

Helping Hands Inc.

2017-2018

## Student and Parent Handbook



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# Welcome to the Helping Hands Inc. 2017-2018 School Year!

Dear Helping Hands Inc. Families,

Welcome to a brand new year! We hope your summer was filled with fun activities and family adventures. It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Helping Hands, Inc. We are humbled and grateful that you have chosen to entrust us with your children.

Helping Hands Inc. is a private day school that provides education to children with Speech or Language Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Other Health Impairment, Emotional Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities and students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Child-driven experiences, movement-based learning, access to manipulatives and individualized activities are approaches we provide to our students. Helping Hands Inc. provides individualized instruction with a 2:5 student teacher ratio in a low stimuli class. Students are instructed using an Occupational Therapy immersion model. While teaching the general curriculum, teachers and occupational therapists infuse sensory integration therapy, speech, social thinking curriculum, occupational therapy and hands on teaching techniques. Helping Hands Inc. provides an educational environment that focuses on teaching in a way that students can better process and retain concepts.

Our students need our community of support to help each child reach their potential of great thinkers, leaders, and global citizens. We are committed to working together with the families, public school system, and Helping Hands Inc. faculty and staff to ensure each student's success. We will be working very closely with you this year and look forward to your participation in the school.

In this handbook you will find a sampling of Helping Hands Inc.'s policies and procedures as well as other useful information.

Please contact us with any question or concerns.  
We are going to have a beautiful year!

*Karen A. Edwards*  
Principal

# Helping Hands Inc. VISION STATEMENT

Helping Hands, Inc. OT Immersion Program uses OT therapy-based strategies as a vehicle for academic instruction. Each classroom will include Co-Learning Facilitators! A Special Education Teacher AND an Occupational Therapist will provide best practice academic instruction and OT based strategies to increase comprehension, retention, stamina, and access to education. Our teachers and therapists will join their powerful skill sets TOGETHER to meet the expectations we have for our students and ourselves.

Helping Hands Inc. students will learn to their fullest capacity. They will be respected for their individuality and will develop a quest for life-long learning. Students will become thinkers, as well as doers, and be able to transfer their learning and problem-solving skills to real life situations using given technology.

Students' self-respect is viewed as essential to their personal development and as a necessary precursor to respecting others. Helping Hands Inc. students will demonstrate responsible decision-making and understand the cultures of the world, enabling them to become good citizens both in school and within the community.

The staff, as a collegial supportive unit, will work in conjunction with the family and the public-school system to support student growth and success. Their cooperative efforts will have a positive impact on this educational vision.

## HELPING HANDS INC. Core Values

We are a **COLLABORATION** of **COMPASSIONATE** professionals who provide **INNOVATIVE** and **HOLISTIC** services to a **DIVERSE** population in our community.

Helping Hands Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status or age in its employment, programs and activities.

**HELPING HANDS INC. FACULTY AND STAFF**

Karen Edwards, Principal  
Laura Pal, Director of Occupational Therapy and Collaborative Learning Support  
Robert Bara, Special Education Teacher  
Lita Brenner, Special Education Teacher  
Stephanie Wunce, Special Education Teacher  
Kyra Potts, Teacher Assistant  
Meghan Adams, COTA  
Stacie Argade, COTA  
Katie Ehm, Rehab Tech

## **HISTORY**

Our founder, Lisa Worcester owns Helping Hands Occupational Therapy Clinic, a private OT business. Lisa was invited to attend public school special education meetings to share her OT evaluation results and suggested accommodations for successful classroom learning. Time and time again, Lisa learned about her clients having a difficult time accessing the general curriculum in the public-school due to sensory processing needs, while that same student would be successful during private therapy sessions. For this reason, Lisa decided to investigate the possibility of opening a school that would incorporate sensory integration therapy, speech, and social thinking curriculum into the general academic curriculum. Two and one-half years later that vision came to fruition.

Helping Hands Private Day School offers an OT immersion program to meet the growing needs of children on the autism spectrum or children with sensory processing disorders who are twice exceptional, SOL tracked, or qualified for the Virginia Alternative Assessment Program (VAAP) in grades K-8. Without daily learning and practice of body regulation, sensory regulation, and reflex integration, students can struggle to meet school expectations and underperform academically, socially, and behaviorally in a large school setting. Oppositional behaviors, and behaviors that appear as non-compliant, are seen in the public-school system, but are often related to the child's disability, not a conduct disorder.

