

Harmony School Handbook

A Hands on, Multi-sensory, Multiage
Education



3737 Covenant Road, Columbia, SC 29204
(803) 787-1899 www.Harmonyschoolsc.com

Email: harmonyschoolsc@gmail.com

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Mission Statement

We create a warm and natural environment that encourages children to explore and develop their individual capabilities, to have opportunities to learn problem solving and respect for others in a spirit of kindness, and that nurtures a sense of belonging in our community.

Welcome

Welcome to Harmony School! You will find, as you peruse this parent handbook, that this is a very special place for you and your child/children. Our community offers a diverse program focusing on the talents and needs of your child. This focus is both our heritage and our strength, which has evolved over the 20+ year history Harmony School has been in operation. Your interest and involvement is an integral part of continuing this tradition.

The board and staff welcome your comments, questions, suggestions and concerns. We look forward to this new school year with you and your child/children.

Debbie Holmes
Harmony School Founder

Educational Philosophy

At Harmony School we feel that each child's unique qualities should be nurtured. We view each child as an individual with needs and abilities that differ from other children. Every child has his or her own learning style, special talents and unique gifts. We individualize instruction to address each child's special qualities.

Our Preschool/Kindergarten programs seek to:

- Give children the opportunity to explore the world around them;
- Provide children with the classroom materials designed to strengthen fine and gross motor, language, pre-math, music, art and social skills;
- Encourage independence;
- Nourish each child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm;
- Help develop respect and acceptance of others; and
- Keep each child's imagination and sense of wonder alive to foster their source of creativity and innovation.

Our Elementary program seeks to:

- Give children a firm command of writing, reading, mathematics, world history, geography, science, and practical life skills;
- Introduce children to music, art, and yoga with the hope that they will pursue these interests;
- Nourish and encourage each child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm;
- Enable children to research and gather information and present ideas to others;
- Provide children with the ability to solve problems in a logical and sequential fashion;
- Help children to develop respect for themselves and others;
- Enable children to find within them the acceptance and tolerance needed to live in today's world.

Classroom

Harmony School's multiage classroom format fosters a nurturing environment where children are free to grow and evolve at an individual pace while exploring their own strengths. This teaching approach helps students to develop self-confidence to meet their own life challenges. It also helps them learn to respect and accept the strengths and weaknesses of others.

Harmony School Communication Process

School question or suggestion?

Complete input form, available at suggestion box, drop in suggestion box
Director will review and route to one of the following:

- Given to a specific teacher to answer
- To be addressed at parent meeting
- Taken to Board for input
- Directly handled by Director

Question or concerns about your child

If you have questions related to:

Class Subject: Student's Teacher

General Question: Student's Teacher

Need further info./emergency: Director

Need further info./emergency: Board Chair

Communication Guidelines for Staff and Parents:

- Every stakeholder in our school community has direct access to appropriate individuals for communication and problem solving.
- Concerns requiring decisions should be expressed to the individual responsible for making the decision. Only after an attempt to communicate individually, should the matter be taken to the next higher authority (See Governance Process).
- Communication and trust are the cornerstones of an effective school. Respect the rights of all members of our school community by making use of appropriate opportunities and processes for communication.

Harmony School Decision-making Categories

Staff Decisions	Staff/Parent community Decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum/Academics • Daily Schedule • Staff/student facilitated activities • Guest Lecturers and Performers • Classroom Parent Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental Materials/Resources Acquisitions • Extra-curricular off campus activities (e.g., music instruction, clubs) • Extra-curricular social events and activities • Grants/partnerships linked to Curriculum and Instruction
Board Decisions w/Staff Input	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Positions: Certified; Classified (w/committee input) • Site Development • Budget • Salaries • Staff and Parent Evaluations

Harmony School
Ideas/Concerns/Issues
(Related to the School)

Statement:

Suggestion: (Implementation – Solution)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Date: _____

Input forms are reviewed and routed to the appropriate individuals or groups weekly. We will let you know where we have directed your input form as soon as it has been reviewed. The person or party that receives your form will then be responsible to respond to your input in a timely manner. Thank you, Harmony School Staff.

Harmony School
Ideas/Concerns/Issues
(Related to the School)

Statement:

Suggestion: (Implementation – Solution)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Date: _____

Input forms are reviewed and routed to the appropriate individuals or groups weekly. We will let you know where we have directed your input form as soon as it has been reviewed. The person or party that receives your form will then be responsible to respond to your input in a timely manner. Thank you, Harmony School Staff.

