

PARENT HANDBOOK FOR CHRIST LUTHERAN CHILD CARE CENTER



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHILD CARE CENTER
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CHRIST LUTHERAN CHILD CARE CENTER

Dear Families of Christ Lutheran Child Care,

Welcome to our daycare family! We are glad you have chosen to share some of your child's most informative and exciting years with us. Our Child Care Center is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care and early childhood education experience. Our Family Handbook is designed to help you become well acquainted with our program and ensure your family has a rewarding experience with us. In this book we provide you with the information about our center, our expectations of families, and general procedures and practices.

This handbook is a "live" document. Many updates and policy changes have been added to this book. We ask that you read it carefully, even if you have been a family of Christ Lutheran for many years. The information in this handbook may be updated and changed as new procedures and programs are created. You will be notified of such changes.

The foremost goal of the Child Care Center is the care of the children. We will strive to develop a partnership with each family on behalf of each child and welcome any questions, comments, concerns, or insight into your child, as we are here as a support system for our families. Over these next years, we look forward to getting to know your family better and watching your child grow.

Sincerely,

Melissa Delaney
Director

MISSION STATEMENT

Christ Lutheran Child Care Center is a service ministry of Christ Ascension Lutheran Church to provide parents with secure and responsible care for their children. The Center strives to give parents a sense of well being in the knowledge that their children are being well cared for in a safe, educationally appropriate and stimulating environment that supports each child's natural curiosity to learn, while fostering a positive self image.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our goal is to provide an environment where children and their families are safe, enriched, and empowered through the following:

- Providing responsible care within the community
- To create and maintain a safe environment for all the children
- Promote a positive self esteem for each child and respect each child as an individual while encouraging and fostering a compassion for others
- Nurture each child's natural curiosity to develop an enthusiasm and desire for academic achievement
- Provide an environment, which provides each child with a sense of security, warmth, and belonging.
- Encouragement of open communication among parents, staff, and administration
- Having the child care center act as a positive participant in the community

We would like to enter into a partnership with you as parents. Our emphasis is on the whole child; the social, emotional, intellectual, physical, creative, and character aspects of each person. Open, informal communication between parents and staff is essential for your child's development. We want to incorporate your own personal goals for your child with our educational goals. Please feel free to speak with us. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions about our program.

Our structured daily program is based on the shared interests and concerns of the children, families, and staff. A variety of structured and unstructured developmentally appropriate activities will be offered, utilizing both large and small groups in outdoor and indoor settings. The children also have the opportunity to explore the community through walking trips visiting neighboring parks and businesses.

BASIC INFORMATION

In 1975, Christ Ascension Lutheran Church opened the Center as a service ministry to provide parents with secure and responsible care for their children, regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Today, the Center strives to give parents a sense of well being in the knowledge that their children are being well cared for in a safe, educationally appropriate, and stimulating environment.

The Center is located on the grounds of Christ Ascension Lutheran Church at 8300 Germantown Avenue. The Center utilizes the facilities in the Church Parish House and large enclosed play area in the back of the property. The Center is a twelve-month program open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM

LICENSING INFORMATION

The Center is licensed and governed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Each staff member has received his or her criminal and child abuse clearances, and reference checks. Over the course of a year, each employee will obtain 9 credits of continuing education in early childhood education, fire safety, emergency preparedness training, and first aid training. The Center adheres to the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards to provide an educationally stimulating environment.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at the Center is open to children from 6 weeks through 5 years of age. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy or disability.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in the Center by completing the Enrollment Application and paying the \$55 Application Fee. The Application Fee is NON-REFUNDABLE.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed Contract for Child Care Services Fee Agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt. The enrollment application and Contract for Child Care Services Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

The Center reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

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Continued enrollment at the Center is contingent upon the parent's emergency contact persons' and child's adherence to the policies and procedures of the Center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify the Center immediately should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit.

PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

To be successful in the care of the children, it is essential that families and school work cooperatively together. The relationship between home and school works best when parents understand the mission, share its values and support its programs, faculty, and staff. Together, we can form a powerful team with far reaching positive effects on children and the community.

Attributes of a Parent Well-Suited for the Center

We look for parents that want to make a commitment to our Center and support a shared mission for the care of the children and who are willing to communicate and work through problems in a team building manner. We need our parents to be accessible and communicative and to act on our recommendations. Parents should trust our curriculum and program choices and respect the professionalism of staff and administration. We also seek parents that have realistic expectations for their child in the learning process and want to educate the whole child.

Childcare Committee

The ultimate decision making authority of the Center rests in its governing body, the Child Care Committee of Christ Ascension Lutheran Church. All members of the Committee are members of the Church. The Pastor is a member of the Committee, and the Director and Assistant Director are advising, non-voting members of the Committee. The Director oversees daily operations of the Center and implements the policies adopted by the Committee.

The Child Care Committee does not intervene in the daily operations of the Center, such as curriculum development, hiring, evaluating staff, or on issues relating to daily routine. If you have any concerns about the Center, you should discuss them with the Director. Additionally, the Committee invites parents to Committee meetings to address the Committee. These meetings typically occur the second Tuesday of each month.

Parent Liaison

A member of the Child Care Committee serves as the parent liaison. If you wish to bring an issue to the attention of the Child Care Committee, you may do so by emailing the parent liaison at cccommittee@christascension.org

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Relationship to the Administration and Staff

The parents of children enrolled at the Center play an essential role in the success of the program. Not only are parents necessary partners in educating their children, they support the Center through volunteer activities, participation with the Parents' Association, educational activities, and social events.

When parents choose to enroll their child at the Center, they agree to subscribe to its mission, follow its rules and abide by its decisions. Importantly, parents and all Center personnel must be guided by an ethic of mutual respect. Parents should remain informed about their child's development and about important events in the life of the Center.

The Center requires the parents of enrolled children to behave at all times in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy and respect. One of the goals of the Center is to provide an appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of the Center but also of each and every parent or adult who enters the Center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment.

Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on Center property thereafter. At no time should a parent discuss center business, staffing concerns or policy concerns openly in front of the children or with employees of the Center. Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing Center property.

