

St. John's Lutheran Preschool

2010-2011

Parent Handbook



*St. John's Lutheran Church
1225 North Main Street
P.O. Box 377
Chatham, Illinois 62629
217/483-2612*

July 2010

Church: stjohnslcms@comcast.net

Preschool: stjohnsprek@comcast.net

stjohns-lutheran-chatham.org

Contents

FOREWARD	iii
I. PHILOSOPHY	1
II. GOVERNING REGULATIONS	1
A. NONDISCRIMINATION.....	1
B. DCFS	1
C. CHILD CUSTODY	1
III. OBJECTIVES	1
IV. POLICIES RELATING TO STUDENTS	2
A. ADMISSIONS AND TERMINATION	2
B. PROGRESS	3
C. DRESS	4
D. TIME OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE	4
E. TRANSPORTATION	4
F. ABSENCE.....	5
G. MEDICATION	5
H. DISCIPLINE.....	5
I. ACTIVITIES	6
J. PRIVACY and RESPECT for Students and Families.....	7
K. SNACKS & DRINKS	7
L. SUPPLIES.....	7
V. MISUNDERSTANDINGS	7
VI. MISCELLANEOUS.....	7

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL
1225 NORTH MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 377
CHATHAM, ILLINOIS 62629
stjohnsprek@comcast.net

- Phone: Chatham 483-2612 (St. John's Lutheran Church).
Unless there is an emergency, do not call the teacher
during school hours.
- Phone: Chatham 483-2612. Pastor Rogers, Principal, call for
information regarding the school or its policies.
- Note: Keep this brochure for future reference and for
answering questions concerning the various policies
for St. John's Lutheran Preschool.

FOREWARD

The Board of Christian Education, St. John's Lutheran Church, Chatham, Illinois, authorized and approved the publication of this manual of preschool policies and procedures.

The Board of Christian Education believes this manual will serve as an aid to the parents, teachers, and teachers' aides and as a guide for the administration of the school.

When situations arise which are not directly covered in the manual, we believe that the good judgment of the preschool staff will direct the course of action to serve the best interests of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I. PHILOSOPHY

It is the goal of St. John's Lutheran Church to provide an educational program in which young children of this community will grow spiritually, physically, intellectually, morally, and emotionally.

II. GOVERNING REGULATIONS

In all matters pertaining to the operation of our preschool and our relationships with the staff, parents, and children, the Word of God is our first and primary source for understanding and determining how we treat one another and interact with each other. The Scriptures are employed to lead and guide us as we strive to operate within the bounds of secular laws and regulations.

A. NONDISCRIMINATION

As required by the Federal Government, we state that:

“St. John's Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, and other school-administered programs.”

B. DCFS

St. John's Lutheran Preschool operates as a “DCFS Exempt” facility. However, the school makes every effort to be in compliance with DCFS rules and regulations in its daily operations, including DCFS mandatory reporting regulations.

C. CHILD CUSTODY

If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring a copy of the court order to the church office. Unless your court order is on file with us, we must provide equal rights to both parents.

III. OBJECTIVES

- A. To develop the God-given abilities of each child.
- B. To encourage the child to grow spiritually, physically, intellectually, morally, and emotionally.
- C. To teach the child that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who gave his life for the redemption of sinners; showing God's great love for mankind.
- D. To prepare the child for Kindergarten through participation in a development program in the following areas: Religion, Language, Science, Health, Music, Arithmetic, Social Studies, Art, and Physical Education
 1. The curriculum includes the use of stories, pictures, field trips, songs, poems, and other developmentally appropriate learning materials.

2. The children also learn about community helpers, farm and city life, animals, good manners, health, nature, colors, and numbers, etc. They are given adequate time to develop socially through play.