Students at Helping Hands are given a low-stimulus environment, immersed with Occupational Therapy, language pragmatics, and Social Thinking curriculum to acquire the skills needed to grow and thrive. To move is to learn. Movement allows the complex thinker to process knowledge and retain information. Multiple movement breaks throughout the day allows for new knowledge to be processed and increased ability to retain and comprehend higher level academic challenges. Additionally, movement also decreases frustration tolerance, dysfunctional movement-seeking behaviors, and increases overall attention to task. Social Thinking awareness is everywhere. It occurs within every academic day, in peer interactions, and in supported community learning environments. Helping Hands Private Day School will allow students to meet their full academic, social, and functional abilities. Academics are taught in an experiential manner to allow students to soar!

### **Location**

Helping Hands Inc. is located at  
2680 Jefferson Davis Highway, Stafford, VA 22554

The academy not only has the classroom space, but also provides students with a gymnasium, library, occupational, physical, and speech therapy rooms, and a sensory room. Assistive Technology and adaptive devices are available.

### **OUR PROGRAMS**

Helping Hands Inc. is a private day school located in Northern Virginia. We serve elementary and middle school students with a nurturing but stimulating learning environment for students with disabilities to include Autism, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, Intellectual Disability and Speech or Language Impairment. With creative planning, and with assistance from trained support staff, it is our belief that Helping Hands Inc.'s students can obtain optimal levels of independence to enhance their quality of life. Helping Hands Inc. looks forward to meeting the needs of students who will excel in a multisensory, structured, small class environment with all the academic challenge! Our teacher-pupil ratio is 2:5.

Our staff believes that all students can learn, that confidence can be built and that opportunities can be created. We also believe that teaching should be child-centered where learning is joyful and purposeful.

Helping Hands Private Day School offers specialized programs to meet the growing needs of children in all cognitive abilities, who struggle with sensory processing difficulties in the large classroom environment. Without daily learning and practice of body regulation, sensory regulation, and reflex integration, the students struggle to meet school expectations and underperform academically, socially, and behaviorally in a large school setting. Oppositional behaviors and behaviors that appear as non-compliant are seen in the public-school system, but are attributed to the child's disability, not behavioral. Students at Helping Hands are given a low stimulus environment, immersed with Occupational Therapy, language pragmatics, and Social Thinking curriculum to acquire the skills needed to grow, and thrive. To move is to learn. Movement allows the complex thinker to process knowledge and retain information. Multiple movement breaks throughout the day allows for new knowledge to be processed and increased ability to retain and comprehend higher level academic challenges. Additional movement also decreases frustration tolerance, dysfunctional movement seeking behaviors and increases overall attention to tasks. Social Thinking awareness is everywhere. It occurs within every academic day, in peer interactions and in supported community learning environments. Helping Hands Private Day School will allow students to meet their full

academic, social, and functional abilities. Academics are taught in an experiential manner to allow students to soar.

***Definition of twice exceptional*** - refers to intellectually gifted children who have some form of disability. These children are considered exceptional both because of their intellectual gifts and because of their special needs.

Students will receive the curriculum from their Local Education Agency (LEA)

## **ADMISSIONS**

If the Admissions Team believes your student will benefit from our program and an appropriate opening is available, s/he will be invited for an OT Assessment. During the assessment, the potential candidate will participate in an interview with the Principal, have an opportunity to tour the school meeting students and staff, and complete placement testing with members of the Admissions Team. At the follow-up consultation parents are provided with the results of the evaluation and a final recommendation on placement is made. Acceptance packages are offered during the follow-up consultation to students for whom Helping Hands Inc. is deemed an appropriate placement.

### **Application Process for Private Students**

#### **A complete Helping Hands Inc. application will include:**

A completed Admissions Application  
An Admissions Interview with our Director of Occupational Therapy and Principal  
Copies of the most recent education evaluation, speech and language evaluation, and occupational therapy evaluation  
Progress reports from all current therapists, counselors and/or tutors  
A current report card  
IEP (Individual Educational Plan) or 504 Plan, if available  
Signed Records & Contact Release Form  
A recent photo of your applicant

Do not submit original copies of reports or documents.

When all materials listed above have been received, the application is considered complete and will be carefully reviewed by our Admissions Team.

### **Application Process for students placed by the FAPT team/CSA**

Students who are publicly placed will also complete an Admissions Application so we can get to know your child.

Helping Hands Inc. will request for the students records from their LEA.