Swearing/Cursing

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on Center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

Threatening of Employees, Children, Other Parents

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate authorities for prosecution. PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or other Children at the Center

While the Center does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may

cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own or physically punish another parent's child. If parents should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or are concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is appropriate for the parents to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or the Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. Behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or Director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our Center have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

Smoking

For the health of all Center employees, children and others, smoking is prohibited anywhere on Center property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds and in the parking lot of the Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette before entering the parking lot.

Violations of the Safety Policy

Parents are required to follow safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children, and others at the Center. Please be particularly mindful of entrance procedures. We all like to be polite; however, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the Center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite but that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Director.

Confrontational Interactions at the Center

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of the Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Violations of the Confidentiality Policy

The Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the Center. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential or

pressures employees or other parents for information that it is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy. Please do not inquire as to whether an absent child is out due to illness. This is a violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

TUITION

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Contract for Child Care Services Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in the Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed. Fees for the child care program are reviewed and revised on a yearly basis to coincide with the rising costs of operating the Center.

Payment Schedule

Tuition Payments: Two options are available for paying your child's tuition, monthly or semi-monthly. All tuition is billed and payable 30 days in advance of care. As an example, when you receive your bill due on August 1, you are making a payment towards care in September.

Monthly Tuition Payments: If you choose the monthly payment option, your child's tuition is due on or before the 1st of each month preceding the month when child care services are provided. For example, tuition for the month of September is due on or before August 1st.

Semi-Monthly Tuition Payments: If you choose the semi-monthly payment option, your child's tuition is due in two equal installments on or before the 1st and 15th of each month preceding the month when child care services are provided. For example, tuition for the month of September is due as follows: one-half on August 1st and one-half on August 15th.

A \$25 fee will be charged in the event of a returned check in addition to late payment penalties. A family having more than two checks returned will have to make cash payments only. The Center does not accept credit cards.

Tuition DOES NOT include fees for field trips and extra curricular activities such as the music program, fitness program, visiting field trips or special activities.

Flexible Hours

If you find you need to have your child enrolled for an extra hour or more past your contracted time, please contact the Director or Assistant Director to see if space is available. We will do our best to accommodate you; however we cannot guarantee that additional time will be available. If there is space available, your child may contract for additional time at a rate of \$8 per hour. This will be charged and added to your next tuition statement.

Additional Days

If the need arises for you to add an extra day to a 3 or 4 day schedule, arrangements can be made if class space is available. It is not possible to temporarily switch days of care for which you are contracted. If available, you may temporarily add days of care at an extra cost, providing staff/child ratios allow for an additional child that day. Advance notice must be given and approval of the Director received in order to add days of care. The daily rate of care will be billed depending on the needed pick up time.

Late Payments

A late fee of \$5.00 per day for the first week and \$10 per day for the second week a payment is late, will be assessed when tuition is not paid by the due date. Tuitions more than two weeks late will be reason to exclude your child from care until all tuitions due are paid. All tuition payments are due on time regardless of vacations, illness, or other absences from the center. Please return all tuition directly to the child care office. NO PAYMENTS should be left with your child’s teacher or left in a lunch/school bag.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness or closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, or natural disasters.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at the Center; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Center Director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved you will be notified by the Center Director.

Subsidized Care

The Center does not accept child care subsidies.

Sibling Discounts

The Center offers a multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled during the same school year. The youngest sibling pays the full tuition rate and each additional child’s tuition are discounted 10%. Discounts are only applicable when tuition payments are made on time. The full tuition rate, plus any additional late fees will be charged when tuition payments are late as per the late tuition policy stated above.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Within the Center, confidential information will only be shared with employees of the Center who have a “need to know” in order to appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential information about employees, other parents and/or other children will not be shared with parents, as the Center strives to protect everyone’s right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of children, parents, employees and others associated with the Center.

Confidential information about a child will only be shared with others outside the Center when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided by law. The written consent will state the information that is to be shared outside of the Center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate. You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of the Center are strictly prohibited from discussing the other child with you. Please do not inquire as to whether a child in the program is out due to an illness. This is information that may not be shared with you. The reason a child is absent from school is considered confidential.

MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interests of all children. Under the Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of the Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of the Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at the Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

As mandated reporters, the staff of the Center can not be held liable for reports that are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

PARENTS' RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever the child is in the care of the Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with the Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as provided by law. The Center can not, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the Center suggests that the parent keep the child with him/her until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. The Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director and are allowed in the child care facility only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of the Center will accompany visitors at all times, throughout the center.

The Center will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon Center property. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, the Center can not have a child enrolled at the Center when the child's parent is prohibited access. The Center will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the Center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

DISMISSAL

The Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause.

Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within 30 days of the dismissal. A Center check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30 day period will be referred to the Center's legal counsel for collection.

The Center Director or designee will assist the parents in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are then required to leave Center property immediately in a calm and respectful manner. The Center will request

assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Director if they wish to return to Center property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent. Parents may also attend the next Childcare Committee meeting or contact the Parent Liaison within the first month after dismissal.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the Center by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

WITHDRAWING & SCHEDULE CHANGES

Thirty days written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any unused tuition and deposit will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks and will not have any paid unused tuitions refunded.

Parents who wish to change their child’s days or times of enrollment at the Center, must submit a request to do so thirty days in advance of the proposed change. Schedule changes are subject to change fee of \$10 per change. The Center Director will notify the parents in writing if the schedule change is available. A schedule change will not be considered to be final until a new fee agreement is signed. If the schedule change requires additional monies, the change will also be contingent upon payment of these monies.

If the requested schedule change is not available parents may choose to continue with the current schedule until such time as the requested schedule change becomes available, or may choose to withdraw their child from the program. The date the request is given, in writing, to the Center Director or Assistant Director, will mark the beginning of the 30 day notice required for withdrawal.

During summer camp, parents may opt to decrease their enrollment from full time to part time in order to preserve their full time enrollment status for the school year.

COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (for example, a Custody Order, Restraining Order or Protection from Abuse Order) the Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with the Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as provided by law. The Center cannot, without a court

order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, the Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of the Center can not, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

The Center is open to receive children at 7:30 AM. Children and parents may not enter the classrooms before 7:30 AM. Parents however may remain in the Big Room until the opening hour. Upon arrival at the Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet located on or near the Parent Information Board. Signing your child into the Center is legally required so that your child is accounted for in the event of an emergency situation and for daily attendance. If you have more than one child enrolled in the Center, you will need to sign each child into his/her class. Parents not adhering to this policy of signing children in and out on a daily basis will be asked to leave the Center. Children are required to be escorted to their designated class by their parent or the adult dropping them off. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the Center: therefore, please do not let them out of your supervision. You are responsible for your child and his/her welfare whenever you are present at the Center until departure from the building. Parents are required to help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day.