Parents & Community

Harmony School parents have the opportunity and responsibility to provide an example of life long learning to their children. Each parent's participation begins at home where children learn the importance of curiosity and discipline. Quality time is experienced through the sense that learning is not a chore, but is a family endeavor that can be both fun and exciting. In showing support by helping out at Harmony School, parents become partners in the development of their child's self-worth, as well as maintaining their interest and motivation in learning.

For Harmony School, it is the community made up of the classroom, the educators, and the parents who provide the students with a safe and nurturing environment. Through open lines of communication between all parties, Harmony School succeeds in creating enthusiastic and creative learners who enjoy school.

Teachers/Staff

The Harmony School staff is highly motivated and enthusiastic, providing the students with solid role models. The staff—teaching as much from example as from experience—instills in students the understanding that learning is fun, which is essential for a child's sense of self, and encourages the development of lifelong learners.

School Hours

Doors open each day at 7:45 am. Kindergarten and preschool start promptly at 8:30 am. The elementary school day begins at 8:15 am with a morning meeting and ends at 2:45 pm.

Please make sure that all kindergarten students are in class by 8:30 am; elementary students are in class by 8:15 am.

Hours of operation/Schedule:

School Hours	7:45 am – 5:30 pm*
Early Drop Off (Preschool & Kindergarten students)	7:45 – 8:30 am
Early Drop Off (Elementary students)	7:45 – 8:10 am
Preschool with Naptime	8:30 am – 2:15 pm*
Kindergarten	8:30 am – 2:15 pm*
Elementary School	8:15 am– 2:45 pm*
After school care for Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary	

Release Time – 5:30 pm*
Release time – 5:30 pm*

Harmony Office Hours:

8:15 am – 5:45 pm

***There is a fifteen-minute grace period. Families will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$20 per child for pick-up after 5:45 pm. An additional \$25 fee is assessed for any child not picked up by 6:00 pm.**

Hours of Operation

**Children may arrive as early as 7:45 am and stay at school until 5:30 pm*.
Preschool children should arrive no later than 9:00 am. Kindergarten students must be at the school no later than 8:30 am and elementary children must be at the school no later than 8:15 am.**

Drop off and Pick-up

All cars enter the school parking lot through the Covenant Road entrance. All cars exit through the Bethel Church Road exit. Please drive slowly and with care in the school parking lot. All preschool children should be escorted onto school grounds by a parent. The main entrance is locked at 9:00 am and parents/students will need to enter through the playground entrance.

Please call the school if your child is going to be late or sick. Also, please let the office manager know if someone else will be picking up your child.

Authorization Pick-Up Policy

At the time of enrollment, all parents will complete an Authorization for Pick-up Form to inform the school of persons approved to pick-up your child. The individuals (adults) who are listed on the Pick-up Authorization Form have the authority to pick up your child at any time, without notice. Although they are listed, please let us know beforehand who will be picking up your child. Please inform the individual(s) who will be picking up your child that they will need to show a **photo** identification card before they will be allowed to pick up your child. If there is someone picking up your child, other than who is listed on the form, you will need to contact Harmony School office or you may give the teacher a note in writing as to who will be picking up your child. If parents need to make a permanent change on the form to add an authorized person, you will need to stop by the office. Please be aware that if there are any questions or concerns regarding who is picking up a child, we will not release anyone until we can confirm arrangements with the parents.

Harmony School reserves the right to not release a child to any individual if we feel it is not safe. In the event that a parent or individual picking up a child arrives intoxicated, we will **NOT** release the child under any circumstance and the parents or emergency person(s) will be contacted to come and pick up the child.

Parents may not withhold parental privileges (i.e., picking up your child) from one another without legal documentation. In cases of court ordered guardianship/non-custodial guardianship, the parent or legal guardian must provide the legal documents to Harmony

School in order for us to make sure the proper release is being followed. In the event that a non-custodial parent wrongfully tries to pick up a child without a court ordered permission, we will immediately call 911.

Attendance

Although there is no mandatory attendance policy for preschooler's, your child's first years in school are an important time in which s/he will begin to form behavior, attendance, and study habits that will last throughout his/her lifetime. It is very important that your child arrives at school **on time, every day**. If you are planning to take your child out of class early or if you are planning a trip and your child will be missing several days of school, please let the teacher and the Administrator know ahead of time. Daily attendance is taken on each child.

In order to maintain continuity and facilitate teacher planning, it is expected that your kindergarten and elementary child be in school every day that we are in session. Exceptions to this policy naturally include ill health, emergencies and family obligations. It would be helpful to give advance notice of planned absences. Please inform your child's teacher and the office manager of upcoming vacations as field trips are usually planned well in advance. Students absent for more than twenty days (10 excused/10 unexcused) run the risk of being ineligible for promotion. Attendance is taken upon arrival, throughout the day and before, during and after field trips.

