



PARENT HANDBOOK

FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

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Welcome

Thank you for enrolling your child at Little Lambs Preschool. We are excited to work with every parent to provide the best possible Christian preschool experience for your child.

This handbook was designed to provide information about Little Lambs Preschool, to give parents an understanding of what they can expect, and what the preschool expects of families. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the director with any questions, concerns, or comments.

Mission

It is the mission of Little Lambs Preschool to support and encourage parents in their quest to educate and spiritually train their child. We provide young children a safe, loving Christian environment where they are prepared physically, socially, emotionally, and educationally for future learning experiences.

History

Little Lambs Preschool is owned and operated by Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church, and is directly supervised by the Little Lambs Preschool Committee, under the governing body of the Church Council. Our church and preschool are members of a larger church body called the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, which has been providing quality Christian education for over 150 years. Little Lambs Preschool opened its doors in 2014.

Philosophy of Education

At Little Lambs Preschool, we believe God created life to be developmental and that the educational process must nurture the development of the whole child. The classroom environment must be flexible in allowing children to go through the predictable stages of growth and maturation on individual timetables, and also allow for the unique characteristics, learning styles, and family experiences of each child. Children are active learners and learn best through concrete, quality play experiences which are facilitated through purposeful planning and modeling by caring adults.

Curriculum

The curriculum of Little Lambs Preschool is designed to meet the spiritual, social-emotional, cognitive, and physical developmental needs of children. The curriculum is based on our Christian faith, is age and developmentally appropriate, and incorporates knowledge of each individual child's needs, interests, and abilities. We use a hands-on, multi-sensory, themed approach to aid in children's learning. The school day consists of active and quiet times, with individual, small, and large group experiences, in both indoor and outdoor environments. Little Lambs Preschool will create capable learners who are able to think for themselves, solve problems, and live as children of God.

Program Goals

Spiritual Development

- Know the Bible is God's true Word
- Exhibit a simple faith in Jesus as their Savior from sin
- Trust in Jesus as their best friend
- Speak to Jesus in prayer
- Act out of love for Jesus in a God-pleasing manner
- Share the good news of our Savior with all people

Social-Emotional Development

- Understand feelings and express them in words
- Demonstrate growing independence and confidence in their abilities
- Develop responsibility for themselves and their environment
- Show curiosity and a desire to learn
- Learn to play, work, and communicate with peers and adults
- Show love and respect for all people

Cognitive Development

- Expand logical and mathematical thinking
- Acquire problem-solving skills
- Make choices, plans, and carry them out
- Gain knowledge and concepts about the world
- Develop in their ability to understand language and to communicate
- Develop an interest in reading and books in various ways
- Demonstrate writing in various ways
- Use imagination and creativity

Physical Development

- Learn to care for their own bodies
- Develop good nutrition habits and make good choices
- Observe safety precautions
- Use large motor skills with confidence, control and coordination
- Develop small motor control including:
 - Hand-eye coordination
 - Self-help skills
 - Writing and drawing skills
- Appreciate and express themselves through art, music and movement

Family Development

- Know Jesus as their Savior
- Worship regularly as a family

- Read the Bible together
- Share in maintaining a partnership between home and Little Lambs Preschool
- Attend Preschool related activities, services, meetings and programs

Non-Discrimination

In the Bible, God tells us that He “...wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:4). Therefore, all children are welcome to enroll in Little Lambs Preschool without reference to race, religion, national or ethnic origin or gender.

Admission

Students will be enrolled for the school year on a first come, first served basis. If classes are filled, the child’s name may be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur during the year. Enrollment is open to all children who are at least three years old by September 30th, and are fully toilet trained and self-sufficient in the bathroom. No diapers or pull-ups are to be worn during school hours.

All children will be enrolled for a probationary period of six weeks. If after six weeks there are no reasons to exclude them from attendance, they will be fully admitted.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms are required for enrollment and must be completed and returned before a child may attend.

- Student Information Form
- Authorization for Pick Up
- Proof of age (birth certificate or passport)
- Financial Agreement Form
- Emergency Medical Release
- School Entrance Health Form (w/Immunization Record)
- Personal Release Agreement Form

Children may be photographed, audio taped, and videotaped for use within our preschool for educational, promotional or advertising purposes. Parents are required to sign a Personal Release Agreement which will give Little Lambs Preschool the right to record and reproduce on film, tape, audio, or web materials the physical and/or vocal image and words of the student.