Please limit conversation with your child's teacher at your arrival so that your child's teacher may focus solely on the children in attendance and your child's adjustment to school. If you would like to have a more lengthy conversation, please inform your child's teacher who will call you or set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Children enrolled to begin their day at 8:30 am may not be dropped off before 8:30 am. In the event you need to drop your child off before 8:30 am please contact the Director, and, if possible, she will make arrangements based on class ratios and availability

The Center is a learning-based environment. The Learning Program for the Preschool Programs begins promptly at 9 AM and runs through 11 AM. Full day children enrolled in our Preschool Programs may arrive between 7:30 AM and 8:45 AM. Half Day children may arrive between 8:30 AM and 8:45 AM. Please arrive on time so that your child may properly begin his/her day

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Full Day children enrolled in our Toddler and Infant programs may arrive between 7:30 AM and 10:00 AM. Half Day children may arrive between 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM. Please arrive on time so that your child may properly begin their day

We ask that you notify the office if your child will not be in attendance or will be arriving after 8:45 AM. The director may be reached at 215-247-1330 or clccc123@aol.com. Parents who know in advance that a child will be late, are required to notify the Center by 8:45 AM so as to maintain the appropriate numbers of employees to ensure ratios are met when the child arrives. If the Center is not informed of a later arrival to school, your child may be denied care upon arrival past the appointed hour.

The Center discourages parents from sneaking out of the center. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. The Center believes it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The employee present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child delays the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. Your child's lead teacher or Director is available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time. Our staff is experienced in comforting your child if this situation occurs. We invite you to call upon your arrival to work or home so that you may check on your child and be assured that your child has calmed down and are enjoying their day.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher or Center Director of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. Parents must present the special instructions in writing and discuss them with either the classroom teacher or Center Director. These special instructions include but are not limited to: Early Pick Up, Alternative Pick Up Person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware of to best meet the needs of their child throughout the day.

The Center does not serve or provide breakfast in the morning. Parents are required to feed their child a nutritious and filling breakfast prior to arriving at the Center. Parents who send their child to school without having been fed breakfast will be considered to be neglectful of their children's nutritional needs and will be reported to the appropriate authorities as provided for in the Child Protective Services Act. Children arriving prior to 8 am may bring breakfast with them, to eat at the table in their classroom. Children arriving past 8 am are expected to have already had breakfast.

Notification of Absence

Parents are required to inform the center by 8:45 AM if a child will not be at the Center on a scheduled day. This will enable the Center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day. If you fail

more than three times in one school calendar year to give proper notice of an absence your child will be dismissed from the program.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the Center Director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables the Director to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Center Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present.

Center's Right to Refuse Admission

The Center strives to maintain an ample list of substitutes in anticipation of staff absences, however, there are times when substitutes are not available, and classrooms need to be closed to maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Refusal will be based on a "first come first served" basis when seeking to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios and/or when closing classrooms.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

- Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
- The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
- Staff deems the child too ill to attend.
- Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at the Center if the child were to be present at the Center.
- Parents' failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
- Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
- A situation in the Center that does not allow the facility to safely accommodate children.

Parents may or may not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program. Each occurrence and situation is considered on an individual basis.

PICK UP PROCEDURES

Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located on or near the Parent Board Information Center. Parents not adhering to this policy of signing out on a daily basis will be asked to leave the Center. Please ask your child to clean up his/her play area prior to leaving. Once a parent arrives, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising his/her child while on Center premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. It is tempting to let your child "visit" in other areas of the Center. Please refrain from allowing this to happen. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child, and are required to

directly exit the building or playground once they have signed their child out of care. Staff may not escort a child to a parent's car or buckle a child into a car seat.

Parents must take home all papers in the child's cubby or school bag each day.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or other authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, you should schedule a meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the Center during the course of the day.

Late Pick Up

A parent is considered late if arriving past the contracted pick up time. As an example, if you are enrolled for a half day pick up at noon or 12:30 PM, your child should be signed out and in your care by that time. A parent arriving any time past the contracted pick up time will be considered a late pick up. All measurements of time are to be according to the Center time clock located in the Center's office.

The Center closes at 6:00 pm. We ask that parents contracted for 6 PM pick-up to arrive by 5:55 PM, to allow time to collect your child's belongings, sign out and exit the building by 6:00 pm. If for some reason you are delayed, please call and inform a staff member. Calling and notifying us that you will be late does not exempt you from late charges. **IF YOU ARE LATE PICKING UP YOUR CHILD, A LATE PICK UP FEE OF \$30 WILL BE CHARGED STARTING AT 6:01 PM AND, THEREAFTER, EVERY 15 MINUTES.** While we understand that emergencies arise, we request that you have a back up person available to pick up your child in the event you are running late. Families enrolled with 12:30, 4pm or 5pm pick-ups not arriving by their contracted time will be assessed a late pick up fee of \$15 per 15 minutes or portion thereof. Late pick up fees will be added to your child's tuition statement and be due by the next billing due date.

A child's enrollment will be terminated should the child be picked-up late on three occasions in one school year regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time. There are no grace periods for late arrivals. Each incident will be billed accordingly.

Persons Appearing to be Impaired by Drugs/Alcohol at Pick Up

The staff of the Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the Center from denying a custodial parent access to his/her child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However,

the Center staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child, and appears to the staff of the Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of the Center will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

Emergency & Alternate Pick Up Forms

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from the Center. In an emergency situation the child's parents will be called first. If they can not be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for his/her child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program.

Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form has the right to act "In Loco Parentis." In Loco Parentis status affords the pick up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child's day including but not limited to, incident/accident reports and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child and the staff is not permitted to discuss the child's day with them.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide a photo I.D. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form. Children will not be released based on an oral authorization. If you are choosing to have someone who is not listed as an approved pick up person, you will need to submit in writing that you are authorizing this person to pick up your child. You may fax, email, or drop off a letter stating your approval.