Late Pickup

We know sometimes roads are blocked by trains, heavy traffic or accidents. Other factors can intervene to make parents late, so we have added a fifteen-minute grace period to our pick up times for the aftercare pickup. Parents picking up children later than their scheduled release times (and grace period) will be charged a fee of \$20. **An additional \$25 fee is assessed for any child not picked up by 6:00 pm**

Parent Commitment

Parents are the most valuable resource in providing our children with the nurturing community necessary for quality education. Your involvement at Harmony School is essential; not only in your child's education, but also as a means to enrich the education of your child's classmates.

Parental commitment at Harmony School is two-fold: a financial commitment and a service commitment. Parents accept responsibility for the cost of tuition for the current year as stated in the tuition and enrollment agreement. The Harmony School Board of Directors is committed to keeping these costs as low as possible and will continue to seek support from outside sources to help defray direct costs to parents. Harmony School is not subsidized by any government or church-related organization, and the costs of operating the school are not fully covered by tuition. Therefore, we rely on your generosity – both time and financial support for specific projects and fundraisers –

to help keep tuition levels down. Parent involvement during the school year can save the school thousands of dollars in expenses which otherwise would be reflected in larger tuition costs.

Harmony School values its many parent (and grandparent) volunteers while recognizing that time constraints can sometimes limit their availability. However, the Harmony School PTO in partnership with the Board, teachers and other staff will develop new opportunities for more parents to become involved.

Parents may choose from such activities as serving on the Board of Directors, transporting students on field trips, purchasing supplies, ordering books, helping in the classroom, maintaining school facilities, teaching special programs, organizing or assisting with fundraising. The Harmony School PTO has a listing of volunteer activities and will help coordinate this effort. Additionally, each fall and spring parents participate in a work day to tackle major projects such as painting classrooms, playground/grounds cleanup and playground equipment assembly.

Registration/Materials Fee

In order to lessen our reliance on fund-raising activities there is a required registration/materials fee of \$300 per student. This helps to cover classroom materials such as art supplies, food expense and textbooks.

The fee is due for returning students with their registration packets due in the spring. For new students, it is due with their application. The Registration/Materials fee is non-refundable.

In addition, there is a \$150.00 supply fee assessed for elementary students at the beginning of the school year. This fee is rolled into the tuition amount.

Parent Meetings

A Parent meeting is usually held within the first two weeks of the fall session. General information about the school, its policies, classroom curriculum and field trips are discussed at this meeting. Other Parent meetings are held when the Board of Directors deems necessary.

Childcare is available for a minimal fee. Childcare is also provided on parent workdays. Parent workdays are held in the spring and fall and are a great way to bring parents and children together as a community to help improve Harmony's physical facility.

Tuition & Fees

Harmony School's annual tuition for 2017-2018 is as follows:

Elementary School (2:45 release) (10 month program)	\$6150 or \$615 per month
Kindergarten (2:15 release) (10 month program)	\$4830 or \$483 per month
Preschool (2:15 release) (12 month program)	\$5720 or \$477 per month
Aftercare Program	\$160 per month

Tuition can be paid in one lump sum annually or in monthly payments. Monthly tuition is due on the first of the month. A late charge of \$30 will be applied to any unpaid balance remaining after the 10th of each month. All tuition is paid through our online tuition management program, FACTs.

Whenever an account becomes past due by 30 days, the student may be withheld from school until the delinquency is cured. If the delinquency is not cured within an additional 30 day period, the student may be dismissed.

Preschool tuition is based on a 12-month contract. If the decision is made to not attend the summer program, tuition is still expected to continue to reserve your child's place for the next school year.

Financial Aid

Harmony is able to provide financial assistance and/or scholarships on a case-by-case basis. Financial aid is applicable to Kindergarten and Elementary students only. Applications are made available each spring for the following school year.

Curriculum

Harmony School incorporates a thought provoking balance between the arts and academics, where the two overlap and join to provide innovative thinking while maintaining a sense of practicality. Class instructions are incorporated into theme-based curriculum, which fosters a conceptual understanding of a subject while encouraging critical thinking and problem solving skills. By incorporating creative arts throughout the process of learning traditional subjects such as literature, mathematics, science, geography, and history, learning for each student is expanded beyond the traditional.