Virginia State law requires proof of age, immunization record, and health evaluation. The medical forms must be signed by the child’s medical provider before we can allow any child to attend preschool.

The above enrollment forms and student records are stored in a locked file drawer and open only to the teacher, director, an authorized employee of the Department of Social Services, or the

child's parent or legal guardian. Information shared with the director or teacher will be kept confidential.

Exclusion

We aim to provide the best possible environment for our students. We will work to accommodate every child within reason. Unfortunately, circumstances may arise in which Little Lambs Preschool may not be the right fit for a certain student such as:

- Preschool cannot meet the needs of the child with reasonable accommodations
- Child is not toilet trained
- Child is not developmentally ready for the curriculum or routine
- Parents do not observe policies outlined in the parent handbook
- Non-Payment or late-payment fees (see Financial Policies)

Procedure for temporary exclusion:

If a child becomes ill, parents will be notified to pick the child up

Director will inform parents if a child needs to be removed from the classroom setting on a temporary basis due to persistent behavioral problems. There will be no adjustment in tuition.

Procedure for permanent exclusion:

Children who, in the professional opinion of the director and preschool committee exhibit consistent behavior which is physically harmful to other children; causes malicious damage to the school or property; is disruptive of the daily program; or shows disrespect toward adults may be subject to, but in extreme cases not limited to:

1. Notification of parents by director
2. One-day suspension with notification of the parents
3. Three-day suspension and a mandatory conference with parents
4. Permanent expulsion after review by the preschool committee. The parents will be required to be at this review.

This policy has been adopted to maintain a healthy Christian atmosphere within our school. If the child is permanently excluded, unused tuition will be refunded.

Financial Policy

A non-refundable registration fee of \$125 is required at time of registration, either by check or online. Our yearly tuition fees are broken down into ten monthly installments. Tuition is due on the first of the month. Payments may be made by check or online. No tuition adjustments will be made due to illness or absence. A \$35 late fee will be added after the 5th of the month.

Tuition is as follows:

- 3-day program \$3,100/year or \$310/month
- 5-day program \$3,600/year or \$360/month
- 3-day extended care program \$5350/year or \$535/month
- 5-day extended care program \$5850/year or \$585/month
- Drop in extended care rate is \$20 per day

An additional fee of \$5 / 10 minutes will be charged for late pick-up.

Guidance (Christian Discipline)

The preschool staff and board are dedicated to keeping the classrooms safe and happy places for all children. Teachers guide children in learning about making God-pleasing choices out of love for their Savior. Teachers make positive comments about children's experiences and help them to work through their problems. Teachers are consistent, give clear directions, and state rules positively and firmly.

Persistent behavior problems will be brought to the attention of the parents so that both the teacher and parents may work together for positive changes. Learning to get along with others and accept limits takes time and adult patience. The teacher's attention will be focused on the problem behavior—not the child. No one will do anything that could break the spirit of a child, be humiliating, frightening, or abusive. No one will use food, rest, toileting, or physical punishment to manipulate a child. If corrective measures do not improve the behavior and the behavior persists, permanent expulsion may result.

Calendar

Little Lambs Preschool follows the Chesapeake Public School calendar for holidays and breaks. Little Lambs Preschool will not follow Chesapeake Public School's schedule for staff days or virtual days.

Inclement Weather

In cases of inclement weather, the director and chairman of the preschool committee will decide whether or not to delay or cancel school. Parents will be notified in a timely manner.

Hours of Operation

Little Lambs Preschool instructional hours are 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Doors will open at 8:45 a.m. Extended care hours are 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please be prompt in picking your child up at the end of the day. An additional fee of \$5 / 10 minutes will be charged for late pick-up.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

Arrival

Due to COVID, parents will sign their children in and out at the podium under the portico at the main entrance. Parents must wear a mask and maintain social distance while waiting to sign in and out. On arrival, parents will record their child's temperature, and verify no COVID symptoms or exposure. Lastly, the parent will note the time of arrival/departure and sign their name. Students will begin an independent activity at the tables. Please return to your car quickly so your child can focus on his or her activity and so that the sign-in area does not become crowded.