The minimum age of an individual authorized to pick up a child is 16 years of age. The Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency/Alternate Contact Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to

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inform each person on the Emergency/Alternate Form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Center will be closed on the following days:

- Staff In-Service Days, either prior to or right after Labor Day
- Labor Day
- Halloween: closing at 4:30 pm
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- December 26
- New Year's Day
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

The Center will be closed or close early on certain days for Staff In-Service. Please refer to the daily Calendar of events, distributed each September.

EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

In the case of inclement weather, the Center will close at the discretion of the Director, often related to the closing of Philadelphia Public Schools. The Center may also exercise the option to have a delayed opening. Upon being contacted, parents will be given a time that the Center is closing, opening late, or dismissing early. In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by an email, phone call, or by calling in and listening to the message on the voice mail of the Center.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up and what time the Center is closing. Parents are expected to arrive by this time. Late arrivals will incur late pick up fees. Closing early is not a decision made lightly, but will be considered on an as-needed basis for the safety and consideration of the children and our staff. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the Center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

Should the Center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than 10 school days. If the closure extends beyond 10 school days, parents will have their tuition refunded by issuing a check in the event the Center must close or by a tuition credit if the Center reopens.

PARKING LOT AND DRIVEWAY

As a courtesy, parents may use the parking lot of Christ Ascension Lutheran Church for dropping off and picking up their child. If the church requires the parking lot for a church event, you will be notified that the lot is closed to parent use. Please refrain from parking in the Pastor's parking space at any time, even if it is the last remaining space available. Do not park in front of the garage, any exits or the back door by the garage. Additional parking is available on Southampton Avenue. Do not leave your car running while you enter the building. NO children may be left in the car unattended. This includes older siblings. Many families are using the lot, please do not hold conversations on the cell phone while in the lot, as this delays other families from being able to park.

Safety is our first concern. Please refrain from speaking on a cell phone while entering or exiting the driveway. Proceeding slowly and keeping eyes on the entrance of the building is necessary as children may often dart out with a parent.

Parking spaces are limited. Do not leave your car in the parking lot to run errands in the community or to go play at local playgrounds. This takes up spaces for other families, child care and church staff, and service people who are arriving. Cars left behind will be towed.

The parking lot is sometimes used as a play area for the children. When in use as a play area the cone will be in the drive way and you must park on the street. Please do not park in the drive way if the cone is up.

Upon entering the driveway, please adhere to a speed limit of 5 miles per hour. Children run from the building into the parking lot and can easily be hit by a moving car.

CURRICULUM INFORMATION & OVERVIEW

Curriculum Overview

The Center curriculum is centered on the individual needs and developmental stages of each child. All children develop at a different pace and the Center's curriculum takes this into account. Lesson plans will be sent home each week for your review and to encourage a discussion with your child. Our learning environment is focused on meeting the following goals:

- Achievement of independence and security in the learning environment
- Promotion of self-esteem
- Development of both fine and gross motor skills

- Encouragement of cognitive learning and development
- Positive growth of social skills and sense of community
- Encouragement of self control and independent thinking
- Promotion of problem solving and critical thinking skills

The Learning Environment

Our physical learning environment in the preschool programs is set up to encourage both independent and group learning. There are areas and equipment for the following:

- Language and Literacy
- Dramatic/Imaginative Play
- Gross and Fine Motor Development
- Math
- Weather/Calendar/Current Events
- Creative and Artistic Expression
- Sensory Experiences
- Music and Movement
- Writing Development
- Quiet/Rest Times
- Outdoor Play

Our infant and toddler programs include the following activity and interest areas:

- Language Development/Story Time
- Songs & Finger Plays
- Music and Movement
- Science and Discovery
- Cooking (Toddlers)
- Tactile Exploration
- Gross and Fine Motor Development
- Dramatic/Imaginative Play
- Quiet/Rest Times
- Creative and Artistic Expression
- Blocks and LEGOs
- Outdoor Play

Children are learning all the time and sometimes learn best through unstructured lessons. All of the activities are planned to encourage success and freedom. All children are encouraged to play and learn at their own pace. There is no “right” way to use materials. The process of “doing” is stressed over the final product. Mistakes are allowed; that is how we all learn! Exploring in a stimulating, physically safe, and emotionally secure environment is the best way your child can learn!

Play is the most important way for your child to process and learn new information and skills. Children observe their surroundings and imitate what they see. What better way to learn about the color red then by smashing Jell-O between their fingers and getting to eat the end result? Whether your child is learning about colors through finger painting,

rhythm by clapping to music, or math by scooping sand in measuring cups, learning is an exciting and new experience!

Guidance and Socialization

When your child starts at the Center, he/she becomes an adventurer in a new and interesting land! The child's job is to explore the terrain of this new and exciting place. Your child is trying to make sense out of a many new things and trying to behave in this mysterious place where they are not quite sure of the customs. Young children strive for understanding, independence, self-control and clear limits. Your child will hone these skills by exploring, experimenting, and testing the limits of their environment, as well as experiencing the consequences of their behavior. In his/her own time, your child will come to understand how the world works and what the limits are.

The Center approach to guidance and discipline is to promote a sense of independence, autonomy, and positive self-esteem while maintaining the control necessary for a safe and non-threatening environment. The basis of this control is a secure, routine, developmentally appropriate and caring class; a positive "yes" environment which allows children to experiment and test their own behaviors within clearly defined boundaries.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Behavior is managed by providing children with clear expectations as to what behavior is acceptable and by encouraging with positive reinforcement behaviors that are valued while downplaying those that are not. The Center does not use corporal punishment or humiliation. Our disciplining principles are based on guidance and clear and consistently enforced expectations. When a child behaves in an inappropriate manner, the most effective strategy is redirecting the child to the more appropriate behavior. When a child is redirected, the child experiences the differences between the inappropriate and appropriate behaviors and the resulting consequences and benefits.

With acts of aggression such as hitting or biting, the staff will use a time-out. The Center views time-out as a "cooling off" period for the upset child. Your child will not be isolated or removed during time out. After the time-out period, the teacher will take time to discuss with the child how he or she feels, why he or she acted that way and what the more appropriate resolution would have been. The Center intends for the guidance and socialization processes to be positive experiences that help children to define their world and its limits

Staff will communicate with children on eye level. A positive and even tone will be used in addressing children. Each staff member serves as a role model and will display appropriate behaviors for children such as sharing, speaking and playing.

