

## Frequently Asked Questions

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*We know you have questions — and we love that. The more informed you feel, the more confident you can be that Harbor Light is the right home for your child. Below you will find answers to the questions we hear most. If you do not see yours here, please reach out directly.*

### ABOUT HARBOR LIGHT EARLY EDUCATION

#### Who is Harbor Light Early Education?

Harbor Light Early Education is a Montessori-Reggio inspired early childhood program dedicated to nurturing each child's natural curiosity, independence, and love of learning. We believe children are capable, creative, and deeply motivated to explore the world around them — and our role is to prepare a beautiful, intentional environment where that exploration can flourish. Our teachers are called guides, reflecting our belief that adults are here to follow the child's lead, not direct it. Harbor Light currently operates in Marquette, Michigan, and we are thrilled to be expanding our community to Houghton through Little Huskies Child Development Center.

#### What does Montessori-Reggio inspired mean?

Our program draws from two of the most respected philosophies in early childhood education. The Montessori approach emphasizes independence, freedom of choice within limits, and hands-on learning materials that children can explore at their own pace. The Reggio Emilia approach views the child as a strong, capable protagonist of their own learning — with creativity, relationships, and the environment itself serving as teachers. Together, these philosophies shape everything from how our classrooms are designed to how our guides interact with children each day. You will see children making meaningful choices, working deeply on self-selected activities, collaborating with peers, and being treated with genuine respect.

#### What ages do you serve?

Harbor Light Little Huskies serves children from 6 weeks through 6 years of age across four classrooms:

- Infant Room: 6 weeks – 18 months
- Toddler Room: 18 months – 2 years 8 months
- Preschool Room 1 & 2: Mixed ages 2 years 8 months – 5 years

Children are grouped developmentally to support natural peer mentorship and age-appropriate independence.

#### What do you call your teachers, and why?

We call our teachers guides. This is intentional — it reflects our belief that the adult's role in a Montessori-Reggio environment is not to instruct or direct, but to observe children closely, prepare a rich environment, and gently support each child's natural developmental path. Our guides are trained in this philosophy and bring deep care and intention to every interaction.

### ENROLLMENT

#### How do I enroll my child?

The first step is to fill out our enrollment interest form. This gives us important information about your family and helps us get your child's spot secured. Tuition information is also included in the form so you have everything in one place. Once we receive your form, our team will follow up with remaining paperwork and next steps.

Enroll here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMDgc6SKu2WacZK3ziBTN203i2MceU33pg0lwBY-1Ozr8k6Q/viewform?usp=header>

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### **Is there a waitlist?**

Yes — if a classroom is at capacity, we maintain an interest list and reach out to families as spots become available. The best way to hold your place in line is to fill out our enrollment form as soon as possible. We encourage families not to wait, as our classrooms do fill quickly.

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### **Do you accept children who are not affiliated with Michigan Tech?**

Absolutely. Harbor Light Little Huskies is open to all families in the Houghton community — you do not need to be a Michigan Tech employee or affiliate to enroll. We warmly welcome everyone.

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### **What paperwork is required for enrollment?**

After submitting your enrollment form, our team will walk you through the full paperwork process. This typically includes a family enrollment agreement, health and immunization records, emergency contact information, and any relevant medical or dietary documentation. We will make the process as smooth as possible for your family.

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### **What is your tuition?**

Our tuition rates are included in the enrollment form so you have full transparency before committing. You can access the form here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMDgc6SKu2WacZK3ziBTN203i2MceU33pg0lwBY-1Ozr8k6Q/viewform?usp=header>

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We offer full-day programming with core hours of 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM, and extended care from 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM for families who need it.

## **| HOURS & PROGRAM**

### **What are your hours?**

Core program hours are 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM. Extended care is available from 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM for families who need earlier drop-off or later pickup. Extended care rates are included in the enrollment form and contract.

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### **Do you provide meals and snacks?**

Yes! We provide an AM snack, lunch, and PM snack for all children each day. Children enrolled in extended care also receive an additional snack. We take nutrition seriously and are committed to serving wholesome, balanced meals that support healthy development.

We are happy to accommodate dietary needs including food allergies and vegetarian diets. Please note any dietary requirements in your enrollment form and our team will follow up to confirm the details.

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### **What does a typical day look like for my child?**

Every day at Harbor Light is designed to balance rich, child-led work time with community, movement, meals, and rest. Children have long, uninterrupted blocks of time to choose their own work from a carefully prepared environment — building concentration, independence, and joy in learning. The day also includes outdoor time, group gathering, meals, and age-appropriate rest. Rather than a rigid minute-by-minute schedule, our rhythm is intentional and responsive to the children in the room.

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### **What does your outdoor program look like?**

Outdoor time is not an add-on at Harbor Light — it is a core part of our program. Children spend meaningful time outside each day engaging in nature-based exploration, physical play, and sensory experiences. We believe the natural world is one of the richest learning environments available to young children, and we embrace it in all seasons.

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### **Do you observe holidays and closures?**

Yes, Harbor Light observes standard holidays and has scheduled closure days throughout the year. A full calendar will be shared with enrolled families ahead of each program year. We do our best to communicate closures well in advance so your family can plan accordingly.

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## **GSRP — GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM**

### **What is GSRP?**

GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) is a free, state-funded preschool program for eligible 4-year-olds in Michigan. It is designed to help children who may benefit from additional support arrive at kindergarten ready to thrive. Harbor Light is proud to offer GSRP at our Little Huskies location.

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### **Is my child eligible for GSRP?**

To qualify for GSRP for the upcoming school year, your child's birthday must fall between September 2, 2021 and December 2, 2022. Eligibility is based on birthday window, not income. If you believe your child may qualify, please note this in your enrollment form and our team will walk you through the next steps.