A student interview/evaluation and tour will be scheduled.

Students will receive a letter of acceptance if the program is the correct fit for the learner.

### **Health Documentation**

A current physical examination

([http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health\\_medical/school\\_entrance\\_form/school\\_entrance\\_form.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/school_entrance_form/school_entrance_form.pdf)) and current record of immunization, or notarized vaccine exemption form ([http://www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/immunization/documents/SchoolRegulations/cre\\_1.pdf](http://www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/immunization/documents/SchoolRegulations/cre_1.pdf)), is required for each student. Helping Hands Inc. follows Stafford County School regulations.

Unless a notarized vaccine exemption is submitted, (form can be found on the VA Department of Education website), your child must be immunized against Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), Tetanus (DPT or DTap), Poliomyelitis (OPV), Measles (Rubella), Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Hepatitis B, and Chicken Pox (Varicella).

All students are required to have a comprehensive physical form and up to date immunization form.

Immunization records must show the month, day, and year of vaccines received. Students who do not have the necessary immunizations, or a vaccine exemption, and/or a physical examination will not be allowed to attend school. However, students may be conditionally enrolled if their health records indicate that they have had a current dose of the vaccines and parents present a written schedule from a physician for completing the immunizations within ninety days of enrollment.

### **Health Services**

Our faculty and staff receive yearly training on medication management procedures and epinephrine administration from a Registered Nurse. We use the same forms and procedures as the public-school system. (Medication Administration Training MAT) All medications are locked in a safe and administrated by MAT trained personnel.

Medications that are transported are signed in and out each day. Parents must pick up and dispose of unused or expired medications.

In case of emergency, HHI has the Epi Pen and Epi Pen Jr. for use with any person believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction

## **Records**

All data in your child's educational record is available for parents' and guardians' inspection and review. Parents/Guardians have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's scholastic records within a reasonable period, but not to exceed 45 days from the day the school receives a request for access;
- An explanation and interpretation of records;
- Copies of records and names of people who have seen the records;
- Give or withhold consent to other people seeing their child's records except to the extent that The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1993) (FERPA) authorizes disclosure without consent;
- Request destruction of records which are no longer needed;
- Request that information be amended that is inaccurate, misleading or violates privacy or rights;
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA (1993) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (1996);
- Review only records pertaining to their child.

No one else, other than authorized school personnel, may review the student's records without a Release of Information form signed by the parent or guardian, unless as authorized by FERPA. Please see the FERPA Guidelines as provided as part of your yearly back-to-school packet.

## **Tuition**

The majority of students for the 2017-2018 school year will be publicly funded.

Beginning 2017 we will also accept privately funded students in our peer model program. No more than 2 students will be placed per classroom as a peer model. Peer Models are a vital part of our special education classroom instruction. The Peer Model Program provides typically developing children an opportunity to interact with same age peers who are receiving specialized instruction in a developmentally appropriate classroom. This "inclusion" program provides a stimulating and challenging environment that offers all children a wide range of learning opportunities.

Research-based practices tell us that typically developing peers are positive role models for students with disabilities. Inclusive school environments promote belonging, friendships, understanding and acceptance of others that are different. Research also states that typically developing children enrolled in an inclusive school setting develop meaningful relationships with their peers who have disabilities.

Children selected to serve as peer role models must demonstrate developmentally appropriate speech, language, social skills and behaviors. Peer Models are able to communicate clearly, interact well with others, model cooperative interactions and follow directions.

Families of children accepted as Peer Models must commit to having their child attend when the program is in session, provide transportation to and from school, and sign an agreement letter. Children are selected by the administrators at Helping Hands, Inc.

If you are interested in having your child considered as a Peer Model, please complete an application and return it to the school. You can submit one application per school year. Applications are reviewed as they are received.

<b>TUITION:</b>	\$20,000.00
Enrollment/textbook/activities fee	\$ 500.00
OT Evaluation for accepted students:	\$ 300.00 (as needed)
Total:	<b>\$20,800.00</b>

Payment Calendar:	
Upon Enrollment (August 2016):	\$ 2,800.00
Monthly Payments due the 1 <sup>st</sup> of each month September-May. (9 months)	\$ <u>2,000.00</u> x 9 months
Total:	<b>\$20,800.00</b>

**School Hours:**  
**8:45AM-3:00PM**

The goal of the Basic Educational Program is to help students achieve their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, increase their independence, utilize their community, express themselves in a variety of ways, promote their health and well-being, and encourage their peer relationships.