IV. POLICIES RELATING TO STUDENTS

A. ADMISSIONS AND TERMINATION

1. Any child who is three or four years of age on or before September 1st is eligible to attend. **No exceptions.**
2. Our preschool will consider each child for admittance, including those with physical and mental challenges. However, we are limited in some of the services we are able to provide. If we are unable to meet your child's needs, we will recommend another facility which would perhaps provide the necessary services.
3. **A completed Registration Form, and the Child's Record Form must be completed to register your child for class. Admission will be denied until these forms are presented. In addition, a certified copy of their birth certificate, and a certificate of health examination, with proof of current immunizations, are required for each child entering our preschool.** The physical is valid for 2 years from the date of examination.
4. Each child must be fully potty-trained and should be able to practice all procedures concerning these functions, with adult supervision. (i.e. buttons, snaps, pulling up pants, etc.)
5. Closing of school, due to inclement weather or other emergencies, holidays, and vacation periods will coincide with Ball-Chatham Community School District #5. Also, preschool will not be held on county-wide teacher institute days or parent/teacher conference days for the Ball-Chatham School District.

In case of an emergency closing parents will be notified.

6. **Tuition is due the first day of school of each month.** Please observe this policy. Reminders and/or payment status will be sent for overdue tuition. Tuition is considered "overdue" by the 15th of each month. After the 15th there will be a \$25 late fee assessed. Please make all tuition checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Preschool.
7. In the event that a holiday or break occurs at the beginning of the month, tuition will be due on the first day the students return to school. Late fees will be assessed 10 days after school resumes from such holiday or break.
8. It is the policy of the Board of Christian Education that any child whose tuition is more than 30 days delinquent shall not be accepted for school attendance. All teaching and administrative staff of the preschool are expected to observe this policy. Any exceptions must be approved in advance by the Board of Christian Education or the Pastor.

9. Since the expenses of the preschool continue even during vacation time, it is the policy of the Board of Christian Education that the tuition will not fluctuate when there are vacations during the month (i.e. Christmas, Easter, and personal vacations, etc.).
10. Tuition guarantees a child a place in our preschool and will be charged until the child is formally withdrawn. If that child desires to re-enter, they must reapply as a new student. This may mean going on a waiting list, if one exists.

It is the Board of Christian Education's policy to charge full tuition for the first child and a \$10 reduction in tuition for each additional child of the same family.

11. If for any reason operation of the preschool is suspended during the school year **for more than 5 consecutive days** due to abnormal conditions (i.e. fire, storm damage, **snow days**, etc.) you will be compensated proportionately for the days when the school is closed. ***This reimbursement policy does not apply to school closings due to holidays.*** This compensation will be deducted from the May tuition. When a child is withdrawn permanently from the preschool, a refund will be made proportionately for each school day left in the month that the child was withdrawn.
12. Preschool registration opens **February 1st to members of St. John's** Lutheran Church congregation and families of children currently enrolled. **Public registration opens on March 1st.** A child's name will be put on the preschool roster after the required \$25 non-refundable registration fee is received by the church office and Board of Christian Education.
13. Children on the waiting list do not pay the registration fee until they are placed on the preschool roster. Placement will be determined on a first come, first served basis by contacting the church office at 483-2612.
14. Preschool sessions begin in September. **The three year class begins on the first Tuesday after Labor Day. The four year old class begins on the first Wednesday after Labor Day. Both classes end the last part of May.**
15. Doors to the class will be closed at all times. Please enter through the hall door and exit through the preschool door ONLY. For the children's safety the outside doors will be locked at all times while the children are present. The doors will be unlocked 5 minutes before the start of class, and unlocked 10 minutes prior to the end of class.

B. PROGRESS

1. Teaching staff will monitor each child's progress daily. Any problem areas will be noted and discussed with parents. Parents' comments and input are welcome. Parents may contact the teaching staff for a progress report at any time.
2. A fall and spring evaluation will be performed on each child.
3. Graduation exercises will be held for the four year old class at the end of the school year. All tuition, fees, and fines must be paid for the student to graduate.

C. DRESS

1. Each student's name should be on his/her coats, jackets, boots, and all personal property, including backpacks.
2. Parents should teach the student to dress and undress and to take care of toilet needs.
3. Parents are encouraged to see that their child attends preschool with clean clothes, hair, face, hands, etc.
4. Since the preschool is a developmental school, with a great deal of movement, activities, and messy work periods, it is recommended that children wear durable, washable clothes. *Special* clothes could get damaged. As weather turns cold, children need to have hats, scarves, and mittens. ***TENNIS SHOES ARE TO BE WORN DAILY. NO FLIP FLOPS OR SANDALS ARE TO BE WORN DUE TO SAFETY REASONS.***
5. A full set of **appropriate seasonal clothing** in the child's backpack will be helpful in case of an accident.
6. We do go outside to play. Be sure to bring coats, jackets, hats and mittens on cool days.