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### **What does GSRP cover?**

GSRP fully covers your child's tuition during our core program hours of 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM — there is no cost to your family for that portion of the day. If you would like to add extended care hours (7:30 AM – 5:30 PM), there is an additional monthly fee of \$400. GSRP students participate fully in all Harbor Light programming, including our Montessori-Reggio inspired curriculum, outdoor learning, and enrichment activities.

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### **I already submitted a GSRP application through the state website — do I need to do anything else?**

We are currently finalizing our contract with the district, and existing GSRP applications should be transferable to Harbor Light Little Huskies. We will be in touch with families as soon as that process is complete. In the meantime, please also fill out our enrollment form so we have your child on file on our end.

## | THE TRANSITION — CURRENT LITTLE HUSKIES FAMILIES

*These questions relate specifically to the transition to Harbor Light. Once we are fully up and running, this section will be updated to reflect our ongoing program.*

### **What is happening with Little Huskies?**

Harbor Light Early Education has been selected by Michigan Technological University as the new provider for Little Huskies Child Development Center. We are honored to be joining this community and deeply committed to honoring the relationships, trust, and care that families and staff have built here. Our program will officially begin on August 10, 2025.

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### **Will my child automatically be enrolled with Harbor Light?**

Current Little Huskies families are not automatically transferred, but you do have priority enrollment — meaning your child's spot is protected on a first-come, first-served basis before we open enrollment to new families. All we need from you is to fill out our brief enrollment form to get your information on file:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMDgc6SKu2WacZK3ziBTN203i2MceU33pg0lwBY-1Ozr8k6Q/viewform?usp=header>

Our team will follow up with remaining paperwork from there. There is no deadline for current families, but we encourage you to fill out the form soon to secure your spot.

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### **Is there a fee to hold my child's spot during the transition?**

No. We will not be charging any spot-holding fee during the transition period. We know this gap in care is already an inconvenience for many families, and adding a financial burden on top of that would not feel right to us. Your child's spot is protected simply by completing the enrollment form.

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### **Why is there a gap in care between June 30 and August 10?**

We know how hard this gap is for working families, and we want to be honest with you about why it exists. Obtaining a brand new state childcare license requires multiple inspections, state review, and close coordination with Michigan Tech — a process that cannot be shortened beyond what the state requires. We are working as quickly and diligently as we possibly can, and if we are able to open sooner than August 10, we will communicate that immediately. We are deeply sorry for the disruption this causes and we are not taking it lightly.

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### **Is there any childcare available during the gap?**

Harbor Light cannot provide care in the facility until our license is active. However, our staff will officially begin with Harbor Light on July 20th. We have let our team know that if any of them feel comfortable making individual arrangements with families during the gap period, we fully support that. Any such arrangements would be made independently between families and staff — outside of the facility and outside of Harbor Light's role as a licensed provider. If you have relationships with current Little Huskies staff, we encourage you to reach out to them directly.

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### **Will the current Little Huskies teachers be staying?**

We have the utmost respect for the team at Little Huskies and the work they have done for this community. We are meeting individually with every current staff member to give them the opportunity to learn about

Harbor Light and decide if this is a place they want to be. We believe that decision should be theirs to make, and we want every person to feel supported through this transition. A full staffing update will be shared with families very soon.

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### **Will Little Huskies still offer preschool?**

Yes — absolutely. Harbor Light Little Huskies will continue to offer preschool programming. We will have two mixed-age preschool classrooms for children ages 2 years 8 months through 5 years, as well as GSRP for eligible 4-year-olds. Our preschool program is rooted in the Montessori-Reggio philosophy and designed to prepare children for a lifetime of joyful learning.

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### **My family is not affiliated with Michigan Tech — are we still welcome?**

Yes, completely. Harbor Light Little Huskies is open to all families in the Houghton community. You do not need to be a Michigan Tech employee or student to enroll. We welcome everyone.

## **FAMILIES & COMMUNITY**

### **How do you involve families in the program?**

Family partnership is one of Harbor Light's core values. We believe you are the most important person in your child's life, and we want your relationship with our program to feel warm, connected, and collaborative. You can expect regular communication from your child's guide, opportunities to visit and observe the classroom, family events throughout the year, and an open-door culture where your questions and input are always welcome.

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### **How will I know what my child is doing each day?**

Our guides communicate regularly with families through daily updates, photos, and observations. We use a digital platform to share moments from your child's day so you always feel connected to what is happening in the classroom. We believe transparency and partnership are essential to a child's experience, and we take that seriously.

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### **Do you have an upcoming family event?**

Yes! We are planning a family meet-and-greet event before our August 10th opening so you can meet Ashley and the Harbor Light team, see the space, and ask any questions you have. Details will be announced soon — we hope to see you there!

## **CONTACT & NEXT STEPS**

### **How do I get in touch with Harbor Light?**

We would love to hear from you! You can reach us at:

Email: [ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com](mailto:ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com)

Phone: 906-631-7845

We do our best to respond to all inquiries promptly. For enrollment, the fastest way to get started is to fill out our enrollment form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMDgc6SKu2WacZK3ziBTN203i2MceU33pg0lwBY-1Ozr8k6Q/viewform?usp=header>

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## **I have a question that is not answered here — what should I do?**

Please reach out! We are happy to help. Email us at [ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com](mailto:ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com) or call 906-631-7845 and we will get back to you as soon as possible. No question is too small — we want every family to feel informed and excited about what is ahead.

### **Still have questions? We would love to hear from you.**

Email: [ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com](mailto:ashley@harborlightearlyeducation.com) | Phone: 906-631-7845

Enroll at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMDgc6SKu2WacZK3ziBTN203i2MceU33pg0lwBY-1Ozr8k6Q/viewform?usp=header>