Music Program

Music is heavily incorporated into the Preschool and Kindergarten curriculums. Elementary students receive music classes as part of their weekly curriculum. In addition each spring, Harmony hosts an "Artist in Residence" program that features African drumming for all students ending with a school wide performance.

Field Trips

Community integration is an important part of the Harmony School curriculum. Your child will therefore have the opportunity to participate in various field trips throughout the year and parents may be asked to provide transportation (on a volunteer basis). The Harmony School buses have 14 seats each, but we may require volunteers to drive some of the younger children in car seats in their car. Below are the guidelines for volunteer drivers:

Proof of Liability Insurance: Must carry at least the minimum amount of liability insurance required by the State of South Carolina on the vehicle you will be driving.

Proof of Driver's License: Must have a valid driver's license in the State of South Carolina.

Driving Record: Must have a clean driving record which reflects no citations other than minor violations, as defined by the State of South Carolina (i.e. non-moving violations, speeding infractions of less than 15 mph, etc.), and that license has not been revoked or suspended in the past five years.

Speed Limits: Will abide by all posted speed limits on this trip.

Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Substances: Will not smoke nor will allow anyone to smoke in the vehicle on field trip. During the 12 hours preceding the trip and between the time of departure and the return, will not consume alcohol or any other substance that could adversely affect driving ability.

When volunteering to drive, please consider the following:

- Be on time
- Each child in the car must be individually seat-belted
- Children should not be placed in the front passenger seat of vehicles equipped with airbags
- No detours

All volunteer drivers need to complete the Volunteer Driver Agreement form in the enrollment packet and return it to the office before driving on school field trips.

The school generally pays for all parking and admission expenses for drivers and students, but not for gas. **If you are joining the trip but are not a driver, you will be expected to pay your own way.**

Children should not be given extra money for treats or souvenirs unless instructed by the teachers. Teachers will assign students to vehicles and there will be no changes after the trip begins unless permitted by the teachers. Children will be tracked using the bus log each time they board and exit the bus. If your child uses a car seat, be sure to leave it at the main entrance of the school on field trip days.

Permission slips are required for all school-related field trips. The permission slip is usually sent out at the beginning of the school year (or summer program) and is valid for all trips associated with that enrollment period. Children without valid signed permission slips will not be allowed to attend off-site field trips.

Snacks

Preschool/Kindergarten Program - Please send healthy nutritious snacks for your child along with his or her lunch for afternoon snack time. Harmony provides a morning snack.

Elementary Program – Harmony provides a morning snack.

Elementary children should bring their own healthy nutritious snacks if they remain for aftercare.

Nutrition Policy

Harmony School is partnering with ABC Grow Healthy to promote your child's health and well-being through healthy nutrition. As part of this program, we agree:

- For children 2 years and older, only skim or 1% milk will be served
- No sugar sweetened beverages will be served
- Fruit will be offered at least twice per day and juice only once per day
- Physical activity will not be used as punishment, nor will it be withheld as punishment.
- Children will participate in planned physical activity at least 2 times per day for at least 90 minutes. In the event of inclement weather, indoor activity time will be adjusted to ensure the equivalent amount of physical activity is achieved.
- Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.
- The teachers and staff will attend training on nutrition, promoting children's movement and physical activity.
- Your child will have at least one opportunity per week to learn about nutrition.
- Ask you to dress your child in clothes and shoes that allow them to be physically active.

Library

Harmony School has a library maintained by the teachers and staff. Parents are encouraged to make regular visits with their child(ren). The library is open most days until 5:30 pm.

Computer Use

The purpose of the Harmony School network is to provide a communication tool and access to rich information resources for educational activities. We recognize that new information technologies pose many challenges and concerns including:

- Appropriateness of material not screened by educators,
- Development of skills to analyze and evaluate resources,
- Commercialization,
- Safety of individual students and families,
- Privacy,
- Copyrights,
- Security of Harmony School information,
- Cost of maintaining systems.

Preschool and kindergarten computers do not have internet access. These computers utilize age-appropriate software only.

The use of Harmony School computers and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges and other penalties.

Birthday & Special Occasions

Your child's birthday is of course a very special day. Harmony School acknowledges each child's birthday with a "birthday circle". Please make arrangements with your child's teacher in advance if you wish to be a part of the birthday circle celebration.

If you are planning a home birthday party, **please send invitations by email rather than distributing them at school unless you plan to invite all children in the class.** This avoids potential hurt feelings. For the same reason, gifts and birthday cards should be distributed outside of school.

Harmony School acknowledges special holidays. The children learn about various celebrations, sing songs, complete art projects and read stories about different cultural celebrations and traditions. Teachers greatly appreciate parent volunteers to help plan parties and celebrations.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items are placed in a box at the main entrance of the school. Please label your child's removable clothing when at all possible. Unclaimed items will be distributed to a charitable organization.