D. TIME OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

1. **Classes begin each day at 8:30 a.m.** Students may be dropped off 5 minutes prior to the start of preschool.
2. **Classes end each day at 11:00 a.m.** A staff member will be available for 15 minutes after class. A \$10 late fee will be assessed for every 15 minutes thereafter. This policy will be enforced.
3. If parents wish to remain with their child during a class period, please make arrangements with the teacher prior to the visit.

E. TRANSPORTATION

1. Parents are asked to comply with the published arrival and departure times and procedures found listed above. Teachers are not permitted to act as a "babysitter" before or after the regular class hours.
2. School staff should always be informed if your child is a member of a car pool.
3. If your child is to leave school with any person(s) other than those stated on the child's record form and sign-in logbook, written notification is required, and needs to be given to the preschool teacher or aide in advance.
4. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18.
5. A photo ID is required for everyone authorized to pick-up your child.
6. Please park in the designated parking areas. **Please do not park under the awning.** This is for the safety of the other children being dropped off.

F. ABSENCE

1. In case your child will not be able to attend class, PLEASE CALL the church office (217) 483-2612 or send an email to the preschool stjohnsprek@comcast.net prior to the start of class. Notify the preschool each time your child is absent.
2. If your child has a cold or other symptoms of illness, please keep him/her at home.
3. If your child is absent due to a communicable disease, contact the teacher immediately!
4. In the event that your child has a communicable disease, keep him/her at home until the doctor gives them permission to return. Be sure that the teacher is informed of your doctor's permission.

G. MEDICATION

1. Only emergency physician prescribed medications will be given to students by the teachers or aides (i.e. epi-pen or inhalers). No other prescription or over the counter medications will be administered.
2. In case of illness, the teacher will notify the parent(s) immediately.
3. If the teacher is unable to contact the parent(s) with the phone number given at sign-in, the emergency number given on the child's record form will be used to contact for assistance.
4. A first-aid kit is available for minor cuts and abrasions. In case of disaster and/or a catastrophic situation, 911 will be called and then the parent(s).
5. We will not apply sunscreen to your child. If you wish to have sunscreen applied, please do so prior to bringing your child to preschool.

H. DISCIPLINE

1. Each child will be treated with Christian kindness and love. This kindness must be firm and so well seasoned with God's love that discipline will be executed for "His" sake.
 - a. Corporal punishment will never be used at any time.
 - b. Physical restraints will not be used other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect the child or others from harm.
2. Misbehavior of children in preschool will be handled by the teacher according to the seriousness and persistence of the behavior. The teacher will have a discipline plan in place and this plan will be given to each parent upon the start of the school year.
3. In cases of persistent unacceptable behavior, the teacher will record the behavior, and staff response of that behavior, on an Accident/Incident Report Form. This form will be signed by the teacher, aide, principal, and parent. The form will be kept in the child's record. Should the unacceptable behavior continue, parents and staff may be asked to meet to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable manner.

4. We are not trained or equipped to handle severe behavioral or emotional issues with young children. In the case that a severe behavioral or emotional problem persists, a parent-teacher-principal conference would be arranged to discuss a possible referral to Early Childhood Department of the school district the child would be attending.

I. ACTIVITIES

1. School Sponsored Activities

Parents may be asked to volunteer to help in the classroom at various times throughout the year. A sign-up sheet will be available after October 1st.

Parents will also be asked on occasion to help the preschool on field trips. The teachers may limit the number of adults that will accompany the class. It is the teacher's decision whether or not siblings will be allowed to participate in school field trips.

**Parents who accompany the class on field trips must follow the teacher's guidelines and be responsible for the children placed in their care.
(See Appendix A)**

For everyone's safety, we will need a copy of your driver's license and auto insurance card if you plan to transport students, other than your own, on field trips.

