

Christ Lutheran Preschool Handbook

Updated 2011-2012

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Christ Lutheran Church and School

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Elementary School

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Welcome

Welcome to Christ Lutheran Preschool. Our staff strives to work closely with you by providing a nurturing, stimulating environment that extends and enriches your child's early home experiences. We welcome your ideas and creativity in helping us maintain a high quality program for your child and encourage your active participation in our program. This handbook has been developed to answer the questions you may have regarding our program and policies. Please keep it in a convenient place for easy reference.

Mission Statement

The Preschool is an integral part of the total purpose and goal of Christ Lutheran Church in teaching the faith through Bible stories and other curriculum areas. The preschool aims to assist families in helping their children come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Our mission is to help the child feel good about himself/herself and know that they are special in the eyes of God.

Purpose

Christ Lutheran preschool is a developmentally appropriate facility that encourages "hands-on" learning. Through our program we pray that each preschooler will have his/her self-esteem uplifted, that they would gain autonomy, and that they would come to know without a doubt that Jesus loves them.

Enrollment

Enrollment is open to any child able to benefit from the program who is three years old by December 1st and fully potty trained. Enrollment is limited. Parents may enroll their children into a two, three, or five day session, half or full time. Prior to your child's enrollment, we request any prospective parent to visit our Early Childhood facility, and set aside a time to meet with the preschool director or admissions counselor.

If we determine that the program meets the needs of your child, you will be able to enroll on-line through FACTS On-line enrollment. All of the California state enrollment forms (linked on our website) must be completed prior to the child's admission into the preschool program. Please notify the Preschool office immediately if you move, change telephone numbers, begin a new job, add someone who is allowed to pick up your child, or in any way change data you had given us on your enrollment forms. We use this information to reach you in case of emergency, therefore, it is extremely important that we have accurate information at all times.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Christ Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students of the preschool. The preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its policies.

Philosophy and Discipline

The philosophy of Christ Lutheran Preschool centers around the idea that each child is a unique individual and should be recognized as someone special. We use a developmental approach of learning, which stresses hands-on activities through a child's play. We believe that a Christian education enables a child to discover that our God is a God of love. Our prayer is that each child may grow and mature under God's direction and inspiration.

We stress the total development of the child; spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical. We believe that our preschool is a servant of Christ striving to bring church, home and community into closer harmony. Our discipline policy at Christ Lutheran is displayed in a Christ-like manner by praising good behavior, changing the environment, redirecting a child, or quietly removing a child from the group when necessary. These are the following steps we take when the behavior warrants it:

1. The teacher notifies the parent by use of a written note or phone call.
2. A conference is set with the parents, teacher, and preschool director. A plan is formed to help stop the behavior.
3. A conference is set with the parents, preschool director, and the principal to discuss further options.

The communication between the child, teacher, and parents is extremely important for self-esteem, trust, and growth to take place. The results of this will be a well-rounded Christian personality that acknowledges the presence of Christ in his daily life.

Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with California law, (California Penal Code Section 11166), members of the school and early childhood development staff are obligated under penalty of fine and/or incarceration to report reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, or sexual abuse and exploitation. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact the parents in advance of making the report to legal authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters.

The clear intent of the law is to mandate a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse. School staff will make such reports in the best interest of the affected child, and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review. If it does become necessary to report, please be assured such action is taken only in the spirit of what is best for your children and your family. The goal is to obtain help and support where it is needed.

Harassment Policy

Christ Lutheran Preschool is committed in providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student or staff is prohibited. The preschool will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment, which is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability or sex. It includes, but is not limited to, any of the following: verbal harassment, physical harassment, visual harassment and sexual harassment. Christ Lutheran Church and School has policies and guidelines for administering this Harassment Policy.

Program Schedule

We provide morning daycare from 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Morning classes begin at 8:45 a.m. Please refer to each teacher's daily schedule posted in their classroom as each one varies. Lunchtime begins at 11:30 a.m. and continues until approximately 12:15 p.m. At this time the half-day children are to be picked up and the full-day children stay for nap and afternoon care.

School Hours / Arrival and Departure

Children may attend Christ Lutheran Preschool from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For those students attending ½ day programs, afternoon care may be occasionally needed. Afternoon Care fees for those students are available for \$10.00 per hour.