Departure

Sign-out will occur in the same place as sign-in. Children will not be released until the parents have signed-out in the binder. Again, please do not loiter or socialize in the arrival/departure zone.

For your child's safety, a student will only be released to a parent or legal guardian. Children will be released to persons listed in writing on the **Authorization for Pick-Up Form** when parents give verbal instruction to do so. Children will be released to persons not on the *Pick-Up* form when parents give written permission to do so.

To pick your child up during extended care hours, ring the doorbell at the main entrance. A staff member will meet you there. If the children are on the playground, please sign your child out at the podium and then walk over to the playground.

What to Bring

- A complete set of extra clothing (top, bottoms, underwear, socks) to be kept in your child's cubby in a labeled Ziploc bag
- A daily nutritious snack
- A daily nutritious lunch (no microwave available)
- A backpack big enough to hold a folder
- A water bottle with a closable spout, with name labeled clearly

All items from home need to be labeled with your child's name.

Snacks/Lunches

Parents provide the daily morning snack, lunch, and extended care snack. Sharing of food is not permitted.

Food Allergies

All food allergies will be posted. In the case of a severe allergy, for the safety and well-being of that child, no children in preschool bring a snack containing the offending food. Again, sharing of food is not permitted.

What to Wear

Children should wear socks and play shoes with non-skid soles. Shoes need to be safe for movement activities both inside and outside. Flip-flops are not appropriate for preschool play.

Children should wear clothes they can independently manage in the bathroom and are not concerned about when playing with messy materials. Please plan for the weather! Outdoor play is an integral part of our program and we will go outside every day unless it is too wet or cold.

Absences

Vacations

If your child will be absent due to a family vacation, please notify the director. No tuition adjustments will be made due to absence.

Illness

If your child has a fever or communicable disease, do not send your child to school. Little Lambs Preschool will follow guidance from the Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Social Services, and the CDC regarding when sick children can be readmitted to the program. No tuition adjustments will be made due to absence.

Medication

Members of Little Lambs Preschool staff are Medical Administration Training (MAT) certified and will dispense medication as described by a doctor according to MAT guidelines. Parents must complete a Medication Consent Form.

Sunscreen

Staff will apply sunscreen if parents have completed an Authorization Form for Non-prescription Over-the-Counter Skin Products. Parents will supply sunscreen in the original container labeled with the child's name.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Closure

In the event of an emergency closure of the school, due to weather or other unforeseen events, the preschool will contact the parent for the children's immediate pick-up.

Emergency Drills

Students will participate in annual tornado drills.

Fire Drills

Fire drills will be conducted monthly. Students will meet on the far side of the fence.

Parents as Partners

God's Word

The Gospel of Jesus as our only Lord and Savior is God's power to create faith and give forgiveness. The Gospel message of salvation is the basis of our preschool curriculum and will be found in every aspect of the day. To help gain a better understanding of your child's teachings we encourage you to attend Resurrection Lutheran Church's Life with Jesus class.

Conferences

Conferences are scheduled once a year to discuss student growth and development. Parents may request a conference at any time.

Communication

Little Lambs Preschool communicates information to parents via student folders, newsletters, email, and verbal interaction. Additional information can be found on the website and Facebook. The communication folder will be sent home on Fridays. Please return it to school on Mondays.

Virginia Code of Compliance

Little Lambs Preschool is classified by the State of Virginia Department of Social Services as a religiously exempt preschool. The early learning center is covered by general liability insurance through the policy held by Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church. Little Lambs Preschool is housed in the education wing of Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church. We use two large rooms equipped with five total sinks and three total bathrooms. There is a capacity limit of 40 children per day, with at least four adults when at capacity. The playground is located on the west side of the building. All food will be supplied from home; we will not use the church's kitchen or appliances. All staff members are annually certified by a physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children. Background checks are conducted on all staff members, and kept on file on the premises at all times. Staff members are trained and certified in First Aid and Child CPR. Members of Little Lambs Preschool staff are Medical Administration Training (MAT) certified and will dispense medication as described by a doctor according to MAT guidelines.