The Basic Program includes all academic subjects following the individual child's curriculum from their Local Education Agency. Language Arts Grades K-8, Math Grades K-8, Science Grades K-5, Earth and Space Science (6), Life science (7), Social Studies Grades K-5, US History before 1865 (6) and US History since 1865 (7), Physical Education, Library, Music, Art, and Computer.

SOL Curriculum

Daily Living Skills

Behavior Support Services

Adaptive Physical Education

Computer/Keyboard Skills

Social Thinking

Family Life Education will not be taught at Helping Hands, Inc.

Helping Hands provides many internet resources including:

Edgenuity (Middle School Online Education in all 4 subject areas)

First in Math

SOL Pass

Moby Max

News4You

Prodegy

IXL Test Prep

Keyboarding without Tears

The virtual resources are using in combination with direct instruction and exploratory learning.

## **IEP RELATED SERVICES**

### **SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY**

Additional one on one Speech/language therapy is available to the students as required by their IEPs. The goal is to provide each student with a functional system of communication using speech, sign, picture symbols, assistive devices, or a combination of these so that the student can express his or her feelings, wants, and needs. If a child's IEP includes pull out or one on one therapy, then these services will occur in the medical offices in the Helping Hands building. Speech/Language therapy goals and the Social Thinking curriculum is included in Helping Hands Inc.'s day to day functioning and is embedded in the program for all students.

### **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY / HEALTH AND PHYSICAL FITNESS**

One on one occupational and/or physical therapy is available to students whose IEPs indicate a need for these services. The therapist will work with the classroom teachers on a regular basis. The goal of physical therapy is to improve gross motor skills, balance, and range of motion, and to help the student achieve as much independent movement in the educational environment as possible. The goal of occupational therapy is to improve fine motor and hand eye coordination so that the student is better able to perform the tasks of daily living, hands on class- room projects, and eventually vocational skills. Occupational therapy allows for regulation and modulation to attend to educational tasks, sensory experiences to promote focus and engagement and academic independence is also embedded into the program on a daily basis for all students. If a child's IEP includes pull out or one on one therapy, then these services will occur in the medical offices in the Helping Hands building. Occupational Therapy gym time will once daily for 30 minutes. This will meet the requirement for a health and physical fitness program.

Within the daily schedule will be the following Occupational Therapist lead experiences;

1. Morning Sensory Integration session – this will incorporate a sensory integration session using suspended equipment to provide vestibular input as well as proprioceptive and heavy work to promote organization and regulation. The activities will occur within a large multi-step sequence that promotes motor planning, body in space awareness, regulation and movement principals and concepts.
2. Yoga groups – these will occur alternately with Brain gym groups to promote core strengthening, proper body mechanics, to decrease anxiety and to stimulate bilateral coordination.
3. Brain gym – this program will alternate with Yoga groups. This is a program involving a sequence of 26 activities, to improve brain functioning and academic performance. The use of bilateral coordination activities promote blood flow ad stimulate the coordination of the eyes, ears, hands and entire body. It promotes concentration, focus, memory, academics, physical coordination, organization skills and self –responsibility.
4. Social Thinking group – The treatment framework and curriculum developed by Michelle Garcia Winner is highly effective when working with students

with Autism. The goals of this curriculum are to improve each child's social thinking abilities and assist them in learning the nuances of social communication and interactions.

### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

Helping Hands Inc. believes that each student has the right to avail themselves of anything that may remove a barrier to learning. Toward this end, the staff will help with the selection of and training on any appropriate assistive learning device. This may include adaptive equipment, an augmentative communication device, or a computer program or adaptation.

### **Media**

Helping Hands has a media policy to ensure students use technology to enhance classroom learning. This policy and permission form is included in your First Day of School packet.

### **Arts Integration**

Integrating arts into subjects makes learning come alive! Weaving arts into instruction boosts our academic achievement and promotes creativity, self-confidence, school pride, and sensory integration. Arts integration is a wonderful form of differentiation because it taps into student interests, abilities, and learning styles. At Helping Hands we incorporate art and music into our curriculum lesson design to help students process and retain new concepts. We also use the arts to regulate the body and increase access to the general curriculum.

