



## **GHCA Pre-Kindergarten: A Special Experience!**

### **Pre-Kindergarten: What is it?**

The word “Kindergarten” literally means “children’s garden.” This brings to mind an environment rich with things to see and do: a room for four-year-olds with many kinds of toys, blocks, books and useful learning tools not found in the typical home. More important than the “things” is a warm, loving, mature Christian teacher who can make interesting things happen – someone who encourages the child to try new things and someone who sets necessary limits and lets a child know in a firm and loving way when he or she has exceeded those limits. A lively academic program for four-year-olds gives children an enjoyable educational foundation and a desire to learn more.

Pre-Kindergarten is offered Monday through Thursday (no Fridays). Parents can choose to enroll children for mornings only (8:00am – 11:30am) or all-day (8:00am – 2:30pm). Morning-only students are not at any academic disadvantage because the afternoon session consists of enrichment activities only.

### **Pre-Kindergarten: Goals**

Play is natural to all children. The Pre-Kindergarten seeks to accommodate children’s desires and abilities in play while nurturing their desire to learn how to do productive work. They come to school knowing that work is an adult skill and that growing up means learning to work. They want to learn to work so they can grow up. Interacting socially with children their own age helps them obtain skills to handle situations to be used the rest of their lives.

### **Early Exposure: Our Trademark**

Exposure to written words and numbers is a distinguishing feature of our Pre-Kindergarten program. While we do not pressure children whose maturation level indicates non-readiness, students will be recognizing letters and numbers, counting and reading three-letter words by the end of the school year. The time at which a child begins to find interest in these areas depends upon several key factors:

1. the amount of instruction provided in the home by parents or older children. This instruction can include memorizing the alphabet, associating letter names with specific written letters, counting to five or beyond, counting objects, coloring with crayons, etc.
2. interest in reading created by parents who read to the child at home. It has been said, if you want your child to be a reader then it has to be molded at home. Reading to your child daily has a vast impact on the interest in reading your child will have in the classroom.
3. experience at Sunday school, nursery school and/or preschool.

### **Pre-Kindergarten Goals: A Basic List**

By the time a child completes Greater Houlton Christian Academy Pre- Kindergarten they will have been exposed to:

- *Readiness Skills:* writing readiness, eye-hand coordination, visual perception, listening skills, thinking skills
- *Numbers:* number concepts, formation of numbers 1-20, counting objects, patterns, sorting
- *Phonics:* recognition of letters, sounds of letters, formation of letters, consonant-vowel blends, one-syllable words, introduction to reading circle.

The child will also have gained knowledge and skills in all the other traditional, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and academic values expected of a quality Christian Pre-Kindergarten.