



Hawthorne Lane Preschool Handbook

2023 - 2024

501 Hawthorne Lane
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204
Preschool Office (704) 332-8132 X 108
preschool@hlumc.org

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Welcome

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Hawthorne Lane Preschool. This handbook is designed to provide you with helpful information about our preschool program. Please take time to read it carefully and familiarize yourself with its contents. We invite you to schedule a meeting at any time to ask questions, offer suggestions or concerns regarding your child's experience in our program.

Our staff members have been carefully selected on the basis of their educational background, work experience and their love of young children. We feel it is important to have close cooperation and understanding of parents and our staff for the benefit of the children in our program.

We hope the experiences at Hawthorne Lane Preschool will be happy, wholesome ones for you and your child during these most formative years. We are excited about our program and feel this is going to be another great year. Thank you for entrusting your child to us.

Sincerely,

Lisa VanNote, Director
preschool@hlumc.org Office
Phone 704-332-8132

Mission Statement

Hawthorne Lane Preschool is a through-the-week children's ministry at Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church. The purpose of this program is to provide a safe, Christian learning environment where preschool children learn about God's world and God's love through teaching and hands-on experience.

Our Goal

We welcome your child to Hawthorne Lane Preschool! We are committed to the best learning environment possible. Teachers at Hawthorne Lane preschool believe it is important to help children become enthusiastic learners. Our curriculum will focus on all areas of development including spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and physical. Our daily program will include hands-on experience, free play, art, music, language, and Christian growth.

Our Philosophy

Hawthorne Lane Preschool is unapologetically Christian in its values, and, true to the highest Christian principles, the school is respectful and welcoming to people of all backgrounds and all faith traditions. We are committed to supporting our teachers, our children, and their families in creating a Community of Caring. We will be communicating frequently with you regarding our areas of study and activities, as well as our policies. Everything will be done with the best interests of the children in mind and will be guided by the principle of Christian love. Children are warmly welcomed into our preschool. We strongly believe that people of all faiths and backgrounds will find our preschool to be a genuine example of a Community of Caring.

Safe Sanctuary

Out of our commitment to the safety of all children in our care, our church follows a comprehensive program for children and youth in our facility. It is the policy of Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church to provide all children and youth a safe and secure atmosphere to encourage the

spiritual growth of children, youth and those adults who are called to work with children and youth. There is a copy of the Safe Sanctuary policies in the preschool office.

Safety

Entry Doors/Locks: The doors to the church and preschool areas have electronic keypads, which require a special entry code. To allow children to acclimate, adjust and to start/end each day on time, we will continue drop-off and pick-up outside the preschool building. Parents should only use the entrance that is located on 8th street, please ring the doorbell for assistance.

Pick-up: If another person will be picking up your child other than those listed on your registration materials, you must send an email to the preschool office or note to the teacher who will notify the office. If notification is given over the phone for a change in pick-up, we require a picture I.D. Only parents and guardians can call in this information. **WE WILL NOT RELEASE A CHILD TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.**

Parking Lot: Please be careful when driving in the parking lot. Please drive slowly. All of your attention should be focused on watching for children. Upon entering the parking lot, we ask you refrain from talking on your cell phone. By doing this, the focus will be on watching out for your child and for others. We wholeheartedly believe that you need to be off your cell phone to greet your children personally at 1 o'clock. After all, they will have lots to share about the fun they have had that day!

Preschool Hours

The preschool will be open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Because of insurance policies, we are not able to accept children before 9:00 a.m. The teachers will be in place before 9:00a.m.;

however, they are using that time to prepare for your child's arrival. Children may enter their classrooms once the teachers have opened the classroom door.

Arrival/Departure

We ask that the drop-off and pick-up routine be done in a swift manner on 8th St. Quick goodbyes no congregation at arrival nor pick up. If you need to relay a message to your child's teacher, please send a note in his/her backpack or email to the preschool office.

Doors open no earlier than 8:50 a.m. Children must be picked up no later than 1:05 p.m. either as a walker (park in the church parking lot, walk around to the middle door entrance or carpool on 8th Street.