### **How is the Helping Hands Inc. program structured?**

Students are in a multi-age classroom with one certified teacher and one Occupational Therapist. Students are taught on their grade level with high levels of structure and individual support. The class ratio will be two adults to five students.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **IEP Development**

A student's IEP is developed by the County Public School System. Helping Hands Inc. Faculty will also attend these meetings with you as a team member.

The administration of Helping Hands Inc. keeps in close contact with the school jurisdictions responsible for each student. It is our goal to work as a team in providing the best possible services for our students. Helping Hands Inc. staff members inform the LEA of progress or any other matters of concern involving students including interims, report cards, and attendance.

### **Testing and Evaluation**

Students will receive the county curriculum from their LEA and students will take all state standardized testing at their local school with assistance from Helping Hands Inc..

Decisions regarding student assessment are part of the IEP process. Students will take the Standards of Learning Assessments with the accommodations listed on the IEP.

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/>

Helping Hands Inc. will assess reading, writing, and math skills throughout the year and lessons will be tailored to the individual student. Pre and post tests will be given for each unit. Reading Levels will be monitored continuously using Fountas and Pinnell assessments and/or the Brigance and Qualitative Reading Inventory.

### **Report Cards, Grading Scale, and IEP Progress Reports**

Progress is noted on the IEP goals four times per year and four times a year on interims, as well as during IEP meetings which at a minimum must be held annually. These progress reports are sent home to parents and guardians. The LEA and FAPT will also receive copies of interims and report cards.

Daily communication books are utilized for ongoing dialogue between parent/guardian and school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make appointments at any time of the year to review their child's progress. Mid-year parent-teacher conferences will be held.

Report Cards include academic grades and separate work habits and behavior grades. Individual teachers will share their weight and percentages of assignments. Projects, quizzes, and tests.

Interim Reports	End of Quarter	Report Card
October 4	November 6	November 15
December 13	January 29	February 7
March 1	March 30	April 16
May 10	June 15	June 15

## HELPING HANDS INC. GRADING SCALE

Grading Scale K-5		
4	=	Exceeds standards
3	=	Meets standards
2	=	Works toward standards
1	=	Performs below standards

Middle School Grading Scale		
	Range	Quality Pts.
A+	98-100	4.5
A	93-97	4.25
A-	90-92	4.0
B+	87-89	3.5
B	83-86	3.25
B-	80-82	3.0
C+	77-79	2.5
C	73-76	2.25
C-	70-72	2.0
D+	67-69	1.5
D	63-66	1.25
D-	60-62	1.0
F	0-59	0

### Home and School Communication

Each student will be given a binder on the first day of school which will go from school to home and back each day. The book provides a means of communication between parents/guardians and teachers. Parents/guardians are asked to read the pages daily and either initial the latest entry or enter a comment. The communication book is an invaluable aid to the home-school partnership. The books will be collected at the end of

the school year and will become part of the student's anecdotal record. In addition, parents receive monthly newsletters informing them of school Activities. of Social Thinking curriculum and functional independence will occur within the daily community activities.

### **Transportation**

Privately placed children will need to make their own transportation arrangements. Children placed at Helping Hands Inc. by the public school are transported to and from school by their local public-school jurisdiction. Problems with transportation should be referred to the Executive Director, and Helping Hands Inc. will be sure to assist you with any issues.

### **Field Trips**

Students will practice skills in the classroom and then translate those practices on field trips to the pool, library, parks, and service projects. All field trips will tie in with the SOLs being learned in class. CPR and First aid certified staff will accompany students on each field trip. Field trips will enhance, not interrupt the instructional program.

### **Visitors**

The school welcomes parent/guardian visits. However, to insure the safety and well-being of our students we must know who is in the building at all times. All daily visitors must report to the office and sign-in with a valid DMV license or military ID before going any other place in the building. If your child forgets something at home, please bring it to the office and we shall be responsible for getting the item to the student. If you are picking up your child during the school day for an appointment, you must sign your child out when you arrive to pick them up from school and inform the office and your child's teacher. If you bring your child to school, you must come in via the front office and sign in your child there.

### **Attendance**

It is required that parents/guardians call the school if their child is absent. You must report your child's absence by dialing the school number 540-657-1423 x 401. The teachers take attendance each day. The homes of absent students are called by office personnel if a parent/guardian does not report their child's absence; however, it is the expectation that the parent inform the school of their child's absence. The reason for each absence or tardiness is documented. Excessive absence and tardiness are causes for concern. Lawful reasons for absences and tardiness include: illness of a student (a doctor's note may be required); death in the student's immediate family; medical appointments; required court appearances; observance of religious holy days; lawful exclusion or expulsion from school by school authorities; temporary closing of school; and other absences approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a

parent or guardian. Vacation time is considered an unexcused absence, and as required by the jurisdiction will be reported as such. If no information is received from the parent/guardian regarding the student's absence, it is marked as unexcused.