Class Assignments

Children are appropriately placed in the correct environment based on birthdays and social and cognitive development. All three factors are important in determining where a child will best succeed. The Center prescribes to developmentally appropriate

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placement of children. Parent input and participation is valued and will be considered in deciding where a child is placed. However, this is not the deciding factor. The Center reserves the right to re-assign a child at any time during a child's enrollment.

Staff to Child Ratios

Staff to child ratios are mandated by the Department of Public Welfare. The Center strives to maintain a lower adult to child ratio than mandated by DPW. During staff shortages the staff to child ratios may default to those as outlined by DPW.

Adult:child ratios:

Infants: 1:4
Center Ratio: 1:3

Young Toddlers 1:5
Center Ratio: 1:4

Older Toddlers: 1:6
Center Ratio: 1:4

Preschool: 1:10
Center Ratio: 1:6

Nap/Rest Time

Each program has a scheduled naptime, except for the Infants. The Center will provide children with a pack-n-play if they are under the age of 15 months or a sleeping mat. This will be labeled with your child's name and only for her/his use. Each child is required to have its sleeping supplies at arrival on Monday. Children that do not have their sleeping supplies may not remain at the Center past 12:30 PM. The Center does not make linens available to parents nor are extras available for forgotten supplies. Sleeping supplies will be sent home at the end of each week so that they may be laundered. Minimal space is available for storing linens, so please try to limit supplies to a crib sheet, (for Infants, a pack n play sheet), light blanket and comfort item, if needed.

Napping Schedules are as follows:

Younger Infants: Personal to each child
Older Infants: 8:45 AM to 9:45 AM, 12:30 AM to 2:30 PM, PM nap if needed
Younger Toddlers: 12:00 PM to 2:30 PM
Older Toddlers: 12:30 to 2:30 PM
PS/PreK: 12:30 to 2:30 PM

We understand not all children take naps or will nap for the full time. Children upon waking up will be allowed to do a quiet activity. Preschool and Pre-kindergarten children that no longer take naps will be required to have a short rest period. Upon their classmates falling asleep, they may do a quiet activity at the table. It is difficult for us to

regulate the amount of time your older child sleeps. If you have a concern about your child napping, please speak with the Director.

Educational/Personal Care Supplies Needed

There are certain supplies that your child needs to have a successful stay in the program. Occasionally the Center will ask for a donation of supplies such as a container of sanitizing wipes. Please be certain to label your child's items that come to school. The Center is not responsible for lost items that are not properly labeled.

Infants: 2 complete changes of clothes, 5 bibs, 30-35 diapers per week, container of wipes, rash cream, 2 pack-n-play sheets, crib liner, light blanket, comfort items, if using a pacifier – and an extra one, bottle of infants Tylenol for emergency use only, and back up formula or breast milk.

Toddlers: 2 complete changes of clothes, art smock, 25-30 diapers per week, container of wipes, sunscreen, and rash cream

Preschool/Prekindergarten: a complete change of clothes, art smock, container of wipes and sunscreen

Children who do not have a complete change of clothes will not be admitted to the program until a set of clothes is available.

Birthday & Holiday Celebrations

Birthdays are a time of fun and celebration for your child. Birthday celebrations will be celebrated on a monthly basis. You are welcome to send in a special snack to be shared with your child's classmates on this special day. Some suggestions are fruit, lightly frosted cupcakes, cookies, ice cream or a special book dedicated to your child's birthday for the class library.

It is important to discuss with your child's teacher the month prior to your child's birthday what you would like to provide. We request that for the safety of the children that any celebrations are carried out in the classroom. If your child has a sibling, that child is welcome to join in the celebration. When a birthday celebration involves more than just a snack we request that the celebration be held after naptime with your assistance in setting and cleaning up. If you are hosting a party outside of school and would like to invite your child's classmates, you may put invitations in the cubbies. We just ask that you let the teacher know you are doing so.

The Center celebrates the diversity of many holidays. Each holiday celebrated is not discussed in a religious context but finds joy in global themes of love, respect, and sharing. We encourage families to share their own celebrations and traditions with the Center. You might like to plan on joining the children and staff of the Center for the following events:

Halloween Parade from 3:30 AM to 4:30 PM- Center closes at 4:30 pm

Thanksgiving Feast (Tuesday before Thanksgiving) from 11:30 AM to 12:30 AM

*Winter Celebration (Wednesday before Christmas) starting at 3:30 PM

*Graduation & Year End Celebrations (second Thursday in June) at 11:30 AM

* Center closes after celebration

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Communication

A teacher’s knowledge of each child helps the teacher to plan appropriate and challenging activities. Systematic assessment is also essential for identifying children who may benefit from more intensive support or who may need additional developmental evaluations. Child assessments are scheduled twice a year: January and June. Written assessments will be provided by your child’s teacher and sent home at those times. If we feel your child is having difficulties in any area, we will bring this to your attention. At any time during the year you may request a conference with your child’s teacher to address any concerns you may have.

The Center is working with you to help your child grow and learn about the world. We strongly encourage parent-teacher communication. It is important to exchange thoughts and information about your child as often as possible. Please limit conversation with your child’s teacher at your arrival and departure so that your child’s teacher may focus solely on the children in attendance and your child’s adjustment to school. If you would like to have a more lengthy conversation, please inform your child’s teacher and they will call or set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time

Pre-kindergarten Graduation and Year End Celebrations

The second Thursday of June is considered Graduation Day for our older children and year-end celebrations for the younger children. The last day that Pre-kindergarten children are eligible to attend the program is the second Thursday of June. Pre-kindergarten parents should plan on attending a graduation celebration at 11:00 AM on this day. This is a big occasion for your child. They have worked hard to complete their kindergarten readiness skills and are excited about moving to summer camps and kindergarten. Your support of your child on this day is essential to your child’s well-being.

The programs for younger children will celebrate their accomplishments of the year with a Year End Celebration. You are welcome to join your child for this celebration. The Center closes at 12:30 PM on this day.

WHAT TO NOT BRING FROM HOME

Please do not allow your child to bring in candy, money and toys. Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues and loss, children are not permitted to bring in these things from home unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Toys from home can cause special difficulties for your child and we ask that they not come to school. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy. Children in classrooms with nap time are permitted to include with their bedding supplies one plush/non-musical toy with which to nap.

All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum, and/or for nap/rest time will be inspected by the staff for safety and appropriateness, and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of the staff.