Please be mindful of arriving to preschool on time (**by 9:10am**). We completely understand appointments. We have found it is very important to your child that you are on time dropping him/her off in the morning. Our teachers work hard to create lesson plans each day, and want to get started by 9:15am. We have noticed children often feel disoriented, and it can be disruptive to the entire class when a child is consistently walking in late. If you're running late and arrive after 9:10am,

Carpool

Carpool will be offered for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up on 8th Street. Please drive up to the sidewalk and wait. Have your child unbuckled and ready to exit the car. Slowly pull forward when the first car pulls away, turn off your car then a staff member will be available to open your child's car door. For everyone's safety, please **DO NOT** get out of the car to help with this process. Carpool will begin 10 minutes before 9:00 a.m. until 9:10 a.m. If you arrive after that time and a staff member is not available, please park on 8th St sidewalk, ring the doorbell located on the entrance door of morning drop off and a preschool staff member will greet you and take your child to their classroom.

Behavior Guidelines

We believe positive methods of guidance are better than negative ones. In the event that a child demonstrates inappropriate behavior in the classroom, the teacher will follow these techniques of behavior management:

1. Positive reinforcement for the appropriate activity
2. Redirecting the child to a more appropriate activity
3. Giving a verbal indication of the inappropriate behavior
4. Withdrawal of privileges
5. "Take a Breather" in the classroom
6. Removal from the classroom for a brief time by the Preschool Director
7. Discussion with parents if a problem becomes severe or persists. If behavior persists or becomes worse, removal from the preschool program will occur

Allergies

We are sensitive to children who may have food or other allergies. It is critical that parents and guardians give us ALL information about their children's allergies. Please remember to keep this information updated and notify the Director and your child's teacher immediately.

Hawthorne Lane Preschool is a **"Nut Free Zone"**. This includes all nuts grown in the ground and on trees. We have children in our church family and in the preschool with an allergy to both tree nuts and peanuts. Please refer to the handouts with the list of items that are "Nut Free" and a list of "Tree Nuts" to help protect the children who are dealing with this allergy.

All packaged foods list the ingredients in the nutritional box. There you will find if the food contains nuts, traces of nuts or if the item has been processed on equipment that handles nuts. Thank you for helping us keep all of our children safe.

If your child has any other food allergy, the parents of all children in the class will be notified and asked not to bring those items. We will take every precaution possible to ensure your child's safety.

If your child carries an epi-pen each day, we ask that you supply **two** for us to keep here at school. We feel that this is an extra step to ensure the safety of your child.

Health

In order to have a proactive and effective preschool, we will make every effort to practice good health policies. There is no guarantee that children won't get sick through preschool. To keep the spread of illnesses to a minimum, the school has the following policies:

Being proactive at our preschool we will require that immunizations be current. We also require that all children have a copy of their immunization records on file in the preschool office.

In the case of an emergency, it is crucial that we have up-to-date files with names, telephone numbers, and two other emergency contacts. The emergency medical treatment form must be signed by the parents/guardians, by the first day of school.

Hawthorne Lane Preschool cannot accept a child with a fever/ temperature above 99 Fahrenheit. Please keep your child at home if he or she is experiencing any of the following: a cold, fever, coughing, sneezing, excessive runny nose (discolored fluid), sore throat, unexplained rash, or any signs of a contagious sickness.

No child should come to school visibly sick.

If your child is to become ill at school or is displaying any symptoms, we will call you immediately and move him or her to an isolated area supervised by the director or a staff member. If we are unable to reach you at the provided numbers, we will then begin calling the other contacts listed. If you are notified that your child is sick, you will need to pick them up as soon as possible. Being proactive and for the comfort of all involved, a

quick response is important. In addition, the staff cannot be responsible for administering any medication to the children.

Communicable Diseases: A communicable disease is an infectious disease that can be spread from person to person in many ways. These ways include: Direct contact with the ill individual or direct contact with their individual's infectious bodily fluids and/or discharges (i.e. mucus, respiratory droplets (coughs or sneezes), excrement, blood, etc.); Contact with an object that has become contaminated with infectious material (i.e. toys, surfaces, utensils, and other high-touch surfaces, etc.); Ingestion of contaminated water or food; Or via a vector, which includes insects, rodents, and other animals that have the capability to spread the disease.

