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Heritage

Homeschool Group

Policy & Procedure Manual

updated 5/28/2024

www.homeschool-life.com/fl/heritage

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I. Membership

A. Initial Requirements

All families must have at least one child homeschooling, Kindergarten or older. In addition, each family must meet with a Board Member, review our Policy & Procedure manual, sign our Statement of Faith, pass periodic background checks, and sign liability waivers for all participants as a condition of membership.

B. Annual Requirements

Each family is required to complete three assignments during the school year:

1. Host at least one 2nd & 4th Friday Community event during the year.
 - a. Each Community Day will be broken into age appropriate groupings (generally 3-4 groups) and the parent will be assigned a specific group.
 - b. See Section IV for details.
2. Coordinate at least one additional small group event of your choosing
 - a. Examples include a Mom's Night Out, field trip, or hang out.
3. Perform Community event cleanup at the host facility.
 - a. Each family will sign up for a day to stay after Heritage and help clean the facility.
 - b. Cleanup includes, but is not limited to, putting away Heritage supplies, moving chairs and tables to their original placement, pickup up stray papers, emptying trash, wiping down bathrooms,
 - c. Cleanup typically takes less than 20 minutes

All three membership requirements must be fulfilled in order to continue membership the following year.

C. Participation & Attendance

Our goal is to honor Jesus and foster community by encouraging relationships among our Christ-loving families. Additionally, our gatherings should help provide fellowship and educational enrichment for our students through extracurricular activities, social gatherings and field trips in an effort to help each of them develop Biblical character qualities.

Heritage is a voluntary group of homeschooling families that depends on each family's participation in order to run smoothly and create community. We are a parent-led group where drop off is not permitted. Please keep your children at home if you're unable to attend. If extenuating circumstances exist (i.e. surgery, birth of a child, death in the family) please reach out to the board to see how we can minister to your family. Sign-ups are required for a majority of our activities in order to plan properly. The integrity of our group depends on your commitment and presence. We ask that whenever possible, you honor the commitment of participation through the entire school year.

D. Background Checks

All adults who will be participating must have a background check for the safety and security of all. Background checks will be updated at regular intervals. The cost of background checks is not included in membership.

E. Sickness

In order to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our Heritage families, please do not bring sick family members to the activities or events. Similar to church or school policies, we ask individuals that experience fever, an unexplainable rash, lice, vomiting, or diarrhea within 24 hours of our meeting to stay home. Please contact a board member as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made as needed.

F. Visitors

Since Heritage is a closed group and our members are background checked, the meetings, activities and events are open to its members only in order to foster relationships within our group. Much preparation and coordination goes into planning each activity or event. Please contact a board member for information and permission to invite out of town family/guests. Visiting grandparents or other familial adults are always welcome. While the privilege to attend an activity or event may be extended to friends and/or family who are interested in learning more about the group, they will be permitted to attend only one "organized" Heritage Field Trip per school year, before they need to officially join our group. (Grandparents are exempt from this rule.) This will allow us to maintain the integrity of our paid membership.

G. Finances

Heritage families typically pay annual fees in two installments. A \$50 family deposit is required to hold your spot in our community immediately upon registration or when committing to a new school year. This non-refundable deposit is typically paid in the early summer timeframe and applies directly to your total balance. The remaining balance is due each year by August 1st. These fees cover the expenses & supplies for Community Days (2nd & 4th Fridays) for the entire year. Field trips, outings, hangouts, parties, and donations to missions projects (that may occur on a Community Day) are not included in the annual fees. A variety of options at different price points are typically offered by our host families.

Heritage prefers to use PayPal, however personal checks and cash are also accepted.

II. Heritage Conduct

A. Parent Commitment

Desiring to see today's children return to a Biblical understanding of respect and discipline, it is the goal of Heritage Homeschool Group for our families to walk together in grace to create a community of believers that encourages our children as we train and guide them. As we enter into this partnership with other parents and families we yearn to point our children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and guide them in their daily walk with the Lord.

Modeling Christ-like behavior as we commune together and lead our children includes speaking in love and praying for one another. Being aware of our meeting times and responsibilities, and using electronics such as phones or other unrelated resources appropriately during our meetings will also show respect while working with one another's children. In addition, treating all Heritage events (including mom's nights out) as you would a church event and abstaining from alcohol out of deference to others.