The Center promotes a non-violence component and we discourage play centered on violent themes that make a game of hurting other people. As an example, superheroes, while perceived as “good guys” cannot be a good guy without a “bad guy” to target. To this end, please do not allow your child to wear clothing or bring items to school relating to this theme. Children are fully capable of understanding that there are “home rules” and “school rules” and it takes firm and consistent limit setting to help us maintain the rule. We greatly appreciate your cooperation with this.

DRESS CODE

Clothing

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, washable, and comfortable clothing.

Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. It is not necessary for the children to wear their winter boots to school. Teachers will change the children into their winter boots when they go outdoors.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. Crocs should not be worn to school. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Children ages 3 through 5 are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the Center at all times. Children under 3 years of age are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate complete changes of clothing at the Center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child’s first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves and boots. The Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

If your child does not come to the center dressed appropriately, we will ask you to bring back the correct attire required for outside play. We are not equipped to keep one child inside, separate from his/her class.

Jewelry/Accessories

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, The Center will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children. Should a child come to school wearing any jewelry, parents will be required to take it with them, or to return to the school to remove the jewelry if it is discovered after the parent leaves. Repeated violations (more than 3 per school year) of this policy are considered to be violation of SAFETY POLICIES and will result in dismissal from the program.

Please exercise caution with hair beads, barrettes, bobby pins, etc. We prefer children do not wear them. These accessories are considered to be safety hazards. When choosing accessories for your children be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for the older and younger children attending the Center.

FIELD TRIPS

The Center frequently supplements the in class curriculum with off premise field trips. Notification of a field trip outside of the community will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including, destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost, and mode of transportation. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be filled out, signed and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend. Parents are welcome to attend the trip with their child and they should discuss this with the classroom teacher.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip and you wish for your child to participate in the trip, please discuss this with your child's teacher at least three days prior to the date of the trip. Your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained with his/her addition to the class. An additional day fee, as well as the cost of the trip and signed permission slip will be due prior to the date of the trip.

PARENT PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. We would love for you to share any special talents with us! Volunteer to teach an activity to the children or share with them a special song or story from your culture. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the Center. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will have posted in their classrooms any

volunteer opportunities available. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items, do maintenance work, or assist in the front office. These volunteer opportunities are posted in the main office area on the parent bulletin board. Your child cherishes any time you volunteer.

Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom, or on field trips.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements), will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Pre-Enrollment Requirements

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the Center's office two weeks prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at the Center. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized, please ask the Center Director for an immunization waiver form. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the Center Director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the Center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional in order to attend the Center. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend the Center, must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the Center Director or Assistant Director within the first 30 days of enrollment.

Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Authorization For Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any

additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases the Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, provided the Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the instructions.

Medical Forms

Pennsylvania state regulations require that the center maintain a current medical record on each child enrolled. Before your child enrolls, your pediatrician will need to fill out a health assessment form. Your child will require well visits as follows:

2 months
4 months
6 months
9 months
1 year
15-18 months
2 years
3 years
4 years
5 years

At each well visit you must have a new health assessment form filled out. You will have 45 days from your child's birthday to return a current assessment. After this 45-day period, your child may no longer continue in the child care program until he or she has a current health assessment. Legally, the Center cannot have a child in its care without a current form.

Daily Health Assessment Check

A staff member who is familiar with the typical behavior of your child will assess him or her each day when he or she arrives, and periodically throughout the day. This assessment involves speaking with the parents, observing the child, and if applicable, talking with the child. The staff member will document and make note of:

- Any changes in behavior, excessive tiredness
- Skin rashes, cuts, bruises, or itchy skin or scalp
- Signs of fever such as flushed appearance or shivering
- Complaints of pain or not feeling well

- Vomiting, diarrhea, and drainage from the eyes

When a child or family member has been exposed to a harmful communicable disease, it is important to share this information with the Center. Withholding information from the Center, particularly if your child was ill on the weekend, is a cause of concern for the Center and considered an unacceptable practice.

Sick Policy

Please take the time to read the sick policy in its entirety and ask any questions you may have regarding the policy. Prior to enrollment, each family will be asked to sign a form stating it has read the policy in its entirety and is clear on the Center policies.

A main area of concern is the rapid spread of infections. The parents and the Center need to work together to keep the children healthy and feeling well. If you suspect your child is not well, but aren't sure, please err on the side of caution! The best word of advice we can offer is to be prepared. A child attending daycare will contract, on average, 5 to 10 illnesses each year. These illnesses will lead to a child being excluded from care approximately 5 to 14 days per year. This is normal and should be expected. Children have to build up their immunity to infections. This occurs over time, beginning with enrollment in a daycare center.

Working parents typically have tremendous stress, with limited days off. It is best to have a back up plan in place before your child begins to be exposed to normal childhood illnesses. Often many of our families express the concern that they do not have family members or enough time off to cover all of the days their child may need to be absent from care. A service many of our families have used to provide baby-sitting for an ill child is www.yourotherhands.net. While it may be costly for a family that does not have any back up care, it is certainly a consideration.

At times you may disagree with the Director and the Center staff regarding whether your child does or does not meet the exclusion criteria as outlined in our policy. As the care provider, we are entitled to make this decision and will stand by that decision.

At the Center, our staff is constantly washing hands before meals, after sneezing and wiping noses, wiping down and disinfecting toys and teaching good hygiene. Our hope is to decrease the amount of illness we have at the Center. When there is an ill child, we follow certain procedures as outlined by the Department of Public Welfare and The American Academy of Pediatrics. Our sick policy has been based upon information from conversations with physicians, certified nurse practitioners, and the guidelines recommended by the AAP, specifically: "Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools," "Exclusion and Inclusion of Ill Children In Child Care Facilities and Care of Ill Children in Child Care," and "Model Child Care Health Care Policies."

One of the most frequent occurrences for exclusion is when a child has a fever. Other symptoms of illness — lethargy, not eating, complaining of pain, unable to participate and discomfort — are also reasons for sending the child home. A child who is not able

to comfortably participate in classroom activities or has a greater need for care than the staff is able to provide without compromising the care of the other children will be sent home. For example, a child wants to sleep at odd times, is inconsolable, or in the case of an infant, needs to be held continuously. The Center realizes how important your job is and that your ability to take time off is limited. We will work hard to use our best judgment as to when a child just has a cold or when he or she needs to be sent home.