The child must be **free of fever for 24 hours** without use of fever reducing agents (stay out of school for three full days) and symptoms improved.

Diarrhea: Whenever a child has a very loose bowel movement accompanied by nausea or if he/she has **two** loose bowel movements within an hour, in the teacher's judgment a diarrhea type, parents will be contacted to come get the child. The child should be **free of diarrhea for 48 hours** (stay out of the school for three full days) before returning. If it is determined by consultation with the child's physician that the diarrhea is going to last awhile and it is not infectious, then the child may return to the school with a note from the doctor stating this on the doctor's letterhead.

Vomiting: Whenever a child vomits at school, the parents will be called to come pick up their child. The child should be **free of the vomiting for 48 hours** (stay out of the school for three full days since vomiting ceased) before returning.

Colds: If the child comes to school with a cold, he/she should be able to follow the daily routine, including some time outside, weather permitting. If the teacher feels the child is not able to participate fully, they will notify the parent to come get the child. Please keep your child home if he/she has a constantly running nose, especially green or yellow mucus, redness in the eyes, pink eyes or eyes with any discharge, and constant coughing.

COVID-19: Parents will be asked to be on alert for any symptoms of COVID-19 and to keep child home if showing any signs of illness. If in question, then better idea to err on the side of caution, keep your child at home and seek medical advice from your child's Pediatrician.

Determined by NCDHHS (Child Care Strong NC Public Health Toolkit updated July 6, 2022) Symptoms include: fever or chills, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell

Other possible symptoms: fatigue, muscle or body aches, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, headache, nausea or vomiting/diarrhea - these are considered non-COVID-19 symptoms unless experiencing along with at least one of the main COVID-19 symptoms

Anyone experiencing COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms will be required to have a negative COVID-19 test, provide a doctor's release or quarantine 5 days since symptoms first appeared and 24 hour symptom free upon re-entry to our program.

In the event COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member at HL Preschool:

- Parents within the classroom will be notified immediately

In the event of a positive COVID-19 household member, or may have been exposed to COVID-19 students and staff will be asked to wear a mask 10 days and test 5 days after exposure. If test positive within those 10 days, remain out of school 5 days after testing positive or since symptoms first appeared and symptom free 24 hours before returning to school.

Staff will be asked to be on alert for any symptoms of COVID-19 and stay home if showing any signs of illness.

If a child or staff develops any symptoms of COVID-19 while at HL Preschool they will be sent home, child will be kept in an isolated area with the director or staff member until pick up.

Staff and children will wash hands frequently: before/after playground use, before/after snack/lunch, after blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing or when in contact with body fluids, after toileting or changing diapers.

Classrooms and office will be equipped with Temporal (forehead) thermometers.

We ensure ventilation systems: open windows

Cleaning and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, toys (mouth toys will be placed in a bin removed from other children), doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, tables and cubbies.

Hawthorne Lane Preschool reduced class sizes to spread children out.

COVID-19 Information signs are posted at all entrances

Head Lice

Lice is not harmful and is very common with young children. However, we want to prevent the spread from occurring. Teachers and children must be treated and **“lice & nit free” 24 hours** before returning to preschool. Once returning to school, your child must go to the preschool office to be checked by a preschool staff before entering the classroom. Lice have to have a “host” to live...otherwise they will die within 24-48 hours. We will be actively taking precautions in each classroom and be constantly on alert for any other cases. Please contact the preschool Director immediately if you find that your child has lice.

Child Abuse

The staff of Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church Preschool recognizes the seriousness of child abuse and neglect. By North Carolina Law, caregivers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. If a situation arises where there is concern for a child, the teacher will report

it to the director who will begin a thorough investigation and then file a report to the Department of Social Services if need be.

Child to stay with Teachers after hours

If a Hawthorne Lane Preschool Teacher takes care of a child who attends our program, parents will be asked to sign a waiver, "Hawthorne Lane Preschool or Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church are not responsible or liable for anything that may occur during the time when the child is with the private sitter".

School Closings

Please refer to calendar in this handbook.