Please provide a note if you plan to pick up your child early from school for an appointment. Early dismissals will not affect attendance as long as it is not excessive and for unexcused purposes.

Attendance data will be shared with your child's LEA.

### **Make-Up Work**

Work missed from absence will be provided to the student and should be made-up at home unless otherwise documented on the IEP. Please return make-up work within three days of the absence.

### **Truancy**

Helping Hands Inc. must follow the attendance policies of the placing LEA/school district. The school is required by law to report truancy for children ages 5 - 16/18 (depending on jurisdiction). Generally, if a student accumulates an "excessive" amount of unexcused absences as determined by the jurisdiction, Helping Hands Inc. must hold an attendance conference, and contact the student's placing LEA. In this situation, every effort will be made to contact the parents and/or guardians of a Helping Hands Inc. student in order to work out a plan for regular attendance. When a student has accumulated three unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home alerting the parent/guardian to the number of unexcused absences. When a student has accumulated five or more days of unexcused absences, depending on the jurisdiction, a conference will be held for such purposes as to review educational and attendance concerns, develop attendance intervention strategies, and identify local community resources to abate truancy and improve school attendance.

For your child's school district's policies please access the appropriate link below or contact your school district's attendance counselor (social worker). They will be happy to discuss this and send parents/guardians a copy of the applicable policy.

Virginia:

- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/studentguide.pdf>
- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/superintendent/attendance.php>
- [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

## **Inclement Weather**

Helping Hands Inc. will follow the Stafford County Public Schools' snow closings. On snowy days, please listen to the radio or TV. If the Stafford schools are closed, Helping Hands Inc. is closed; if they open late, Helping Hands Inc. opens late. If school must be closed early, teachers will notify the parents or guardians.

## **Medications**

All medication, both prescription and over-the-counter (Tylenol, cough drops, etc.), must be in the original container accompanied by an Authorization of Administration of Medication form. The form must be signed by the physician and the parent/guardian, and is required for all medicines administered at school. Medicines must not be transported to school by the student, nor by the bus driver. Medications may only be brought by the parent/guardian. The school needs to know what additional medications are administered in the home, in the event an emergency occurs during school hours.

All medications will be handled by trained staff.

## **Illness**

Health regulations require that a child with a contagious illness, a severe cold, sore throat or cough, or who has a badly upset stomach must be kept home. A child with a fever must be kept at home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal. The office should be immediately informed regarding a child who has a contagious illness or infection. Parents and/or guardians will be called if a child exhibits any of the above symptoms or if the administrator believes the child is sick and should not be at school. Parents/guardians must make arrangements to pick students up as soon as possible, if and when they become ill.

**Students should stay home if they have a fever of 100 or higher, vomiting or diarrhea. They must also be free from all of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.**

## **Meals**

Students are to bring their own meals to school. A microwave is available for heating lunches. A refrigerator is available to keep lunches cool.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

It is the philosophy of Helping Hands Inc. School to foster productive student behavior. Toward this goal, staff is expected to provide: clear rules for student conduct, collegiality among staff members, a pervasive caring environment for students, effective instruction, and a focus on providing positive reinforcement and options for students. Please refer to our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Manual for more information.

Effective methods for responding to disruptive student behavior include:

- Using positive redirection and reinforcement whenever appropriate; Teach wanted behaviors and set the students up for success.
- Developing positive personal relationships with students that indicate high teacher expectations and respect for students;
- Closely monitoring performance and behavior;
- Using brief, non-disruptive interventions;
- Handling conflicts calmly and avoiding engaging in power struggles;
- Clarifying students' choices so that options are clear and students are responsible for the consequences of their choices;
- Using effective listening skills to help students identify problems and gain insight.

When students exhibit serious behavioral difficulties, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) may need to be developed. The development process should include the multidisciplinary team involved with the student and the following six steps:

- Determine the function (s) of the behavior through an FBA;
- Focus on one or two specific student behaviors that need to change in order for the student to have a successful school experience;
- Determine specific interventions to bring about these changes;
- Assign responsibility to staff for implementing each intervention;
- Determine the data to be collected to test the effectiveness of the intervention; and,
- Review the program at a minimum annually, or as determined by the IEP team.