As Heritage members, we recognize the privilege to participate and enjoy this homeschool group's meetings and functions. Helping our children to build friendships is a key component of our community. And although disagreements may arise, teaching our children how to resolve them in a manner that is honoring to the Lord will have life-long rewards.

B. Child Conduct Guidelines

The purpose of having guidelines is to help make the Heritage expectations for behavior as clear as possible. We request that parents read over these guidelines with all of your children and discuss them before meeting with our group. We are aware that many of our children are young and are in the early stages of the learning process, so grace is of the utmost importance when guiding our children.

1. To be respectful and mannerly to adults, to peers, and to the host facility during all Heritage meetings, functions, events, and field trips. (Colossians 3:12-15)
2. Work together with others in a manner that exhibits a positive attitude of helpfulness, support, and encouragement. (Acts 20:35, 1 Thessalonians 5:10-12)
3. Treat others the way I would like to be treated; keep hands and feet to self. Always communicate any problems to an adult. (Romans 12:18, Luke 6:31)
4. Use kind words that build others up. Listen when others are talking, raise hand when appropriate and wait patiently to be called upon. (Proverbs 16:24; 18:2, Ecclesiastes 7:8, Matthew 5:9)
5. Always be honest and trustworthy. (Ephesians 4:25)
6. Walk when inside the facility before, during, and after Heritage meetings, functions, and events. (Galatians 5:22-23)
7. Use electronic device(s) only as it is directed by the activity leaders, or as a means of

emergency contact with an adult. (Exodus 20:3-5a)

8. For students who are dating: Refrain from displays of affection during Heritage events as this may cause others to feel uncomfortable or feel left out. (Phillipians 2:3-4)

To reinforce the importance of each member's commitment to the conduct policy set forth in these guidelines, we ask that parents review these with their children occasionally through-out the year.

C. Physical Appearance

All participants should dress modestly in a manner that is respectful and appropriate and in line with traditional gender expectations (Genesis 1:27). Women and girls, please wear clothing that completely covers cleavage, midriff, and behinds. No strapless or halter tops are permitted. Guys and girls, if you choose to wear form fitting bottoms (yoga pants/leggings/spandex), please cover your behind with a longer shirt. Cross dressing is not allowed.

III. Health Concerns & Awareness

The families represented by Heritage deal with a variety of allergies and/or other medical conditions that, at times, can even be life threatening. Out of respect for these challenges, we expect that:

1. Parents will provide complete disclosure of known medical conditions pertaining to but not limited to allergens and asthma for themselves and their children. Please note any instructions on how you want us to handle emergencies on your liability form.
2. Parents and adults are to be cognizant of potential allergen exposure for others, understand that some allergens can be life threatening and help their children be respectful while practicing good hygiene.
3. Everyone will respect our allergy free zones in and out of the classroom setting. A "zone" in a classroom may be a particular table or work area. A "zone" while picnicking on the church grounds may be a particular family blanket or seating area.

IV. Responsibilities of Planners and Parents

A. Community Day Planner (Mom/Dad)

Planners are responsible for creating a Community Day that will engage our children in learning and serving opportunities. Awareness of existing allergies and medical conditions is helpful when planning activities and events. Please ask parents for permission before providing a snack; this can be done through a forum post.

1. Communicate detailed plans in advance with a Board member 4 weeks prior to the event. Seek advice and/or help as needed from board members.
2. Plan in writing. Each activity or event is approximately a 90 minute session with an additional 15 minutes at the end to clean-up. Please focus all 90 minutes on the agreed upon topic.
3. Respect the age, ability, knowledge level and attention span of the students.
4. Have a “rainy day plan” for outdoor activities. Confirm options with a board member in advance.
5. Adhere to the activity/event's supply budget and use it so that every child will end up with something to help remember their experience. Please check the available supply list prior to purchasing common items and post requests for additional supplies to the forum to maximize budget. Any additional unused supplies should be equally distributed to the participants at the end of said activity.
6. Communicate with the families on the forum as needed prior to the scheduled event/activity. Please give specific details if students are preparing projects in advance, including timeline and proper advance notice. ***It is especially important to verify allergy information in advance.***
7. Planners will need to arrive at 9:15 AM to help guide the set up of the assigned room/s and/or facility on the day of the activity/event.
8. Allergy free zones should be designated as necessary. It is the planner’s responsibility to ensure proper hygiene and common courtesy are being practiced during events/activities.
9. Participating adults will be assigned a group of children and/or tasks as needed for a successful day together.
10. Utilize different techniques (if applicable) to encourage children to actively engage with the information being taught and with each other. Our goal is to integrate each child and avoid cliques.
11. Follow clean-up guidelines. It is our goal to leave our facility as nice or nicer than we found it.
12. Receipts are due to the Treasurer within 30 days of the event. Refer to the Expense Reimbursement Section for instructions.