Severe Weather Closings: It will be to the Preschool Director's discretion based on safety for the staff and children to close or delay. The Director will send a mass e-mail to parents by 7:00am. There will be NO Make-up days if closed three or less days. Make-up days will take place only if closed four or more days.

Contingency Plan for Pandemic or Natural Disaster

Hawthorne Lane Preschool recognizes the need to have a contingency plan in the unlikely case of a pandemic or natural disaster. As such, we have developed the following policy and procedures.

In the case of a natural disaster, like a hurricane:

- It will be to the Preschool Board and Director's discretion based on safety for the staff and children to close or delay.
- In the event that the preschool and/or church campus suffered damage severe enough to hinder daily operations, the director will, with input from the board, make a decision to close the preschool accordingly.

That information will be communicated via email.

In the case of a pandemic, like COVID-19 or The Avian Flu, etc:

- The Preschool Director will, with input from the board, make a decision to close the preschool accordingly. That information will be communicated via email.
- In the event that a large portion of HL Preschool students and staff are ill, the director, with input from the board, can cancel preschool to protect families and staff. That information will be communicated via email.
- Parents are expected to exercise caution and discernment when choosing to send to preschool a child/children that may be ill and a risk to others.
- The Preschool Director may ask that any child exhibiting symptoms or that any child exposed to a person exhibiting signs and/or symptoms of an infectious disease stay home. The Preschool Director reserves the right to send a sick child home immediately.

Tuition and Staff Pay:

In the event that Hawthorne Lane Preschool is closed for less than 30 days due to natural disaster or pandemic:

- Tuition will not be prorated for missed days. Tuition payments will continue to be due on the first of each month.

Example: Due to COVID-19, school closes on September 15th and reopens September 21st, full tuition payment due October 1st, no refund for September 16 – 20th.

- Staff will continue to be paid.

In the event that Hawthorne Lane Preschool is closed for an extended period (longer than 30 days) due to natural disaster or pandemic:

- Prepaid tuition (one month) will not be refunded. No additional tuition will be due.

Example: Due to COVID-19, school closes on September 15th, as of October 22nd remain closed, October 1st payment due, no refund. No payment due starting November 1st.

- Staff will be paid for the 30 days immediately following the closure of preschool based on their regular work schedule.
- Should Hawthorne Lane Preschool reopen during the same preschool year following a closure for an extended period (longer than 30 days):

- Prorated current month tuition plus next month's tuition will be due upon reopening of preschool.
Example: Due to COVID-19, school closes on September 15th and reopens on January 15th. October 1st tuition due, No payment Nov & Dec, Pro-rated tuition January 15 – 31st & February tuition due upon reopening.
- Staff will be paid based on the number of days worked during the month.

Registration

Parents who are interested in enrolling their children in the preschool program must complete the enrollment application. The required, nonrefundable registration fee is due with the application. When the classes are full, a waiting list will be instated. Your child's name will be placed on the list in numerical order. Adding your child's name to the waiting list is free. If a space becomes available, then the registration fee is required immediately for enrollment in the program.

Enrollment is based on priority levels. First priority is given to Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church members and staff, then currently enrolled families and then to the community-at-large.

Tuition/Fees

Registration Fee (non-refundable):

\$115.00 non-church members

\$105.00 for church members (must join minimum 90 days prior to registration)

\$20 discount for each additional sibling

<p>Young Toddler</p> <p>T/TH.....\$300</p> <p>M/W/F.....\$315</p> <p>M – F.....\$425</p> <p>Toddler</p> <p>T/TH.....\$275</p> <p>M/W/F.....\$300</p> <p>M-F\$410</p>	<p>Twos</p> <p>T/TH.....\$265</p> <p>M/W/F\$290</p> <p>M-F\$410</p> <p>Threes</p> <p>T/TH.....\$255</p> <p>M/W/F\$280</p> <p>M-F\$405</p>	<p>Fours</p> <p>M/W/F.....\$285</p> <p>M-TH.....\$370</p> <p>M-F.....\$415</p> <p>TK</p> <p>M-F.....\$430</p> <p><u>Activity Fee:</u></p> <p>Toddlers \$75</p> <p>Twos \$125</p> <p>Threes, Fours & TK \$140</p>
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A late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed if tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month. If tuition fees are not paid by the end of a month, the child may not continue in class until the fees are paid. There will be a charge of \$30.00 for all checks that are returned from the bank for “non-sufficient funds.”