School Newsletter

The school publishes a monthly newsletter about school-related activities, units, field trips, policies, special occasions, etc. The newsletter will be emailed monthly.

Parent Boards/ School Pockets

Information regarding field trips, fund-raisers, volunteer information, school supply lists, and general educational information is posted for review and updated regularly.

Please check these white boards daily. One is located at the main entrance and the other at the playground entrance. Your child will also have a “parent pocket” marked with his or her name on the wall next to the cubbies which should be checked daily (for the preschool / kindergarten program).

For elementary students, regular email communication will be sent. Additionally, a parent communication folder will be sent home weekly. Please remind your child / children to return these to Harmony with your comments.

We do everything possible to make communication flow smoothly. However, we rely on parents to be proactive by checking their email, the parent boards, their child’s school pockets or communication folders on a daily basis and occasionally refer to the website at <http://www.harmonyschoolsc.com>.

Confidentiality

Student and staff records, including allergy information, home address and emergency contacts, will remain in a locked filing cabinet in the school office. Only authorized school staff, DSS staff, ABC monitoring staff and DHEC monitoring staff shall have access to student records. An emergency contact list and allergy information is made available to classroom and aftercare staff for emergency use only.

Free and Full Access

Parents are welcome to visit their children at Harmony School at any time! We encourage parental participation in the classroom and on field trips as mentioned in this handbook. We do ask that parents not interrupt nap times unless absolutely necessary (between 12:45 – 2:00pm) as it disturbs all sleeping children. Arrangements can be made in advance with the office to pick up during nap time – please simply call before 12:30pm. Unless court orders stipulate otherwise and the visits are not disruptive to planned activities, feel free to visit us during the day!

Enrollment

Anyone is invited to apply for admission to Harmony School.

Although Harmony School strives to provide a learning program to fit the students’ needs, we are not equipped with the necessary resources to adequately serve students who may fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Students who display severe behavioral problems.
- Those requiring special education programs.

The following is our official enrollment policy.

1. Children are placed on the Waiting List for the year specified by the parents when Harmony School receives a completed application. All parents must tour the school along with their child before any spot is offered.
2. Children are accepted from the Waiting List into the School based on the date the application is received by Harmony School. Harmony School does reserve the right to accept students out of sequence in order to maintain age and gender balance or according to other criteria as may be set.
3. Siblings are given preference for enrollment purposes.
4. Notification of acceptance is made as soon as possible.
5. From time to time, a space becomes available during a school year. Harmony School will then notify the next child on the Waiting List.
6. When your child is accepted for registration in Harmony School, a \$300 registration/materials fee will be due. The fee is non-refundable.
7. Harmony School requires a 4 week withdrawal notice. **Parents can be held liable for payment of the full term of your child's contract.**
8. There is a trial period of four weeks during which time the school may request that the student be withdrawn. If this occurs, you will receive a full refund of your registration fee.
9. The parent is responsible for notifying Harmony School of any address or telephone changes.
10. Harmony School reserves the right to change its Enrollment policy as needed without notice.

DSS Requirement Policies

Tracking Children Policy- Each Lead teacher carries attendance forms at all times to account for the presence of each child entering and exiting the school, the bus or any new location inside the school.

Release of Children- During pick-up all parents must sign out your child(ren) on the Harmony School Release log. If you will not be picking up your child(ren), you must leave a written note stating who will be picking up your child. If there is no written note and someone else arrives to pick up your child, we will call the parents to obtain your verbal permission. If there is an emergency situation and you cannot be here or reached, the person picking up will be required to show id, know the family code word and be on your emergency pick-up list

In the event that a parent (custodial or non) or other authorized caregiver arrives to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated, the child will not be released. Someone from the child's emergency contact list will be called and requested to pick up the child. If necessary, law enforcement will be contacted to handle the situation.

Confidentiality - All staff files and children's school records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the office.

Care of Mildly Ill Children- Harmony School does not care for ill children, if they are running a fever, have diarrhea, vomiting or any contagious illness they need to stay home. If this develops at school parents will be called to pick up their child.

Discipline Policy

We believe that discipline is a means of aiding children in identifying expected limits and boundaries as defined by our society. It is our goal to teach children techniques for developing and utilizing self-discipline by providing them with problem solving strategies. The following is a description of the discipline methods we use at Harmony School.

