

Vestavia Hills City School Preschool Services (APPLICATION ATTACHED for the 2021-22 school year)

Vestavia Hills City Schools (VHCS) is responsible for serving children eligible to receive special education ages three through five year. VHCS offers a range of special education services for preschoolers including:

- 1) Services in an integrated preschool program housed currently at three elementary schools
- 2) Services in the child's natural environment
- 3) Services in daycare , or the child's zoned elementary school (i.e. preschool speech)

Children who require special education services, as determined by the child's Individual Education Program team (IEP) attend Vestavia Hills Preschool located at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights, Vestavia Hills Elementary East, and Vestavia Hills Liberty Park Elementary School. The preschool class is designed to be an inclusive preschool program for 3, 4, and 5 year olds with special needs and 3 to 5 year old typically developing peers. ALL students are taught by highly qualified, certified teachers following state standards in order to prepare students for their Kindergarten year. The goal of the program is to enhance instruction for students with special needs, which includes age appropriate models in the classroom-while preparing ALL students for Kindergarten.

The Vestavia Hills Preschool is based on the philosophy of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, which means that the emphasis is on learning through a language rich, play-based child-initiated approach. Instruction for each child is age appropriate as well as individualized for the child's developmental level. The curriculum is organized to facilitate children's development in six major areas: cognition, communication, self-help, motor skills, social-emotional, and play skills. Each class is staffed by certified teachers, trained paraprofessionals, a speech-language pathologist, an occupational therapist, and physical therapist (if needed).

Enrollment: Children with Special Needs

Children, ages three to five with special needs, which meet the state requirements for eligibility and have need of special education as determined by the IEP team are eligible to attend the *Preschool Partners Program* on their third birthday. They may continue to receive preschool services until they become eligible for services in Kindergarten (turn 5 years on or before September 1). It is the responsibility of the child's IEP team to consider a full continuum of services following the child's eligibility determination. This decision is based on a number of factors. The frequency, intensity, and location of the services are decided upon by the team and become the child's least restrictive environment.

Enrollment: Typical Peer Models

Who can be a Typical Peer Model?

Peer models are non-disabled children between the ages of three and five, selected to participate within the preschool program. While benefiting from the preschool experience, these children provide peer interaction and social motivation for the preschooler with special needs. Peer models are an integral part of the preschool program, because all children learn not only from adults, but from watching and interacting with other children. Peer relationships are important for the social and cognitive development of every child. To be considered a typically developing peer, the child must pass a developmental screener and demonstrate the following: age-appropriate speech and language skills, age-appropriate self-help skills, model positive behaviors, and be toilet trained.

Preschool Application Process for Typical Peer Models

All children applying to become a typical peer model must be at least three years old and fulfill district registration requirements. In addition the following must be completed:

- All applicants must apply at the school for which they are zoned or be an employee (member of faculty or staff) of Vestavia Hills City Schools.
- Typical peer models must re-apply on an annual basis for continued education.
- Applications are available ONLINE. Please email the completed application to Keta Peterson at petersonlc@vestavia.k12.al.us .
- After the application is received at the school you may be called for a screening consisting of the following:
 1. The child will be administered a standardized developmental screener (subscale cut-scores will be used).
 2. The child will be observed by the Preschool Team (the State Department of Education *Natural Environmental Survey* Instrument will be utilized).
 3. The family will participate in a family interview (the State Department of Education *Family Focus Interview* will be completed).
- The child's acceptance into the program will depend on the information taken from the standardized test, the observation, and the family interview. Acceptance determinations are made by a committee at each school (comprised of preschool teachers, speech language pathologist, system administrator, and other professionals as needed).

- Enrollment will be determined based on the number of special needs students with a 50% ratio of typical peers.
- A child must be potty-trained (unless an underlying medical issue is documented) before enrolling in the program in August as a typically developing child.
- To enroll in the program if accepted, you must provide the following information to register your child. (A parent or guardian must register the student). All preschool students must register at the school they will attend.