Copies of the FBA and BIP are discussed with and given to parents/guardians and affected staff. A copy is placed in the student's record.

Helping Hands Inc. staff members are trained each year in MANDT. The MANDT System is a comprehensive, integrated approach to preventing, de-escalating, and if necessary, intervening when the behavior of an individual poses a threat of harm to

themselves and/or others. The focus of The MANDT System is on building healthy relationships between all the stakeholders in our school in order to facilitate the development of an organizational culture that provides the emotional, psychological, and physical safety needed to teach new behaviors to replace behaviors that are labelled challenging.

The Helping Hands Inc. School Behavior Management Plan strictly prohibits:

- Deprivation of drinking water or food necessary to meet daily nutritional needs;
- Denial of the use of toilet facilities;
- Any action humiliating, degrading or abusive;
- Deprivation of health care including counseling;
- Intrusive aversive therapy;
- Use of mechanical and/or chemical restraints, or seclusion.

Corporal punishment will never be administered by any staff person. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will contact Child Protective Services (CPS) or Adult Protective Services (APS). Before CPS/APS comes, a parent/guardian may be notified, unless the parent/guardian is the suspect. CPS/APS may interview the child without consent from the parent or guardian.

#### ***What is Helping Hands Inc. School's policy on student suspension?***

While Helping Hands Inc. School is dedicated to serving students with challenging behaviors by providing intensive behavior supports, there may be incidents where suspension is deemed necessary. This includes, but is not limited to: drug and/or weapon possession, incidents that may result in serious bodily injury, and other incidents of such nature in which it is felt the safety of the student and others is at risk. Dependent on the seriousness of the offense and/or danger to others, outside authorities may also be contacted. Further disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, may be considered. Parents will be notified via certified mail and phone of this decision within 24 hours of the suspension. If suspension equals ten consecutive or cumulative days over the school year, then a Manifest Determination IEP meeting must be held. A Manifest Determination Meeting, per the LEA, will be scheduled within ten days to determine if the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability. Depending upon the outcome of this meeting, the recommendations of the IEP team will be implemented.

#### ***My child has difficult behaviors. Can he/she be discharged from the program?***

Although Helping Hands Inc. is committed to serving difficult-to-place children, there are times when we feel we cannot provide the intensity of service that a child requires. An IEP to discuss placement would be held in these circumstances and our recommendations of such would be made. The LEA or other jurisdictions would then provide alternate placement options. In terms of day-to-day behavior difficulties, we are dedicated to providing students the needed supports and will not call to have them picked up or sent home unless we feel it is a medical or safety necessity.

### **Minimum Cancellation and Settlement Policy of Helping Hands Inc.**

Parents who wish to withdraw their child must inform the Principal of their intent in writing 60 days prior to the withdrawal date. All balances must be paid in full and all books returned before report cards or transcripts can be released. Refunds will not be issued without 60 day notice; clients will be responsible for all payments due. In rare circumstances such as emergencies or sudden job transfers, clients may receive a refund without giving 60 day notice. Whether to grant such exceptions is at the Executive Director's discretion.

### **Weapons/Drug Policy**

Any student who brings a weapon or an object that could be used as a weapon to school, brings drugs to school, or is involved in a situation that causes serious bodily injury can be suspended or expelled immediately. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense or the danger to others, outside authorities may be called. Further disciplinary action as noted under the student suspension policy section will be followed.

### **Emergency Plan**

Helping Hands Inc. staff has a safety plan to be implemented in the event of a chemical or biological attack. If a terrorist action should materialize, we will immediately go into a lockdown mode. This means that parents and guardians should not come to the school, but should wait by the phone. Helping Hands Inc. has cell phones and will use them in the event of service interruption. If you have a cell phone number that we do not have, please call the office and give it to us. The building occupied by Helping Hands Inc. has windows that are sealed. In case of a biological or chemical event, we would shut down our air handlers and close off the ventilation systems to the best of our ability. We will not open the doors to anyone except official security or police personnel since to do so would compromise the air in the building. The school has a delineated plan for fire and other emergency-related events (e.g. earthquake, tornado, violent intruder). All staff are trained in emergency procedures.