Praise

We want children to develop a good sense of self-esteem. We praise, hug and compliment often for appropriate behavior. In some schools, misbehavior tends to be called to the attention of children much more often than appropriate behavior. At Harmony, we find it is more effective to give children feedback on what behavior is acceptable, in addition to what is not. Children like to be praised and complimented, which in itself is motivation to behave appropriately.

Logical Consequences

Logical consequences is a method of disciplining children using the logical outcome of their misbehavior. For example, if a child refuses to clean up her work at school she will have to stay in at playground time to clean up while her friends go outside. If a child draws on the wall he will have to scrub it off. A child who destroys a toy might make amends by giving up her allowance to replace the broken toy. Logical consequences give children a sense of satisfaction in that they can often make an unpleasant situation right again.

Time Out

Time out is used as a way to offer children the space they need to regain control, calm down, pull themselves together and think about their behavior. Time out spaces are usually off in a corner or in the hallway away from other children so the misbehaving child can not disturb or disrupt classmates or continue to attract attention to him/herself in an inappropriate way. The length of the time-out depends upon the age of the child and generally equates to 1 minute per year of age, or less. For example, a three year old would incur a 3-minute time out (or less as determined by staff).

Restraint

In rare instances a child may need to be held securely by a teacher. We restrain children only if they are a physical threat to themselves, other children or property or only if all other means of discipline have failed to be effective. The child held close to the teacher in a way that prevents the usage of arms and legs to inflict harm. The teacher talks or coos to the child in a gentle and soothing way until he/she regains self control. Children that have allowed themselves to get to a point where restraint is necessary often need a long time to “decelerate.” They usually want to be left alone in order to process what transpired.

Communication and Resolution

When a child has misbehaved it is very important to process the episode together. After a child has received logical consequences, time out or restraint, we tell them we need to talk about what has happened. Sometimes the child is not ready to talk and needs more time to calm down. We respect this and will come back later to try again. We ask several questions. The first is, “Can you tell me what the problem was?” Next we ask, “How did you choose to handle your problem?” Then we say, “Do you think you made the best choice?” Some children are stubborn and will answer, “Yes.” In these instances we say, “What else could you have done that wouldn’t have gotten you into trouble?” Finally we ask them, “So what will you do next time you have this problem?” After talking with the child about the misbehavior we thank them for talking with us and praise them for thinking of a better solution than the one they opted to use previously. It is important to forgive them and allow them the opportunity to start fresh.

Contracts

Some children behave inappropriately out of habit. They sometimes have gotten used to responding to conflicts in an unacceptable way. We may make a contract with a child that states rewards and consequences for desirable and undesirable behavior. Contracts help some children to remain acutely aware of their behavior so that they can break some old habits and rewards can provide motivation to succeed.

Group Conflict Resolution

In social situations children will invariably get into squabbles with their peers. We feel it is important to teach children how to solve problems on their own. Conflict solving sessions involve allowing each child to state their difficulty using “I” rather than “you” statements to avoid placing blame. The children then brainstorm solutions and finally chose one that they all can live with. Group conflict resolution teaches kids to listen to each other and compromise.

We have sayings we use repetitively with the children. Some of them are as follows:

- Use your words.
- Listen to his/her words.
- Is this a problem you need me to help you with or can you solve it on your own?

- You may not be able to control what other kids say or do to you, but you can control how you choose
- to respond.
- Use words that make the problem better, not worse.
- Try talking it out, walking away, or ignoring. If that doesn't work you can come to me for help.

We never use corporal punishment. We feel it is humiliating and intimidating. Children will often correct their behavior because they fear reprisal, not because they learned right from wrong. When the source of that fear is removed (the punitive adult), the undesirable behavior often returns. In other words, kids learn not to get caught. The methods of discipline we subscribe to give children strategies to solve their problems by allowing them to think about their behavior, process the episode and brainstorm alternative solutions.

Harmony School has no tolerance for violence, threats, harassment, illegal drugs, or weapons. This includes a no tolerance of "play" violence as well. Toys guns or other toy weapons are not permitted. The Harmony School's policy regarding dangerous weapons such as pocketknives, squirt guns, paintball guns and look-alike weapons is as follows: First incident, confiscate the weapon, notify the parent and the student receives a written warning. If a second incident occurs, the child is expelled.

In situations where behaviors are displayed to a degree beyond what is typical, a parent-teacher conference will be held and appropriate measures will be employed (e.g. referral to professional evaluation and support services.) In the event that the child's needs are beyond the scope of what can be addressed at Harmony School, enrollment may be terminated.

Child Care Discipline Policy

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self discipline. Based on this belief, Harmony School uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following discipline and behavior management techniques.