Late Pick-up Fee

If your child is picked up late, there will be a \$1.00 per minute fee charged to the next month's tuition bill after 1:05 p.m. If you are running late, your child may be picked up in the director’s office. We strongly believe that small children need to be able to depend on the reliability of adults. This policy helps everyone involved to be as dependable as possible.

Withdrawal

We value the relationships that we have with our parents and children, and we hope to grow with you and your child during all of their preschool years. Despite the best of intentions, there are times when a child may need to be withdrawn from Hawthorne Lane Preschool for various reasons, including life and family changes. In the event of a parent-elected withdrawal (including cutting back days), we ask that you submit written notice to the director at least **30 days in advance**.

Clothing/Potty Training

Clothing: Please dress your child accordingly for the weather. During the spring and fall, it is best to dress in layers. We want all children to feel comfortable while playing and learning. Sometimes, we even like to get a little dirty, so please leave your “Sunday Best” at home.

Children must wear closed-toed shoes. Open-toed shoes may lead to injuries on the playground. **Crocs, tevas, flip-flops & sandals** are not the best shoes to wear during school hours. Sneakers & Native Shoes are the best and the safest for your child.

Every child will need to bring a complete change of clothes to keep in his or her cubby. Please place a set of clothes (shirt, pants/shorts, undergarments and socks) in a large ziplock bag and give it to your child's teacher at the start of school. Your child's teacher will ask for a heavier change of clothes once the weather turns cooler. Children who are not potty-trained must bring their own diapers and wipes. Please label all diapers with your child's name.

We will be going outside every day, weather permitting, so please remember coats or jackets, and make sure that your child's name is labeled in them. Apply sunscreen at home if you wish; sunscreen is considered a “medication” by the state and teachers are not allowed to apply it to the children at school.

In order to help your child develop skills of “self help,” we ask that you do not dress them in overalls or belts.

Potty Training: Children who are not potty-trained must bring their own diapers and wipes. Please label all diapers with your child's name. We practice good hygiene and will require the children to wash hands with the help of the teacher after having their diapers changed or after using the toilet.

If you are potty-training your child, please let the teacher know. We ask that you provide two extra sets of undergarments and pants. Please make sure that the buttons and snaps on the clothing are manageable for your child, with some help. **Overalls and belts should not be worn.**

It is important for your child to show signs of being emotionally and physically ready to begin potty training before they begin potty-training at school. We want to help in this exciting process and will not encourage your child if he or she is unwilling or resistant. For sanitary reasons, if the child is in the process of being trained, is not totally trained, and has three consecutive accidents, please use pull-ups when coming to school.

Children entering the Three-year-old class in September must be fully potty-trained by the first of October, that same school year.

Lunch/Snacks

Lunch and Snack items can be sent in disposable bags or non-disposable lunch box/container. Water will be served at snack times if they do not have 2 drinks in the lunch.

We ask that each child bring their own snack from home. Snacks are to be in separate and labeled "snack and child's name".

Each child will be required to bring a lunch from home every day. Please be mindful of your child's ability to use utensils and plan accordingly. If your son/daughter is still working on using a spoon correctly, yogurts and puddings might not be ideal. We recommend 3 to 4 items. We do not microwave children's food. Gloves will be used when assisting children when opening their lunch. To help with fine motor skills, finger foods are most appropriate. Please no pouches (i.e. applesauce, yogurt, etc.). We have found pouches are not filling for the children and finish too fast. Please remove all plastic wrappers from food items (i.e. string cheese). We ask that no toothpicks be used to hold children's food together. We ask that you avoid pouches.

Nutritional Snack/Lunch Ideas: A protein: cheese, sandwich meat (with or without bread). A fruit: raisins, mandarin oranges, banana, strawberries, blueberries, grapes & cherry tomatoes (cut in half), apples (cut in slices). A bread: crackers or sandwich bread, etc. A vegetable: carrots, celery, cucumbers, celery sticks, etc.