If your child exhibits symptoms on the weekend, particularly Sunday, please do not bring your child to school on Monday. A child receiving an antibiotic must stay home for 24 hours. It has been our experience that until a child has at least 24 to 48 hours of an antibiotic, he or she is not comfortable while in daycare.

Conditions Requiring Exclusion

If your child is not feeling well, the Center will recommend temporary exclusion. Often this decision is based on your child's physical symptoms — such as a fever — but also on his or her inability to be comfortable in a group setting. Some reasons for exclusion are as follows:

- A child is not able to participate comfortably as determined by a staff member.
- A child's illness or symptoms result in a greater need for care than the Center is able to provide without compromising the level of care provided to the other children.
- A child appears to be ill.
- A child has a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit auxiliary (armpit), or 101 degrees Fahrenheit orally.
- A child has diarrhea that is not associated with a change in diet. Any diarrhea that is outside of what is considered a normal bowel movement for the child, ie: loose, watery bowel movement that is not contained in diaper OR a child cannot make it to the toilet in time.
- A child is vomiting.
- A child complains of abdominal pain lasting more than one hour.
- A child has mouth sores accompanied by drooling.
- A child has an unexplained rash.
- A child has pink or red conjunctiva, with white or yellow discharge.
- A child has severe diaper rash lasting more than three consecutive days.
- A child has impetigo.
- A child has strep throat or other streptococcal infection.
- A child has head lice.
- A child has open wounds unable to be bandaged.

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms — for the sake of your child and the other children in our care —we expect you to keep your child home. Sick children and staff members are to be kept out of daycare. If the staff members are uncertain about whether your child's illness poses an increased threat to themselves or to the children

around them, the Center will exclude your child until a physician or nurse practitioner notifies the Center that your child may return.

Indications of Illness

Often, once a child is in care, he or she can exhibit certain signs that could be indications of an infection or illness. If this happens, the Center will call to notify you that your child does not appear to feel well. At this time, we will advise you of your child's condition, and let you know if he or she is having a hard time participating in group care, and if you need to come and get your child. Some indications could be, but are not limited to:

- Lethargic behavior
- Lack of appetite
- Unusual irritability
- Apparent pain in the ear
- Continuous or abnormal crying
- Difficulty participating or "keeping up" with the class
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Evidence of conjunctivitis
- Rash or skin infection
- Uncontrollable coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing and wheezing

We recognize many symptoms may be short lived. We will make every effort to distinguish between those situations and a true illness. The Center will, at all times, err on the side of caution in reporting a suspected illness. Exclusion is required when the Director feels a child is in the contagious phase of an illness or requires more care and observation than can be offered at the Center. We are not, at any time, able to care for a child individually. We understand parents have hectic schedules, and the decision to exclude a child is well thought out.

Arriving promptly following a request to take your child home is required. We will let you know the level of urgency regarding how ill your child is and if we expect you to arrive within the hour, or if you may take up to two hours. Please let the Center know when to expect your arrival. If you are asked to come immediately, we will expect you at the most, within the hour, WITHOUT EXCEPTION. If you work, or are dependant on public transportation, please have a back up plan in place to adhere to this policy. Failure to arrive in a timely fashion to pick up your child when you are notified of your child's illness is deemed a serious problem and your child's care from the program will be suspended. Only the Child Care Committee can grant admittance back into the Center.

The Center MUST be able to get in touch with you at all times. Work numbers, cell phones, pagers and emails — if available — are to be provided to the Center. An inability to get in touch with you during an illness or emergency is grounds for

suspension from the Center. It is the responsibility of the family to provide the Center with contact numbers. If you will be away from the office for the day, please provide an alternative means of contacting you or someone we may contact if we cannot reach you.

In the event of a medical emergency or an accident, we will contact the parents and the doctor of the child. If it is not possible to reach either parent immediately and emergency treatment is required, we will contact 911 and have your child transported to Chestnut Hill Hospital. Your authorization for the Center to contact your child's pediatrician and take whatever medical measures deemed necessary is part of the emergency contact form.

Notification of the Center of Illness

In the event that your child is exposed or does contract an infection or illness and will not be in care on a given day, please notify the Center. Please report any conditions that your child may have. Unreported illnesses are a violation of Center policy and are grounds for suspension from the child care program. All rules of confidentiality are followed and your child's name will not be shared. However, we do have the responsibility to report certain illnesses to other families, such as:

- Strep
- Lice
- Ringworm
- Chicken Pox
- Viral stomach illnesses
- Bacterial Conjunctivitis
- Scarlet Fever
- Fifth Disease
- Chicken Pox
- Measles

Lice

The most common symptom of head lice is itching. It may take up to 4 weeks after lice get on the scalp for the itching to begin. Most of the itching happens behind the ears or at the back of the neck. Also, itching caused by head lice can last for weeks, even after the lice are gone. However, an itchy scalp also may be caused by eczema, dandruff, or an allergy to hair products. *It is a strict Center requirement that you notify us if any family member has been found to have lice.*

How do you check for head lice?

- Seat your child in a brightly lit room.
- Part the hair and look at your child's scalp.
- Look for crawling lice and for nits.

- *Live lice* are difficult to find. They avoid light and move quickly.
- *Nits* will look like small white or yellow-brown specks and be firmly attached to the hair near the scalp. The easiest place to find them is at the hair line at the back of the neck or behind the ears. Nits can be confused with many other things, such as dandruff, dirt particles, or hair spray droplets.
- Use a fine-toothed comb to help comb out the lice or nits. Comb through your child's hair in small sections. After each comb-through, wipe the comb on a wet paper towel. Examine the scalp, comb, and paper towel carefully.

How do you treat head lice?

All persons with head lice should be treated. Please be aware that lice becoming more and more resistant to chemical treatments. Upon discovering Lice, consider treating the whole family, as 90% of mothers have been found to also have lice if their child has lice.

Lice Lifters

If your child is discovered to have Lice, we strongly encourage you to contact Lice Lifters, www.licelifters.com, located in Lafayette Hill. They will provide not only your child with a head check but your whole family. They are also able to provide your child with a note to be able to return immediately to childcare. Their methods are not chemically based and much more successful in treating and removing lice.

Chemical treatments

There are a variety of head lice treatments, including shampoos and cream rinses that can be found at your local drug or discount store. Many of the cream rinses contain 1% permethrin. Permethrin is a chemical that has proven to work very well to treat head lice.