WE DO

- ◆ Communicate to children using positive statements.
- ◆ Communicate with children on their level.
- ◆ Talk with children in a calm quiet manner.
- ◆ Explain unacceptable behavior to children.
- ◆ Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- ◆ Praise and encourage the children.
- ◆ Reason with and set limits for the children.

- ◆ Apply rules consistently.
- ◆ Model appropriate behavior.
- ◆ Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
- ◆ Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- ◆ Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- ◆ Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.
- ◆ Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires and feelings.
- ◆ Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- ◆ Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

WE DO NOT

- ◆ Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)
- ◆ Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.
- ◆ Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.
- ◆ Use food as a form of reward or punishment.
- ◆ Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- ◆ Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- ◆ Embarrass any child in front of others.
- ◆ Compare children.
- ◆ Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- ◆ Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- ◆ Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- ◆ Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Harmony School is partnering with ABC Grow Healthy to promote your child's health and well-being through healthy nutrition. As part of this program, we agree:

- For children 2 years and older, only skim or 1% milk will be served
- No sugar sweetened beverages will be served
- Fruit will be offered at least twice per day and juice only once per day
- Physical activity will not be used as punishment, nor will it be withheld as punishment.
- Children will participate in planned physical activity at least 2 times per day for at least 90 minutes. In the event of inclement weather, indoor activity time will be adjusted to ensure the equivalent amount of physical activity is achieved.
- Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.

- The teachers and staff will attend training on nutrition, promoting children's movement and physical activity.
- Your child will have at least one opportunity per week to learn about nutrition.
- Ask you to dress your child in clothes and shoes that allow them to be physically active.

Conferences will be scheduled with parents if particular disciplinary problems occur. If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate child care services for that particular child.

Note: If, at any point, there is an indication/suspicion that a child may have special needs, Harmony School will inform the child's family and make contact with Baby Net for assessment and assistance.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Preschool / Kindergarten:

Teachers will meet with parents twice a year—once in the late fall and once in the spring. At the first conference, the student's progress will be discussed in addition to a goal for the student. This goal may be academic or social depending on the student's strengths and challenges. We ask that parents come to the conferences with ideas for a goal, and then work with the teacher to make an appropriate one.

A parent or teacher may request a conference at any time.

Elementary School:

Teachers invite parents and students to visit us the week before school starts. (A specific date is announced via email and / or phone calls.) Later, there will be a school-wide meeting where all the teachers and parents have an opportunity to meet, ask questions, and hear about the curriculum.

Teachers have conferences with parents twice a year. Conferences will take place in the late fall and at the end of the year, after the teachers have written reports on each child's progress.

A parent or teacher may request additional conferences as needed. At pick-up and drop-off time it is crucial that teachers focus on the safety and needs of the children, therefore these are not appropriate times for impromptu conferences. However, parents are always welcome to bring in a note or send an email to request a conference. The teachers will then find a time when the participants can focus on the issues at hand.

Health & Safety

Immunizations

As required by law, all school children must be immunized (or properly exempted) in order to attend school. Immunization records must be on file at the school by the first day of school.

Illness

The health of all the children at Harmony School depends on each family acting responsibly. Harmony does not care for ill students. Please consider these general guidelines.

- Vomiting is frequently a symptom of oncoming illness; therefore, do not send your child to school for 24 hours after such an upset.
- Keep your child home if he/she is experiencing diarrhea.
- A child should remain at home 24 hours after a fever.
- An extra day at home is good protection against a relapse and/or re-infection.

Please notify us immediately if your child contracts anything that is contagious and also act promptly with medical care. We will provide information for dealing with contagious situations as the need arises. Harmony School follows DHEC's Childcare Exclusion List which outlines conditions that excludes a child from childcare until the condition is rectified. South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Exclusion Policy, State Law 1976, Code Section [44-1-110](#), [44-1-140](#), and [44-29-10](#).

Injury or Illness at School

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, every effort will be made to contact parents or your emergency contact. If, in our opinion, the child is too ill to be at school, it is the parent's responsibility to pick up the child as soon as possible. In the event of an injury or illness too severe to warrant waiting for the parent (conditions listed below), we will contact 911:

Medical Emergencies

A. Medical Conditions Under Which Emergency Care and Treatment is Warranted

Medical emergencies that would require immediate medical care by a health care professional include the conditions listed below:

- Loss of consciousness
- Semi consciousness
- Breathing difficulties
- Unequal pupils
- Seizure
- Neck or back injury
- Continuous clear drainage from nose/ears after a blow to the head
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck or neck pain when head is moved

- Hives that appear quickly
- Very sick child who seems to be getting worse quickly
- Repeated forceful vomiting
- Vomiting blood
- Severe abdominal pain that causes a child to double over
- Abdominal pain after a blow to the abdomen
- Possible broken bones
- Shock

Steps to follow in a medical emergency:

- Call 911 immediately upon recognizing signs and symptoms that require immediate medical attention.
- Call the child's parent/guardian immediately after calling 911 to inform them of the child's symptoms and where they will be transported for medical care.
- Provide first aid as trained in an approved First Aid training course until emergency personnel arrive.
- Take the child's emergency medical information form(s) with you to the hospital.