Our daily program involves the following:

Half Day: 7:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. / Preschool and lunch

Full Day: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. / Preschool, lunch, naptime and afternoon childcare

Late Policy

Please notify the Preschool staff if you will arrive late to pick up your child. Children who are not picked up from the morning session by 12:30 p.m. will be considered late, and will be charged \$10.00 per hour for extended care. It is imperative that your child be picked up at the end of his/her enrolled program time.

If your child is enrolled in one of the full day programs i.e. 2-day, 3-day, or 5-day, he/she must be picked up NO LATER THAN 6:00 p.m. The following charges will be incurred per child.

1-5 minutes: \$5.00

6-10 minutes: \$10.00

11-15 minutes: \$15.00

16-20 minutes: \$20.00

21-25 minutes: \$25.00

25-30 minutes: \$30.00

Tuition (cont.)

If tuition is unable to be collected by FACTS Tuition Management over a period of 60 days, the child may be withdrawn from the program. The child will not be permitted to re-enter the program until arrangements have been made with the preschool office. Prepaid tuition and registration fees are non-refundable.

If, on occasion, you need to send your child an extra day, you may do so if the preschool is not at capacity for that day. You will need to check with the preschool director. There will be an additional charge of \$45.00 for a full day and \$35.00 for the half day.

Registration Fee

An annual non-refundable registration fee is payable at the time of application. This covers the cost of registration materials and extra supplies. School registration is paid when you register on-line through FACTS On-line Enrollment. The summer program has its own registration fee and is due with the summer registration. The summer registration fee is paid in house.

Holiday Schedule

Each family will receive an annual calendar listing special dates and events scheduled for the school year.

Note: The Preschool will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Labor Day

Veterans Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Presidents' Day

Memorial Day

Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

New Years Eve and New Years Day

Good Friday

For summer program children – July 4th

Sign up sheets will be posted in advance of the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter Holiday periods to determine the number of children who may need care during these times. (No childcare will be offered on other holidays). A prepaid holiday care fee will be billed to families who have signed up for holiday care. The fee for a full day \$45.00 and it is \$35.00 for a half day. You will pay these extra fees in house. To ensure that scheduling can be accommodated, sign up is required no later than two weeks prior to the vacation week. A lack of numbers may result in the cancellation of the vacation daycare program for these weeks or part of the week. Please see your child's teacher or the preschool director for more information. There are no refunds or discounts for holiday childcare.

Staff

The staff at Christ Lutheran Preschool is trained in Early Childhood Education. The lead teachers have been selected because they have a strong background of course work and experience in Early Childhood Education. They exhibit a standard of positive adult-child interaction for students to model, and from which parents may draw ongoing support.

Regularly scheduled staff meetings and professional development activities encourage staff members to continually increase their knowledge of developmentally appropriate teaching practices so that they may better serve young children.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to nurture young children, stimulate their language, physical, cognitive, and creative development, as well as encourage positive self-esteem and social interaction. The curriculum is age appropriate and designed to meet the individual needs and interests of each child, emphasizing the building of autonomy and problem solving abilities in the following areas; religion, music and movement, physical and natural science, language arts, cooking, gross and fine motor coordination, creative art and dramatic play.

Parent Involvement Program (P.I.P.)

The partnership of parents and staff is a vital part of our total program. As part of our Parent Involvement Program, each family with a child in Preschool is asked to pledge 10 hours of service to the school each year.

Parent participation is a vital part of your child's development and to the continued success of the preschool program. The preschool office will track the hours submitted. Preschool parents must submit all hours that they have worked to the preschool office or designated area in each classroom. Unfulfilled hours are billed to the family at a rate of \$25.00 per hour. Additional information regarding areas of opportunity in which to complete PIP hours can be obtained from your child's teacher or the preschool office.

Parent Participation

We encourage parents to visit, observe, offer ideas and suggestions, and maintain open communication with our staff. Please keep us aware of changes in your child's home life to help ensure that our staff has the information necessary to meet your child's unique and changing needs. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the center and participate in their child's program according to their interests and availability. Parents can assist in many ways. Your child's teacher can suggest ways to participate that may interest you.

Preschool parents are encouraged to take part in the PTL (Parent Teacher League) with the elementary school parents. This group meets several times a year. It sponsors speakers and programs in areas of interest to parents, and organizes fund-raising projects to benefit the school. We also have opportunities for parents to help with special days.