Visitation/Conferences

Teachers will be communicating with you all year long in a variety of ways including monthly calendars and email updates.

We hold conferences for fours and TK in the fall and twos and threes in the spring. However, we value the relationships between parents and teachers. If you have any concerns that you would like to discuss with your child's teacher, please let that teacher know. The teacher will work with you to find a time to discuss via phone call or virtual before or after normal class hours.

School Accidents

We will take every precaution to ensure your child's safety while at school. In the event of an accident, we will evaluate the situation and make the decision to call the parents. Of course there will be minor bumps and bruises which we will tell you about at the end of the school day. Our teachers will report all incidents by filling out an accident report. The parents will be given a copy of the report and one will be kept on file in the preschool office.

Birthdays/Class Parties

Everyone should be celebrated for being born, and birthday celebrations are a great way to do just that! Please let your child's teacher know what you would like to send to share with the class for your child's birthday. Summer birthdays can be celebrated during the month of May. We love to celebrate every season and holiday. We will have special activities for the children to learn about each one. Please refer to the monthly calendars for the party dates. There will be a chance for you to sign up to send in items for each party.

Preschool Board

Membership: The Preschool Board consist of the Preschool Director, Senior Pastor, the Director of Children's Ministries, one Trustee Member, one Attorney, up to three church members, and one preschool parent.

Duties: The Board supports the philosophy, purpose and objectives of the preschool program.

Makes recommendations and approves the fees, admission procedures, preschool budgets, fundraising events, salaries, staff changes, calendar and any other item that the director brings forth. In the event of a director's resignation, meet and appoint an acting director.

Preschool Personnel Committee

Membership: The Preschool Personnel Committee consists of the Director, Senior Pastor, the Director of Children's Ministries, and two church members.

Duties: Interview and approve all preschool staff members. The list of members is available to you from the preschool office.

Preschool Personnel Committee

Qualifications: Has a working knowledge of child growth and development. Be able to work with teachers and provide their needs for a successful classroom. Be able to administer the business portion of the school.

Duties: Hiring and dismissing teachers. Provide curriculum resources, materials, supplies, continuing education and support for teachers. Administer the school's finances.

Preschool Staff

Lisa VanNote- Director

Rachel Rempson – Office Assistant

Michelle Henry – Toddler Teacher

Emily Fly – Toddler Teacher

Tina Coffey - Two year old Teacher

Carolyn Camann - Two year old Teacher

Ginny Mehlretter – Two year old Teacher

Alli Jo Martin – Three year old Teacher

Nicole Chaprastian - Three year old Teacher

Jess McGuire – Four year old Teacher

Tina Norton – Four year old Teacher

Laura Fitchue – Transitional Kindergarten Teacher

Special Area Teachers:

Chapel with Lizanne Miskelly; Director of Children's Ministry

Fun Fitness with Coach Terry Oates, Jr.

Music with Rodney Boatwright (Mr. Rocky)

**Hawthorne Lane Preschool
2023-2024 Calendar**

August

25 – Staff CPR & First Aid Training
28 - Staff Work Week Begins
31 - Open House 9 – 1pm

September

5 - First Day of School

October

11 & 12 - Fall Photos
19 & 20 - Pumpkin Patch

November

6 – 10 - Scholastic Book Fair
22 - 24 - Thanksgiving Holidays (Preschool closed)

December

15 – 4s & TK Christmas Program
18 – Jan 1 - Christmas Break (Preschool Closed)

January

2 - Classes Resume
15 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (Preschool Closed; MLK, Jr. Holiday)
15 - 26 - 2024-2025 Registration begins for **Currently Enrolled Students**
29 & 30 – 2024 -2025 Registration **siblings of Currently Enrolled Students**
31 - 2024-2025 Registration & Summer Camp 2024 begins for the **General Public**

February

19 - Teacher Workday (Preschool Closed; President’s Day)

March

4 – 8 – Teacher Appreciation Week
29 – Good Friday (Preschool Closed)

April

1 - 5 Spring Break (Preschool Closed)
8 – Classes Resume
17 & 18 - Class Photos & Optional Individual

May

24 - Last Day of School (Graduation Program time 11:30am)