B. Adult Participation

Adults are a very important part of each activity and event and should *actively* participate. Punctuality at every Heritage meeting is essential.

1. Actively assist in every part of Heritage meetings – Opening Announcements, Bible Memory, Activities/Events, Service Projects, and Clean-up. Unless otherwise directed, please sit with the children and supervise a small group, encouraging and modeling proper behavior.

2. Active engagement with the children will be a great help as the Planners explain the instructions and demonstrate ideas.
3. Because relationships are a priority for us, every child should be integrated and included, and children should be redirected or moved if cliquish behavior is seen. Participating adults should be available to pray with or encourage a child who is disruptive or who is upset.
4. We urge all adults to be aware of allergens and other medical conditions in the room, so that we can actively help keep our children safe. Allergy free zones should be designated and protected as necessary. Please help ensure that proper hygiene and common courtesy are being practiced while students are in class.
5. Refrain from using electronic devices during our time together. If an important call needs to be taken, please briefly step away from the students after ensuring there is proper supervision.

C. Leader On-Call

As scheduling permits, at least two Board members will be assigned to each Community Day activity to be available to address the various challenges that arise during a Heritage meeting. Board Members consist of volunteer members who have at least one child actively participating in Heritage.

V. Field Trip Policy

As an opportunity to strengthen our Heritage community, Family Field Trips may be offered through our Heritage website.

1. Attendance is optional and signups will be done via the Heritage website calendar or forums.
2. Please pay special note to satisfy any signup and payment deadlines to ensure your participation.
3. Typically, refunds will not be available unless Heritage cancels the trip.
4. If you are not able to attend a trip you have committed to, please notify the Field Trip Host (as posted on the calendar event) as soon as you know.
5. For additional detailed instructions specific to the current school year, please see our “Family Field Trip Policy” document.
6. On occasion, visitors are welcome to join our Family Field Trips. Please refer to the Visitor section above for guidelines before inviting guests.

VI. Child Supervision Policy

A. Purpose & Intent

It is the purpose and intent of Heritage Homeschool Group to provide a safe, secure environment to encourage, guide, and care for our children during our activities and events. Since we are not a drop off group, it is the responsibility of each family to care for our children during the activities and events. As we build community, we want to come alongside one another and lend a helping hand.

B. Age Appropriate Room

In order to provide age appropriate activities for all of our children and ensure adults are fully engaged in assisting our children, a baby and toddler room will be provided during many of our Community Days. When provided, babies & toddlers are expected to be dropped off in this room.

C. Guidance of Behavior

In referencing our Child Conduct Guidelines, the following steps should be considered standard procedure in encouraging best behavior in our children.

1. Every parent is expected to intervene in circumstances where their child requires guidance or redirection in behavior.
2. If the parent is unavailable, then another parent will respectfully address the issue.
3. Our first response to questionable behavior is to verbally correct that child in love and help him/her to understand what he or she has done wrong so that our environment remains orderly and safe for everyone.
4. If negative behavioral concerns continue to disrupt the Heritage activities or events, the child may be dismissed from that Heritage activity.
5. The Heritage Homeschool Board reserves the right to remove any child from the co-op if disruptive behavior fails to be curtailed.

D. Buddy System

It is not permissible for an adult to be alone with any individual child that is not related to them. Use the BUDDY SYSTEM when necessary to assist children to the restroom. Children are to travel in groups of two or more when going to a different classroom, bathroom, or water fountain. Common sense in supervising children of ALL ages is to be expected.

E. Exiting the Activity Space

When exiting the activity space it is the responsibility of the assistants (parents) to ensure that all students exit the classroom, class area, and/or facility. When meeting at Creekside

Church for our Community Days, students will be led into the sanctuary and dismissed to their parents from that location.