We encourage you to visit our classrooms. We ask that while in a classroom observing, you respect the confidentiality of children enrolled and refrain from conversing with the teacher or aides about other children's behavior. If you are observing (as opposed to volunteering), we also ask that you refrain from class participation (this includes guiding students through activities, disciplining, talking with students, etc.) as this disrupts the normal class activities. In addition, we invite parents to attend scheduled early parent information nights, our annual Christmas program, parent workdays, and other special scheduled family days.

Snacks / Nutrition

Nutritious snacks consisting of two of the major food groups are served daily. A monthly calendar will be sent home indicating a day that each child will be able to bring in a snack. If your child has food sensitivities or special nutrition needs please see your child's teacher. Children need to bring a lunch that consists of nutritious foods and a beverage, unless they have prepaid for milk. We strongly discourage adding sodas or candy to your child's lunch. **Please do not send food that needs to be warmed up.** If your child forgets a lunch, the school will provide one. There will be a \$3.00 charge. A hot lunch program is offered Monday through Friday of each week, with the exception of holiday weeks. You will be notified in advance of changes in the availability of the hot lunch program.

Health

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. We want to protect your child and the other young children in our program. State law requires that we only have healthy children in attendance. Germs travel quickly among young children. Please check your child for signs of illness before bringing them to school. A child who is ill cannot benefit from the school program and should be given the proper treatment at home to prevent spreading of illness at school. If a child becomes ill at home, please telephone the preschool office and let them know the circumstances of the child's illness. If your child becomes ill while here at school, you will need to pick up your child as soon as possible. By keeping your child at home, infections are not being spread to others and your child is not being exposed to other germs while his or her resistance to infection is low. Children who are ill or show symptoms listed below will not be allowed to remain in class.

1. Has a fever or had one in the previous 24 hours
2. Has vomited in the last 24 hours
3. Is taking an antibiotic and has not been on the antibiotic for the last 24 hours.
4. Has diarrhea, even if caused by taking an antibiotic
5. Has diarrhea with increased water in stool or cannot be contained by use of the toilet
6. Has eye discharge or crust. A child with conjunctivitis must stay out for 24 hours after the prescription medication starts and until all redness and discharge is gone
7. Has a constant cough
8. Has a constant runny nose (with yellow or green discharge)
9. Has an undiagnosed body rash
10. Has symptoms of possible communicable disease
11. Have head lice. Your child should remain home until treatment is complete and all lice and nits are gone.
12. Has ringworm

If symptoms are contagious, a doctor's release form is required before the child can return to school.

Communicable Diseases

Please notify the school immediately if your child has a communicable disease so that the incubation dates can be verified and the parents of other children in our facility can be informed of the exposure.

Medication

Please try to schedule your child's medication around school hours. We realize that occasionally the need may arise for one of the staff members to administer prescription medication to your child (after your child is no longer contagious). Medicine should be brought in its original container and given directly to a staff member upon arrival at school. A form giving permission to administer the medication must also be completed. You can find these in the preschool office. If you are administering medications at home, it is helpful to inform your child's teacher in case of unusual behavior or any adverse reactions to the medication.

First Aid

Our staff is trained in basic first aid and will administer minor treatment as needed. Parents are notified of any injury(ies) in writing. A duplicate of the written notice will be placed in the child's file. Parents will be notified immediately if the injury requires more than a simple first aid procedure. Simple first aid procedures for treatment of minor injuries consist of washing the injury with soap and water. (The use of a disinfectant follows the medication policy.) Your child will be instructed on emergency procedures in case of a fire or an earthquake while at school. He/she will participate in regular fire drills and learn other rules of safety. In case of a community-wide disaster such as an earthquake, children will remain at school or where the community emergency personnel direct us until called for by the parent or designated adult.

Universal Precautions

The staff at Christ Lutheran Preschool will use universal precautions when dealing with infectious material. Basically, this means all staff will use latex gloves when performing any duties that involve bodily fluids. Also, any clean up materials will be disposed of properly to insure safety for all. If you have any questions regarding these precautions, please see the director. We do request that all parents train their child to be careful not to touch someone else's bodily fluids. If an emergency were to occur, we ask those parents who choose to help to also use universal precautions. We thank you in advance for your understanding and support in this area. Remember, hand washing is the #1 guard against infection. Please help us train your child in the proper way to wash their hands. Soap, scrub, rinse, and dry.

