

2009-2010 Preschool Parent Handbook

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

At St. John's Lutheran Preschool, we educate the whole child, body, soul and mind. We emphasize Christian faith, knowledge, attitude, conduct and God's gracious promise of salvation through Jesus Christ.

We acknowledge the primary influence of parents and the importance of working together toward a common goal- to train a child "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4)

We believe that children learn best by working with concrete, hands-on experiences in a creative and stimulating environment. We recognize the uniqueness of each child and focus on the whole child. We respect play as a vehicle for learning- to create, explore, solve problems, and interact socially.

St. John's Lutheran Preschool is an extension of the mission and ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

STAFF

The Director, Teachers and Aides are all trained in Early Childhood Education and meet California state requirements. We keep up with new developments and continually evaluate and upgrade our program. We regularly attend workshops and seminars in early childhood education.

ELIGIBILITY AND ADMISSION

Preschool *Yellow* (Tuesday/Thursday) and Preschool *Blue* (Monday-Friday) Groups are both 3 year old classes. Preschool *Green* (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) and Preschool *Red* (Monday- Friday) are both 4 year old classes.

To be eligible to enroll for the school year (Yellow or Blue) a child must reach his/her third birthday by September 1. To enroll in the Green or Red Groups a child must reach his/her fourth birthday by September 1st. All children must be toilet trained. We are not licensed or equipped to change diapers or pull-ups.

Please send your child to school wearing underwear. We are aware of the fact that starting preschool is somewhat stressful and children may have an occasional accident. Please be sure to have extra clothes in his/her cubbie. If accidents occur regularly after

the first six weeks of school a parent conference will be scheduled to discuss whether or not your child is truly ready for preschool.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30am	Morning PALS available
8:30	Arrival/Sign In
8:40	Opening/Large Group Time on the Rug/Songs
8:45	“Goodbye Mommy and Daddy” Song **
8:50	Station 1.....Small Group Time
9:50	Snack
10:00	Station 2
11:00	Station 3
11:50	Large Group Bible Story Time on the Rug/Songs
12:00pm	Dismissal Time for ½ day children ***
12:15	Lunch
12:45	Story Time
1:00	Rest/Nap Time
2:00	Outside Time
3:00	Dismissal for ¾ day children
3:15	PALS Activities Indoor and Outdoor
6:00pm	Closing Time

** In order to decrease the amount of disruption when parents leave, we would like to ask you to please wave goodbye to your child while they are sitting on the rug.

*** Please leave the large rug area and take your conversations to the other side of the room or outside so that we can continue the day for those children who are staying for lunch.

The three classes rotate the three station times to include science, music, art, blocks, manipulatives, outside play, reading, cutting, etc.

Children bring their snacks and lunch from home. Milk can be ordered through the school’s milk program. Hot lunch is available on most days. You must pre-pay for Kinyon lunches on MWF. Pizza Day is Thursday and you sign up and pay that morning in the preschool. Tuesdays are sometimes Hot Lunch days. Check the weekly “Blue Note” for specifics each week.

CURRICULUM

A day in our preschool provides each child with opportunities for free choice and self-expression. We balance our time with group and individual time, teacher-directed and self-directed activities, inside and outside play, quiet and active time. We provide an environment for learning social skills and independence, language development, creative expression, creative thinking, curiosity and experimentation. The role of our teachers is to facilitate, assist, encourage and mediate. It is very important to remember . . . a child's work is his/her play!

The preschool (along with the entire elementary school) has adopted the Core Curriculum which determines what appropriate knowledge is for preschool age children. We also implement various other preschool curriculums to supplement the Core. We provide theme-oriented learning throughout the year. The main focus of the 3-year-old program is social development and the main focus for the 4-year-old program is pre-kindergarten preparation.

Literature and music and art are a large part of our curriculum. The preschool has a music teacher who comes in weekly to teach each class. Our program provides an environment for large muscle development every day. We have a large outdoor playground for running, climbing, sliding, and riding tricycles and scooters, and a large sandbox for digging. We are fortunate to have access to our gym on rainy days.

The Green and Red Group children attend a school-wide Chapel Service on Wednesday mornings. They are paired up with 6th grade buddies for this activity. We schedule other activities and parties with our Chapel buddies throughout the year. Parents are always welcome to join us for Chapel. The children also sing during the Sunday morning church services at St. John's Lutheran Church throughout the year. It is very important that you help us in supporting this ministry.

Lunch and snack time, both morning and afternoon, are important times of the day. It is a time to share experiences and build communication skills while we learn and practice our manners. We suggest that your child be a part of planning and packing healthy food at home. Please do not send "soda" with your child. Milk is available through our school for lunch or snack time. Please be sure to let us know of any allergies your child has.

We invite your child to celebrate his/her birthday at school. You can coordinate the arrangements with your child's teachers. Plan your refreshments to be easily managed by the children. Please check with your child's teachers about any allergies in their class.

We encourage family members to be part of our activities. Come and visit and join us and share your expertise with us. All children go on several field trips that are coordinated with the learning focus. Parent volunteers are needed to chaperone and provide transportation. You must have the proper insurance information on file with the school office. All children who participate must have a permission slip, signed by the parent or guardian.