1. Blue Alabama Immunization Form
2. Proof of age to include but not limited to birth certificate, religious, hospital, or physician's documents showing date of birth; a baptismal certificate; an entry in a family Bible; an adoption record; an affidavit from a parent; previously verified school records, etc.
3. Current and Valid Lease, Warranty Deed, Settlement Statement, Mortgage Statement, or Current Property Tax Notice
4. A Utility Bill in your name for the current month showing residence property address
5. One other item that ties you to the residence:

Proof of residency form County Registrar of Voters

Current Vehicle registration showing residence address

One other bill mailed to you at your residence address

A cancelled check in your name for the current month showing residence property address

6. If legal custody of a child is split between two parents, you must attach a certified copy of the court order identifying each parent's respective award of physical custody

Tuition and Fees for Typical Peer Models

- Upon acceptance into the program, there is a **non-refundable registration fee** of \$100.00.
- At the beginning of each year, there will be a supply fee of \$100.00. This pays for instructional/classroom supplies, including a book bag.
- Snack Fee: \$50/\$60 (students that attend 5 days=\$60, all others \$50) at the start of school AND AGAIN after the holiday break in January. This pays for student's daily snacks and paper products. Snacks are coordinated with the unit being taught in the classroom. *THIS DOES NOT NEED TO BE PAID UNTIL SCHOOL BEGINS.
- The monthly tuition depends on how many days your child attends:
 - 5 days: \$300.00
 - 4 days: \$250.00
 - 3 days: \$225.00
 - 2 days: \$180.00
- Tuition is due the 1st of each month and is delinquent on the 5th.
- If a family has two typical peers enrolled in the preschool program, a 20% discount is applied to the monthly tuition fee only (this does not include the registration and materials fees).
- If a parent decides after payment of the registration fee (\$100.00) that the child will **NOT** attend, he/she must notify the preschool teacher in writing that they are withdrawing the child from the program. As stated earlier in this document, the \$100.00 **registration fee is non-refundable**. No typical slots will be "held" for a student. If a student is not in attendance in the program for a two-week period of time without an appropriate excuse (doctor's letter, etc.), the school will contact the parent. If the parent fails to contact the school after seven days, the student will be considered withdrawn from the program.

Meals

- Lunch may be purchased at the school or may be brought from home. Meals are not included in the monthly tuition. The charge is \$2.50 for a lunch and drink. We encourage students to eat the school lunch instead of bringing from home as this allows students to try new foods as well as use language to request food items.
- Each school has a snack time. Snack fee is \$50 a semester if your child attends 2-3 days per week and \$60 a semester if your child attends 4-5 days per week. The first payment is due at preschool orientation (to be announced) and the second payment is due by January 6, 2021. This fee covers all snacks, drinks, paper products, and supplies for cooking activities in the classroom.

Time/Schedule

- Preschool carpool is from 8:00-8:15
- Afternoon carpool is from 12:30-12:40
- Each school has a daily schedule that is posted in the classroom.
- Preschool dates for the 2021-22 school year are from August 18, 2021 - May 19, 2022 (different than grades K-12). All other holidays/off days follow the Vestavia Hills City Schools calendar.

Date received from Applicant: _____

Initials of school staff member receiving application: _____

**Vestavia Hills City Schools Preschool Partners Program
Typical Peer Model Application**

Child's Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: M or F

Parent or Guardian #1 Full Name: _____

Parent or Guardian #1 work/cell phone: _____

Parent or Guardian #2 Full Name: _____

Parent or Guardian #2 work/cell phone: _____

Address (and zip code): _____

Parent/Guardian email: _____

Home Phone: _____

Does your child have a sibling currently enrolled in a VHCS? _____

If yes, name and grade: _____

Has your child attended a preschool or playgroup? If yes, Where? Dates of attendance? _____

My child's strengths are: _____

My child's weaknesses are: _____

What behavior strategies are used at home: _____

How would you describe your child's personality: _____

What activities does your child enjoy: _____

Is there anything else that you would like us to know about your child when considering this application? (For example: fears, allergies, medications, habits, needs, etc.)

**Please answer the following questions about your child
(respond yes, no, or sometimes).**

Is fully potty-trained and goes independently? _____

Is able to feed self independently? _____

Verbally responds to simple "wh" questions? _____

Takes turns with minimal assistance? _____

Speaks in sentences? _____

Follows 2-3 directions? _____

Works and plays well in small groups? _____

Helps with simple tasks when asked? _____

Speech is clear and understandable? _____

Separates easily from parents w/o crying? _____

Dresses self except shoes? _____

Can follow rules and routines? _____

Does your child drink from an open cup? _____

Does your child eat a variety of foods? _____