However, head lice treatments may not always kill all of the eggs. A second treatment is often necessary 7 to 10 days after the first treatment. Contact your pediatrician if you think your child still has head lice after 2 treatments.

Prescription treatments with other chemicals are also available, but they are not usually the first choice for treating head lice. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor. *Always follow the directions on the package.*

You can continue to comb out the nits after the hair has been treated. This may help prevent your child from being misdiagnosed with an active case of head lice. And it will help ensure eggs not killed at first are removed.

Treating the House

Effectively ridding the family of lice requires the house to be treated as well

Examples of some household items that should be cleaned are:

- * Home and auto upholstery
- * Rugs, carpeting
- * Mattresses, pillows, and pillowcases
- * Bed linens
- * Towels
- * Clothing
- * Coats, scarves, earmuffs, and gloves
- * Hats
- * Headbands
- * Baseball Caps
- * Bike/Sports helmets

Medication

The center will only administer prescription medication as directed by a physician. In order to do so, we must have the following:

- Written instructions from a licensed physician
- Written permission from the parent/guardian
- The medication in its original container

All prescription medication must have an affixed label with:

- Child's first and last name
- Name of medication
- Date of issue of prescription
- Instructions for administration
- Instructions for storage
- Dispensing physician's name
- Medicine is prescribed from a non-family member

The Center will only administer non-prescription, (over the counter) medications/ointments as outlined:

- Sunscreen of an SPF of 15 or higher, supplied by families in the original container. Your permission to apply sunscreen will be kept on file in the office.
- Diaper cream and ointments, as needed, and supplied by the family.
- Over the counter medicine as prescribed by a doctor, stating the reason and for how long.

Physician Notes

It is the discretion of the Center if a physician's note is required for your child to return to care. Most often this is not the case, but in the event of a concern for the well-being of the children in the Center, this may be required. Physician's notes for your child must be from a non-family member.

A note from your child's pediatrician alone is not reason enough for your child to be able to return to the Center. Other factors will be taken into consideration, primarily the ability of your child to comfortably participate in a group care setting, and the confidence of the Center that your child will get the level and quality of care he or she deserves. The Center understands that children may appear well at home and ready to return to care — when the reality is that they are still recovering and may have difficulty keeping up with the level of activity in a daycare setting.

Biting

The Center recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bitten or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior and that the staff is working to identify situations that provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child's services terminated.

Children older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the child guidance section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child's service terminated. Furthermore, children in the older age groups who bite 3 times in a school year will have their services terminated since the safety of all the children in the program is of the utmost concern of the Center.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of the Center cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by her/herr family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

Fire/Emergency Drills

The Center conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building before signing their child into or out of the program. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the Director or her designee will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within one hour of the telephone call.

Alternate Safe Location

Should the administration of the Center or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the Center to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to J.S. Jenks Elementary School. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up. As stated before, children must be picked up within one hour of the telephone call.

Band-Aid Reports

Minor injuries that occur at the Center and require first aid will be reported in the form of a written "Band-Aid Report". The teacher will report to you the incident, how it happened, and how we responded. We will send one copy home with you and keep one for your child's file. If the injury is visible or your child is upset by the injury, we will give you a call and speak with you directly.

Snacks & Lunch

You should bring a lunch for your child each day with foods that are bite size. The Center is making a concerted effort to introduce and enforce healthy eating habits with children. Typical snacks include cheese and crackers, fresh fruit, vegetables, cereal, applesauce, pretzels, goldfish, yogurt, milk, and orange juice. If you would prefer, you may supplement your child's morning and afternoon snacks with food from home.

All age groups:

All food items must be labeled with your child's name. The Center does not permit children to share or exchange food items.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHILD CARE CENTER

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets)

The Center never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavior reasons. It is a state regulation that once food is opened it must then be disposed of. We are not able to pack uneaten items and send them home. Please pack portions reflective of what your child may eat as to limit waste.

Sweet Peas and Busy Bees:

Children enrolled in these programs must have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks and juice bottles. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to insure that your child won't run out. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a warm crock-pot prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed.

Parents must provide and label all utensils and bowls necessary for feedings. Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their infant on a weekly basis, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when and how much.

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the Center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breastfeed your child with the classroom teacher.

Caterpillars, Butterflies, Adventurers and Explorers:

The Center offers children a morning snack at approximately 9:30 a.m., a half-hour lunch at approximately 12:00 noon and an afternoon snack at approximately 3:00 p.m. The Center does not serve breakfast. Children arriving prior to 8 am may bring breakfast with them.

All meals are together, with the children sitting at tables to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main

entrée first, followed by healthy snacks. Junk food will be reserved for a “dessert” when an adequate amount of their lunch has been eaten. We prefer you do not send any candy to school.

The Center curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Therefore, parents are required to provide a full, healthy lunch for their children each day they are in attendance. Lunches should include a sandwich (or main entrée item), snack(s), and a drink. The Center will provide water for children who wish to have it with lunch. Snack food items should be healthy, such as fruit, vegetables, and the like. Parents should limit junk foods to a minimum in their child’s lunch. Parents should limit the number of choices offered in their child’s lunch, as children often become distracted by the choices. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satiated, but not so much that food is wasted.

The Center does not allow full size candy bars, sodas, or full size candy treats such as Skittles, Starbursts or gum, in a child’s lunch. If you wish for these foods to be a part of your child’s diet, please give them to your child at home.

The Center prohibits any food item in glass containers (except Baby food in the infant classrooms), as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff.

The parent, in the refrigerator designated for your child’s classroom’s use, should place lunches containing milk, cheese, yogurt, and/or other food items requiring refrigeration. To locate which refrigerator is designated for each classroom, ask your child’s teacher. All the children must be able to store their lunch boxes in the refrigerator. Please consider this when you are purchasing a lunch box for you child. It should be small and compact. You may also purchase a larger lunch box that holds a cold pack and store it in your child’s cubby instead of the refrigerator.

Firearms and Weapons

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunition and/or weapon on Center property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY CLIENTS

The staff of the Center is prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former). Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment.

Employment refers to any relationship outside of the Center’s services, which causes an employee of the Center to interact with a current or former client of the Center. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother’s helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless of whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHILD CARE CENTER

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