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline is to guide and encourage children toward self-control and personal growth in self-discipline. To encourage positive behavior, we set clear limits, and model and encourage expected behavior. We redirect behavior to allow for alternative choices and encourage cooperation and negotiation to solve problems.

The entire St. John's community has implemented the *Young Peacemakers* program as part of our curriculum. Please check with the Director for more information about this Christian-based conflict resolution program.

We have three simple rules in the Preschool that we consistently review and enforce with the children. We appreciate your help in reminding your child of these:

1. Take care of yourself.
2. Take care of others.
3. Take care of our things.

If negative behavior is ongoing, we work with the family for the benefit of the child. Biting by a child of any age cannot be tolerated. It is not safe, socially acceptable, or conducive to a positive environment for children. If your child bites someone at preschool we will call the parents to come to the school and have a conference with the director, teachers, and the child. If the biting behavior continues, your child's enrollment at St. John's Lutheran Preschool may be terminated.

We do not use any form of corporal punishment.

HEALTH

We require a health form and proof of immunization to be completed by your child's doctor. In consideration of others please do not bring sick children to this class. **We will call you to come and take your child home if your child has any of the symptoms.** Your child must be healthy! No children with the following symptoms of illnesses will be admitted:

1. Fever within the past 24 hours
2. Coughing
3. Diarrhea
4. Impetigo
5. Active chicken pox
6. Measles
7. Mumps
8. Head lice
9. Sore throat
10. Abdominal pain
11. Pink eye
12. Vomiting
13. Runny nose.... running noses consisting of yellow or green coloring are a definite sign of infection, however, some children may have allergies in which a nose will run clear. These children will be admitted.

Thank you for following this policy. We care about your children and want to provide a safe learning environment. We like to keep our teachers healthy too!

For a teacher to give any medication, the parent or guardian must supply detailed and written instructions. The medicine will be kept in a place inaccessible to children. Any child who needs to use an inhaler or nebulizer must have the proper form on file with the preschool.

It is in the best interest of your child if we communicate with you frequently about your child's care and overall development. If there is any change in your child's behavior during the time away from school, we would appreciate it if you make us

aware when you bring your child back to school. (I.e. Please tell us if your child is taking over the counter medications)

In case of emergency we will follow procedures as listed by the parents on the Emergency Care Card. In case of extreme emergency, and if neither parent can be reached, we will seek medical attention for your child, unless we are specifically instructed, in writing, otherwise.

Please apply sunscreen to your child before they come to school. If your child stays for PALS, please leave sunscreen with your child's name on it, in his/her cubby and let us know that you would like us to re-apply it in the afternoon.

DRESS CODE

Preschool children are NOT required to wear uniforms. Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and sturdy shoes. No flip-flop sandals! Preschool clothing is appropriate if it is OK to get paint, markers, glue and other messy stuff on it, and it enables your child to run and climb safely. Please label all of your child's clothing including sweaters and jackets worn in the cool mornings! Your child should keep an extra set of seasonally appropriate clothing, placed in a Ziploc bag, in his/her cubbie. Please include underwear and socks.

For preschoolers who attend Chapel on a regular basis (Green & Red Groups) we ask that you dress your child a little bit nicer on these days.

REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

We encourage parents and other family members to visit and observe at any time. Please remember that the teachers are with the children during school hours. If at any time you have questions concerning your child's development or progress, feel free to set up an appointment outside of classroom time. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November every year to discuss your child's progress. The preschool teachers will be giving you feedback on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Communication is extremely important to us. We will do our best to contact you and keep you informed. Please help us by:

- Reading the white board outside of the classroom
- Checking the ABC paper posted on your child's class bulletin board
- Reading the monthly preschool newsletter and calendar
- Reading the weekly Blue Note
- Reading and writing emails
- Calling us when you have questions
- Leaving notes on the sign-in clipboard regarding PALS

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In compliance with state regulations the following forms must be completed and on file before your child may be admitted to this facility:

- Identification and Emergency Information
- Consent to Treat
- Personal Rights
- Parents Rights
- Parents Health History
- Physicians Report
- Proof of Immunizations

The above forms can be obtained from the Preschool Director or Office Manager. Please inform the school AT ONCE of any changes in the information.

We are required by the State of California regulations to inform you of the following:

Inspection Authority (Section 101195 b c): The department or licensing agency has the authority to interview clients, including children or staff, and to inspect and audit the client or facility records without prior consent. The department or licensing agency has the authority to observe the physical condition of the client, including conditions, which could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional examine the client.

Complaint Procedures (Section 101223 a): Any person may request an inspection on any child daycare facility in accordance with the California Child Daycare Facilities Act by transmitting to the department, notice of an alleged violation of applicable requirements prescribed by statutes or regulations of this state. The substance of the complaint shall be provided the licensee at the time of the inspection. Upon receipts of a complaint, the department shall make a preliminary review and, unless the department determines that the complaint is willfully intended to harass a licensee or is without any reasonable basis, the department shall make an on-site inspection within ten days after receiving the complaint. In either event the complainant shall be promptly informed to the department's proposed course of action.

LICENSE NUMBER 280102497