Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.)
- The parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The director, classroom staff, and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parent will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendation of evaluation by professional consultation.
- Recommendation of evaluation by local school district child study team.

Schedule of Expulsion

- If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or come to an agreement with the school.
- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion policy.

- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return to school.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion/Termination of Services

- A child's services may be terminated due to that child's parent or guardian's inability to meet the expectations and requirements of the Pre-kindergarten program. Expectations and requirements of the program include, but are not limited to, unpaid bills, continual late arrivals, or a parent, guardian, or family member's inappropriate or unsafe behavior in or near the school space.

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of the child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts that cause harm to the child's self, staff, or other children.
- Ongoing physical abuse to staff or other children.

Child Will Not Be Expelled

- If the child's parent(s) reported abuse or neglect occurring at the school.
- If the child's parent(s) questioned the school regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent sufficient time to make other childcare arrangements.

Staff to Child Ratios

In the Pre-kindergarten Program, the staff-to-child ratios are as follows:

- 1:11

Weapons, Tobacco, and Drugs

Weapons, tobacco, cannabis, and all illegal drugs are not permitted on the school property. Anyone with these on their person will be asked to leave the school immediately.

Children with Special Needs

We will work with the child's parents and professional services to develop an Individual Care Plan that addresses the child's diagnosis and special needs. This plan must be updated annually or if the needs of the child change. The parent is responsible for ensuring the staff are informed regularly of any changes and needs the child requires.

Developmental Screening

Developmental screening is an important, but brief, method of evaluation completed by a parent or caregiver to quickly identify a child's progress through foundational early childhood developmental milestones. A child's development can be measured in several ways and can give important information that might help identify if the child needs additional resources or services. Studies show that early intervention is one of the main factors that contribute to a child's success in school and life.

To help recognize delays or disabilities, we ask each parent to fill out the Ages and Stages Questionnaire for the child. We use the scores from this tool to help screen each child's progress and connect them with other important services, if necessary.

Resources

Information can be found at www.hillsideacademy.com regarding Supply Lists, Forms, Tuition and Fees.

You may review the program's Health Policy, Staff Policies, Insurance Information, Inspection Reports, and other relevant program policies by sending a written request to: info@hillsideacademy.com.