In the event of an emergency or crisis-related event, Helping Hands Inc. will send a text message to parents notifying them of the emergency. In order to receive this message, a cell phone number and cell phone provider (i.e. AT & T, Verizon, etc) must be provided by the parent/guardian to the school. If you also wish to receive the message via email, you must provide an email address. This text message system will only be used in the event of an unusual circumstance. We will all do whatever we can to insure the safety of everyone involved.

### **Child Protective Services**

#### **Professionals Required to Report Ann. Code § 63.2-1509**

All school personnel are mandatory reporters.

**Reporting by Other Persons Ann. Code § 63.2-1510**

Any person who suspects that a child is abused or neglected may report.

**Institutional Responsibility to Report Ann. Code § 63.2-1509**

If the information is received by a teacher or staff member in the course of professional services in school, such person may, in place of making a report, immediately notify the person in charge of the institution or department, or his or her designee, who shall make the report forthwith. If the initial report of suspected abuse or neglect is made to the person in charge of the institution or department or his or her designee, such person shall notify the teacher or staff member, who made the initial report when the report of suspected child abuse or neglect is made to the local department or to the toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline, and of the name of the individual receiving the report, and shall forward any communication resulting from the report, including any information about any actions taken regarding the report. <https://www.childwelfare.gov>

**Standards for Making a Report Ann. Code § 63.2-1509**

A report is required when, in his or her professional or official capacity, a reporter has reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected.

When ‘reason to suspect’ is based upon this subsection, that fact shall be included in the report along with the facts relied upon by the person making the report.

**Inclusion of Reporter’s Name in Report**

The reporter is not specifically required by statute to provide his or her name in the report.

**Photographs / Video**

Helping Hands Inc. School does not take or release photographs of its students without permission from the parent/guardian. However, sometimes pictures are needed for school publicity or for academic purposes. A photographic release form is provided for this purpose.

**Cell Phones and Electronic Devices Policy**

The use of cell phones and electronic devices (MP3 players, PDAs, iPods, etc) are not allowed during normal school hours. If you need to contact your child, please call the main office and they will be notified. At all times during the school day, student phones and electronic devices should be turned off and put away. If a student continuously disregards school policy on personal cell phone and electronic device use, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, teacher and school administrator as necessary. The school is not responsible for any electronic devices students bring to school as they are highly discouraged.

## **Teacher Qualification**

In accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a parent/guardian may inquire about the qualifications of their child's teacher at any time. All inquiries may be directed to the Principal.

School employees are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services.

## **Dress Code**

Clothing should be safe, comfortable and not restrictive to learning activities. Sneakers are much safer than sandals. Construction/hiking type boots are not allowed as they not only impede mobility but also because serious injury/property damage can occur if a student kicks someone or something. Clothing should be free of loose strings around the neck or other items that could cause injury during active play; this includes, but is not limited to, heavy chains worn as either necklaces, belts, or hanging from belt loops. Undergarments should be worn at all times and students should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Short shorts, dresses/skirts, halter tops and low-cut blouses are not acceptable for school. In the event your child needs a change of clothing, it is requested that you send an extra pair of clothing to school (labeled with your student's name), including underwear.

## **Transition**

HHI will participate in the Transition Service IEP and take an active role in the goals created to help the student transition from our school to another.

Transition planning includes a coordinated set of activities designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from HHI to the next school placement.

Students receive an array of services to help them attain their identified outcome(s). These services may include, but are not limited to; social skill and self-advocacy instruction, technology education, and community outings.

A student's transition plan becomes a part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process beginning at age 14 or younger, if appropriate. Transition planning is a process that may include any of the following:

- Identifying the student's goals for the next school.
- Assessing the student's interests and abilities in relation to identified goals
- Determining courses, experiences, and programs that will prepare the student to reach his/her goals
- Supporting the student in transition-related activities

- Determining the student's anticipated adult service needs
- Linking the student and parent with potential adult services

**If I am dissatisfied with some part of my child's program what recourse do I have?**

A parent or guardian can ask for a meeting of the Multidisciplinary Team to discuss their child's program at any time during the school year. If the parent or guardian does not agree with the recommendations of the team, the parent can initiate their due process rights and/or notify the LEA, as needed.

In the event that you are not satisfied with the internal resolution of prefers, they may file a complaint with the Office of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities, Virginia Department of Education, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Helping Hands Inc. admits students and clients of any race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender or age to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students and clients of Helping Hands Inc.. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or veteran's status in educational programs or in other school-administered activities. Helping Hands Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran's status, or any other factor protected by local, state, or federal law with regard to employment.

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