

Preschool Handbook

Table of Contents

	page
Philosophy	1
Policies and Procedures	3
Admission	3
Releasing a Child	3
Children Who Arrive Late and Their Class/Group	
Is Away from the Preschool	4
Tuition and Fees	4
Arrival and Departure	4
Curriculum	5
Children's Dress Code	6
Health/Immunizations	6
Daily Health Check	6
Sickness Policy	7
Medication	7
Discipline	8
Meals and Snacks	8
Nap Time	9
Reporting Child Abuse, Neglect and Complaint	9
School Closure/Inclement Weather	10
Student Withdrawal	10
Television/Video Viewing	10
Toys/Articles from Home	10
Visitor and Volunteer Policy	11
Emergency Evacuation	11
Transportation	11
Parent Information	12

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Our Savior Lutheran Preschool is a positive learning environment where children are first. The role of the Christian Preschool is that of satisfying the needs of its children in the following areas: The need to trust their Lord's will in all situations, supporting parents who love them, and providing teachers who support all they do. The need to explore and develop their senses, vocabulary, capabilities, environment, creative abilities. The need to live with others sharing, taking turns, coping with life. In meeting these needs, the school will provide the child with a setting of consistency and stability. The child will develop an interest and joy in learning and feeling of security, success and responsibility.

Early training is the most significant training children receive. An early childhood experience permeated by Christianity provides children with added richness. Not only are their mental, emotional, social and physical needs recognized but also their spiritual needs. The results will be children with well- rounded Christian personalities who acknowledge the daily presence of Christ in their lives.

The preschool usually represents a child's first separation from home and first experience with a peer group. Therefore, young children have a lot of social learning to do. In the cocoon of preschool, children can grow from their self centered world of "I" to the world of interaction, "we". They learn through exploring and inquiring to solve their problems.

Play is the work that children do. Much of their motor play is preparatory to later cognitive development. In stacking blocks, they learn spatial relationships, balance and the law of gravity. In climbing, swinging and running, they learn motor and perceptual coordination, which is essential in fine motor development. By taking advantage of the many innovations in early childhood teaching techniques and materials, a solid foundation can be laid for future school years. By freeing children from inhibitions, they learn to express themselves. In short, preschool can open young children's awareness of their Lord's world and stir their inquisitiveness so as to make eager learners in their preschool year.

We believe that Our Savior Lutheran Preschool exists to assist parents, in our congregation and in our community, in the raising of their children in the nurturing and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. In doing so we seek to give glory to Almighty God in every area of the curriculum and in the way in which our students experience life on a day-to-day basis at our school.

As members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we join with the over 2,000 other Lutheran schools in our nation and with the more than 200,000 children enrolled in this largest, Protestant, Christian school system in the nation. We rejoice in our participation in this massive endeavor to provide a solid educational foundation for children grounded in the Christian faith, and we are blessed to draw on the excellent resources that such a large system provides.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission

Each child who attends Our Savior Lutheran Preschool must have completed and on file all required forms. Additionally, during orientation, parents must have received and signed for a copy of the Parent Handbook. We need to be informed when children receive updates to immunizations. Parents will need to send in a copy of each immunization update. We must have valid contact numbers on file. This includes cell phones. Please notify the staff immediately of any changes. It is in your child's best interest to make sure we are always able to contact you. All students must be the age of three to five years old. Each child should be potty trained. Behavioral Probation: All new students are placed on behavioral probation for six weeks. Students exhibiting severe behavioral problems during the school year will be placed on behavioral probation. If the behavior does not improve, the child will be suspended or expelled.

If a child is in need of special services the class curriculum will be modified to the individual needs. If further needs are necessary additional services will be provided by professional services outside of the school. If possible some services may be brought to the school.

Releasing a Child

Our Savior Lutheran Preschool will only release a child to persons for whom the preschool has written authorization. Persons not familiar to the staff will be asked to present sufficient proof of their identity, including picture identification.