1. All children must be in his/her own car seat.
2. A car seat or booster seat appropriate for your child must be left with the school if the child is to ride with another adult on a field trip.
3. A one-time activity fee will be assessed at the beginning of the school year to cover costs of field trips and special in-house programs. Parents and siblings attending school activities are responsible for their own expenses.

2. Extracurricular Activities

As the children get to know one another and become friends during the school year it is very likely that they will want to invite their friends to come to their homes for play dates, sleepovers, and parties. This is a natural and expected outcome of their socialization education. We support and encourage such activities among all our students.

It is also a natural part of a child's social development to have preferences concerning whom he or she associates with during leisure time. Such choices can cause hurt feelings and divisions among the students and the families of the preschool. This means that from time to time one or more student(s) may not receive an invitation to participate in a family sponsored (private) extracurricular activity. Therefore, we do not allow invitations for private extracurricular activities to be distributed at the preschool or on church property. We ask that all such invitations be mailed from your home. (Each preschool family is given a student directory at the beginning of the school year.)

J. PRIVACY and RESPECT for Students and Families

As a Christian preschool our focus is always to build up our students physically, emotionally, and spiritually. (*Encourage and build one another up. 1 Thes 5:11*). In submission to our Lord, we seek at all times to refrain from gossip and hurtful speech and endeavor to put the best construction on everything. (*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion. Eph 4:29*) Therefore, when parents volunteer in the classroom or on field trips, we ask that matters pertaining to child behavior or academic development not be discussed with other parents or children.

K. SNACKS & DRINKS

The snack schedule will begin the second week of school. Please be sure the snacks and drinks you bring in are from the *Preferred Snack & Drink List*. This list will be mailed by late summer.

L. SUPPLIES

A printed list of supplies needed will be mailed by late summer. The list will be included in your Open House invitation.

V. MISUNDERSTANDINGS

If you have any questions or concerns, we suggest you discuss them with the Principal/teacher first before discussing them with others. It is our hope that all problems, large or small, may be addressed and resolved in a Christian manner (Mt 18:15-17).

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

St. John's Lutheran Preschool operates under the direction of the Board of Christian Education and the teacher of the preschool. As an extension of the ministry of the congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church, the Pastor serves as the "Principal" of the preschool.

If any school policy is in question, the Principal/teacher will be happy to discuss this matter with you (please, not during the preschool hours). Please call the office at 483-2612 to schedule an appointment with the Principal/teacher.

Appendix A

Field Trip Guidelines

Teachers

- Plan field trips
- Place students in parent supervised groups
- Provide map, itinerary, and an emergency cell phone # to drivers
- Provide parents with field trip permission slip and field trip rules
- Provide sign-in/sign-out book for parents at field trip location
- Bring the emergency/field trip bag to all outings

Parents

- All Parents will need to provide a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance card
- Parents should arrive to the classroom by 8:30 AM on the day of the field trip
- Parents should provide an appropriate child safety seat if you are not attending the field trip
- Parents should fill out and return field trip permission slip on the date provided

Drivers/Chaperones

- Drivers should transport all children under their care in the BACK SEAT of their vehicle
- Drivers should make sure that all children in their care are in an appropriate child safety seat
- Drivers should go directly to the field trip site and back to school on the same route as the group: no errands or detours
- Drivers should not be distracted during the transportation of students (cell phone use, eating, drinking, smoking)
- Drivers are responsible for the children in your group throughout the field trip. Stay with the children at all times and provide supervision.
- Driver/Chaperones should never send a child to the restroom alone (accompany the child or stand outside the restroom door)
- Driver/Chaperones should not provide snacks or drinks for the children due to allergy concerns
- Drivers must be over 21 unless they are transporting only their own child
- Parents who drive may bring siblings along, but they are responsible for their student and the sibling. All admission fees for parents and siblings are NOT covered under the students "activity fee".
- Please do not take the children to any gift shops during the field trip.
- Help enforce appropriate behavior and rules.

Students

- Must be in a child safety seat to attend the field trip
 - Talk quietly while in the car
 - Stay with the group at all times
 - No running anywhere
 - Be polite
- School behavior rules apply on all field trips