VII. Expense Reimbursement

1. Some Community Days will be provided a budget.
 - a. Budgets will be established in advance by the Board and sent via email by the Resource Specialist.
 - b. Budget must be used for the designated activity.
 - c. All additional unused supplies should be equally distributed to the participants at the end of said activity.
 - d. If your activity will exceed your allotted budget, please contact the Treasurer prior to making purchases to get a verbal approval.
2. Per IRS regulations, an itemized receipt for the item(s) purchased must be submitted in order to be reimbursed.
 - a. **Receipts must include the date of the transaction, Store/Company name (or who was paid), list of items purchased, and purchase price.**
 - b. If admission to a facility during a Heritage class field trip is paid, please ask for a written receipt or ask our Treasurer to write a check for the admission cost prior to the trip.
 - c. Helpful Tip: Take a picture of your receipt as soon as you check out so you can easily upload it later.
3. If personal photocopies or printed documents are made for the class, reimbursement may be requested at a rate of \$0.10 per page.
4. The deadline for submitting receipts for reimbursement is **one month** after the date of the activity/event. Reimbursement will be distributed within three weeks of submission. If receipts have not been turned in by the deadline, reimbursement will be forfeited.

VIII. Parking

Heritage families are asked to park all vehicles along the fence so that our children have safe play areas. If specific parking is needed, notice will be sent in advance of activity or event. If help loading or unloading is needed, we will be glad to have older children or adults provide assistance.

IX. Emergency Plan & Medical Care Policy

It is the purpose of Heritage Homeschool Group to provide the necessary information to enable our families to bring safety to all our participants if medical care is needed or an

emergency situation should occur. Please program the cell numbers listed below into your phone for easy access in an emergency situation.

Medical Emergency Telephone Numbers

9-1-1 Universal Emergency Number

(813) 817-7301 Jenny Sanborn, Director

(727) 560-7749 Janelle Barnes, Resource Specialist

Host Facility Location: 311 Newberger Road, Lutz FL 33549

A. Emergencies & Medical Care

1. If the child has an **Allergic Reaction**:
 - a. **If parent is unavailable, call 9-1-1,**
 - b. An EPIPen or AviQ is a lifesaving device and in most cases is necessary to administer at the same time that the call to 9-1-1 is being made. An EpiPen is to be used **ONLY** in case of a life threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) when the child is showing some extreme symptoms such as difficulty breathing.
2. For a **LIFE THREATENING** medical emergency:
 - a. **CALL 9-1-1 from your cell phone, immediately.**
 - b. For a child, ensure the parent is aware of the situation and volunteer to assist with any additional children that need care.
 - c. For an adult, voluntarily assist with any children that need care.
 - d. Contact Jenny Sanborn or Janelle Barnes to inform them of the situation, but only **AFTER** 9-1-1 has been called.
3. For a **NON LIFE THREATENING** incident:
 - a. For a child, ensure the parent is aware of the situation and volunteer to assist with any additional children that need care.
 - b. For an adult, voluntarily assist with their children that need care.
 - c. Ensure the Leader on Call is aware of the situation.
4. Complete and sign a Heritage Incident Report after the situation has been addressed. The Participating parent/guardian needs to accept receipt of the completed form. See Incident Report Section below. Copies of Incident Reports are stored online.

B. In Case of Smoke or Fire

1. Please familiarize yourself with the exit doors or posted evacuation route/s upon arrival of the facility.
2. Should smoke or fire arise, please proceed to the exit noted on the evacuation route with all your children.
3. Stay calm and keep the children calm.
4. Once you have safely exited the facility, meet with the rest of the group in the parking lot, a safe distance away from the building.

5. Seek medical attention, if necessary.

C. Incident Report

1. An Incident Report should be filled out if 9-1-1 is called or an EPIPen or AviQ is used.
2. An Incident Report should be filled out if any type of follow-up medical care is needed or if the general first aid kit is used.
3. A snapshot of the injury from your cell phone camera or other camera is required as evidence to be filed with any report.
4. All completed Incident Reports should be turned into a Board Member before the close of the Heritage Meeting in which the incident occurred.
5. A copy of the Incident Report will be given to a parent, and an electronic copy will be kept on file.
6. All Incident Reports will be kept on file for ten years.

Heritage Incident Report

Name of Child: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Type of Incident (check one): Accident _____ Illness _____ Injury _____ Other _____

Description of Incident (including place): _____

Treatment provided by: _____

Treatment provided: _____

Who was notified: _____

PARENT NAME

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD

SIGNATURE OF PARENT NOTIFIED

SIGNATURE OF BOARD MEMBER