Our Savior Lutheran Preschool will release a child to a responsible party in an emergency if the preschool received verbal permission from a parent or guardian. Authorized persons who pick up a child from the preschool must follow the same procedures to sign-in/sign-out as any parent or guardian. If, for any reason, an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up a child after staff informs them of the policies and procedures, the Pagosa Springs Police Department will be called. There is a late fee for children still at the preschool after 5:31.

Children who arrive late and their class/group is away from the Preschool

Before leaving the preschool, children will be on a sign up sheet for either a field trip or outing. If a child was scheduled to leave with his/her group but has not arrived, parents will be notified to bring the child to the preschool after the outing or fieldtrip. Children who arrive late will not have a teacher available during the outing of fieldtrip and no child will be permitted to stay at the preschool without teacher supervision. Parents will have to make other arrangements at that time. They will, however, be able to attend the preschool after the group is back at the preschool.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is due by the 10th of every month. There will be a \$10.00 late fee if received after the 10th. If your payment is more than 30 days late, your child will be suspended from attending, until your payment is made. There will be no guarantee that your child's space will be available at that given time.

Arrival and Departure

The operating hours are 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. The staff will be more than happy to open the doors at 7:30 AM. The staff may be here earlier than 7:30 AM, but they need the time to prepare for the day. Five minutes after the end of the scheduled day, if the parent or authorized adult has not picked up the child, the parent will be notified by telephone. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed beginning at 5:31 PM. Payment will be made directly to the staff member on duty. Children will only be released to Individuals authorized in writing by the parent. We will require a form of identification prior to releasing the child. After calling all emergency phone numbers for the child that has not been picked up he/she will be taken to the Archuleta County Sheriff Department after a half of an hour of waiting.

At the beginning of the day and at the end of the day, it is VERY important to sign your child in and out.

OSLS Preschool is a place where children laugh, sing, play and run. The environment is designed to stress sharing and caring. It is structured, yet within the structure there is freedom. Children can express feelings and experiment with many different learning challenges. Centers such as housekeeping, quiet area, puzzles, blocks, arts and crafts, toys, water table, etc., are provided so the child can choose what he or she would like to do and learn through discovery and play. Access to the gym allows for body movement as well as interaction among the children. During all transition times the staff member teaching counts how many kids they have-according to their daily schedule.

Curriculum

Early childhood curriculum includes:

Outdoor Play- running, jumping, climbing, ball throwing and catching

Indoor Play- blocks, trucks, housekeeping, puzzles, table games, sand, and water play

Art Experiences- experimenting and crafting with many types of media including paints, clay, paper, yarn, etc.

Social Studies-study of seasons, holidays, homes, church, community, health, etc.

Science Experiences-planting and caring for seeds, care of pets, using senses to discover the world, and cooking

Number Experiences- developing number concepts through use of straws, beads, measuring cups, songs and fingerplays

Musical Experiences-singing, listening, rhythm, and musical games

Language Activities- storytelling, use of books and poetry to develop pre-reading skills

Dramatic Play- socio-dramatic play, puppets, acting out stories

Religious Activities- daily lessons in Christian living through the use of flannelgraphs and the Voyager Series. On Thursdays, a chapel service will be held at 9:00 am to which parents are always invited.

Children's Dress Code

Our Savior Lutheran Preschool is a place for your children to have fun while they learn, so please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that match the weather. **No flip-flops are allowed.** Sandals are acceptable as long as they have a back heel strap. He/She will be engaging in very active play and should be comfortable. For the sake of safety, girls should not wear any dangling earrings and boys will not be allowed to wear any sort of earrings. Children should be toilet trained and have their bathroom habits established before the first day of school. They must be able to manage their clothing, being able to pull up and zip their pants, etc. Parents please provide an extra set of clothes in a zip lock bag to leave at the school in case your child might have an accident. Make sure all articles of clothing are clearly identified with child's first and last names. A hook and cubby is provided for each child. Our Savior Lutheran Preschool is not responsible for anything lost or stolen. Outdoors is part of our daily routine, so please include hats, and coats, boots, etc., when necessary.