C. Palmetto Health Richland, nearest emergency room.

D. Ambulance will transport.

E. A first aid kit shall be available for the treatment of minor cuts and abrasions and shall be stored in a location inaccessible to children.

If the parent has not arrived by the time the child is to be transported, office personnel will accompany the child to the hospital. Please be sure that all current emergency and work contact information is on file in the school office.

Staff will remain with child until parents arrive.

We will call 911 for an ambulance to take the child to Palmetto Health Richland's children's ER, the nearest emergency room. If the parent has not arrived by the time the child is to be transported, office personal will accompany the child to the hospital. **Please be sure that all current emergency and work contact information is on file in the school office.**

Medication

If medication is required during school hours, your child's teacher will dispense it. Harmony School is not allowed to administer any form of medication, either prescription or over-the-counter, if there is not a medical release form on file. The medical release form is included in your enrollment packet.

Medications or medical procedures:

1. Written, signed and dated parental consent is required prior to the administration of any prescription or over the counter medication or administration of special medical procedures:
 - All medications shall be used only for the child for whom the medication is labeled;

- Medications shall not be given in excess of the recommended dose; and
- Prescribed special medical procedures ordered for a specific child shall be written, signed, and dated by physician or other legally authorized healthcare provider.

2. Storage of Medications

- All medications shall be kept in their original labeled containers and have Child protective caps. The child's first and last name shall be on all medications;
- All medications shall be stored in a separate locked container under proper conditions of sanitation, temperature, light, and moisture; and Discontinued and expired medications shall not be used and shall be returned to the parent or disposed of in a safe manner.

3. Medication log

- For each medication that is administered by a staff person, a log shall be kept including the child's name, the name of the medication, dosage, date, time name of person administering the medication. The information shall be logged immediately following the administration of the medication and a copy provided to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Appropriate Clothing

At Harmony School, children go outside in all kinds of weather. Please always consider this when your child is dressing for school. We believe that students and parents can choose apparel that demonstrates individuality, as well as maintain the standards of appropriateness to ensure that the school environment is conducive to student learning.

In the elementary school, we often work on a rug. Therefore, we want to keep our rugs and floors as sanitary as possible. We ask that children bring a pair of swim shoes, dance slippers, moccasins, or clean socks (changed daily) so that they can leave muddy, dusty, or sandy shoes by the door. Athletic shoes (or closed-toe shoes) are recommended for recess. To prevent injuries, children who choose to play games like soccer and kickball are asked to wear footwear that protects their toes.

In general, sturdy clothes that can withstand outdoor games and nature walks are recommended. Also, we frequently use art materials, and despite our use of smocks and other protection, permanent stains are sometimes unavoidable. Therefore, please provide the children with casual school clothes that will not make them feel inhibited in their work and play.

Emergency Procedures

Inclement Weather Policy

Please listen to your radio or television. We follow Richland School District One. In the rare instance that we deviate from this policy, you will be notified by telephone. Should it be necessary to end school early due to weather or other natural disaster, we will make every effort to contact parents or people you have listed as your emergency contacts. Be sure to let your friends/relatives know you have listed them and again, make sure this information is up-to-date.

Fire Drills and Emergencies

The teachers will supervise and conduct fire drills throughout the year. All children are lead to the front of the school, roll call is taken for all classes and the children are lead back into their classes where the roll is taken again. In case of an actual fire, the children would be kept outside until released by the fire department or until picked up by responsible party.

General Information

Fundraising Activities

Tuition revenues do not cover the full cost of Harmony School operations. In the past the gap has been alleviated through fundraising activities. There is an expectation that parents and families become involved in organizing fundraising activities. Harmony School's annual Oyster Roast provides much of the revenue every year to pay for major updates to our facility and to keep tuition rates at a minimum.

Foundations/Grants

Harmony School is very interested in obtaining grants from funding sources such as the federal and state governments and private institutions. If you are interested in helping obtain these grants, there will be many opportunities to help with these efforts.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Harmony School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and financial assistance programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.