What to Bring / What to Wear

Each child has an assigned cubby for his/her personal belongings. Children are welcome to bring appropriate shares that will ease their transitions from home to school. We allow one share per day, or assign a special day for shares. We ask that aggressive toys be refrained from being brought to school. (Any inappropriate toys brought to school will be taken to the preschool office and returned at the end of the school day.) Please label your child's "shares" with their name so that we can identify them if they are misplaced.

Please send your child to preschool wearing comfortable and washable play clothes. Remember that your child will be involved in painting, water play, and other messy play experiences. Jeans, shorts, and old t-shirts are very appropriate for our program. Send your child to school wearing safe shoes. Flip-flops are not appropriate or safe for the playground area. Tennis shoes are the best for running and climbing. As the weather becomes warmer, parents may send sunscreen to school. As stated in the Medication section of this handbook, sunscreen is considered a type of medication. Therefore, a release statement must be signed by the parent and on file in the preschool office before the sunscreen will be applied to the child.

Due to messy play and accidents, we ask that each child supply us with a complete labeled change of clothing. This should include a change of underwear, t-shirt, shorts or pants, and a pair of socks.

The preschool is not licensed for diapers or "pull-ups"; therefore, children cannot come to school in them. The parent will be asked to change them. Pacifiers and bottles must also be left at home.

Potty Trained

A child is permitted to attend Christ Lutheran Preschool if he/she is fully potty trained. We realize that accidents will occur occasionally, but if a consistent pattern occurs, the parent will be notified and asked to remove the child from attending preschool until the wetting or accidents stop.

Our policy regarding accidents is if four or more accidents occur in a two-week time frame, you will be asked to keep your child home until the time when he/she is completely potty-trained. We are not licensed to care for children who are not potty-trained. Therefore, children may not wear pull-ups or diapers. With this policy in place, it ensures the child a successful experience in the classroom.

Communication

Please look for our monthly “Star Newsletter” in your child’s cubby. This newsletter will keep you informed about scheduled events and activities. Check bulletin boards each day for information regarding our curriculum, schedule, events, etc. Lesson plans will be posted in the classrooms. When you pick up your child each day, check his/her cubby for special notes or information.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher by phone or leave a message in the office. Should you want or need to speak with the director, please feel free to contact her in the office. We want and need to hear from you!

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent conferences are generally scheduled during the first and third quarter of the school year to discuss your child’s progress. However, we realize that everyone’s schedules are different and we want to accommodate your needs. As teachers observe your child and become aware of any concerns that need your input or help, you will be asked to meet with the teachers. Sometimes the short period of time in the yard before class will meet your needs and at other times you may want to schedule time before or after class.

Emergency Plan

In any kind of natural disaster (earthquake, flooding, fire, etc.), all children will remain on the campus until picked up by parents or authorized persons.

Christ Lutheran is prepared for emergency situations. We have food, water, and provisions for three days. We have adequate first aid supplies and sanitation materials. Part of our registration fee each year supports this plan. All staff members are trained in CPR and first aid. Every staff member has an assigned job in the event of a disaster.

Traffic Flow and Parking

For the sake of safety in our parking lot, please observe the following traffic flow:

1. You may enter the front parking lot from Victoria St. and park in either that lot in the appropriately marked spaces or park in the parking lot adjacent to the school (the church parking lot next door).
2. You may also park on the side lots adjacent to the church.

Please enter the facility using the side gate, rather than the church and elementary school office. Remember to drive slowly in the parking lot areas please. If you plan to remain at school longer than a few minutes, please do not park in the area reserved as a playground for the elementary students.

Rest Time

It is a policy of our program and a state requirement that all children who are in the full day program are given the opportunity to rest each day. Children who stay for naps will each be given a special mat to sleep on. To help prevent the spreading of germs and infection, we ask each child to bring in a king size pillowcase to be used to cover the mat. The pillowcase should be labeled with the child's name. A small light blanket may also be brought for warmth. Please refrain from sending pillows as they create storage problems. The preschool staff assumes responsibility for laundering the pillowcases and returning them each week.

Thank you

The staff here at Christ Lutheran Preschool would like to thank you for choosing our school. We are looking forward to this school year and we hope that you are too. May God bless you and your family.