Health/Immunizations

In keeping with the laws of the State Of Colorado, every child enrolling in school must present on or before their first day of attendance, proof of full immunization, or initiation of a schedule for immunization, or a certificate of exemption.

Daily Health Check

The staff will conduct daily observational health checks on the children as they arrive. Children are observed daily for signs of illness, abuse or neglect. If it is determined that a child is ill and must go home, a parent, guardian, or other adult authorized to pick up the child will be contacted and be advised the child cannot remain. Children who are ill will be placed in an area away from the other children until they can be picked up.

Sickness Policy

Please do not send your children to school when they are sick. Children who are not feeling well cannot participate in activities. There is not adequate staff to supervise individual children when they cannot participate. If you observe any of the following symptoms, your child cannot be at school:

temperature over 99.6	impetigo
uncontrollable or deep chest cough	sore throat
rash	pinworm or ringworm
vomiting	scabies or head lice
diarrhea	chicken pox measles
green nasal discharge	any communicable disease
strep infection or pink eye	hand foot disease

Medication

As a general policy, staff may not administer medication to children. If your child needs medication, give it to him/her before or after attendance at the center. In unusual circumstances, the staff may administer medications that carry the physician's prescription for that child. Medications must be kept in the original container. Containers must bear the original pharmacy label showing prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name, and directions for dosage. When no longer needed, medications will be returned to parents/guardians or destroyed.

Medication will be dispensed and a record made. Written records will include the child's name, date/time of medication, name and dosage of the medication and name/initials of staff who administered it. Medications will be kept in a locked storage area inaccessible to children and according to pharmacy instruction.

Discipline

Children at Our Savior Lutheran Preschool shall be treated with respect at all times. Only rules and limits which are absolutely necessary to a positive learning environment for children and teachers shall be enforced. Rules will be at the developmental level of the children both in vocabulary and expectations. These rules shall be reasonable and enforceable.

Natural and/or logical consequences will be utilized to help children develop effective ways of bringing about individual and social responsibility and prosocial behaviors. Efforts of all children will be recognized and competition will be avoided.

We believe in a positive approach to discipline. Our rules are basic: 1) walk in the room, 2) use an inside voice, 3) keep hands to yourselves, 4) put toys away after use. At no time will there be any corporal or harsh discipline. No humiliating or frightening discipline will be used, nor discipline associated with rest, nap, toileting or food. When “thinking time” or the “time-out” is used, the separation shall be brief and appropriate for the child’s age (one minute for each year of child’s age: i.e.: 3 minutes for a 3 year old, etc.)

When a child is separated from the group, the child shall be within the sight of an adult in a lighted, ventilated area. At the end of this time, we discuss why the child is there. How can we make sure it doesn’t happen again?

Sometimes a child may have difficulty even with those rules. At that time a conference is called with the parent to discuss an individual approach with the child to help subscribe to our rules.

Our goal is self-discipline, and we begin even at this early age to help a child be aware of responsibility for his or her own behavior. We believe that simple basic rules with a positive attitude and approach make this possible with the pre-school child.

Meals and Snacks

The children are required to eat the lunch provided through our lunch program. Snacks will be brought by the helper of the day. We feel that nutritious snacks from all four-food groups are essential in developing good eating habits in children. Do not bring soda. We do not want

to give the children empty calories as it is proved to not help the learning process. Children may bring birthday treats. Your child should eat breakfast at home before he/she comes to school. No gum allowed, please do not bring to school, child will be ask to remove it at arrival.

Nap Time

If your child will be napping at the center and wants to use a small blanket or pillow, you will need to provide this for your child. Label it with the child's name. Blankets and pillows must be taken home each week to be laundered. We appreciate your cooperation. Naptime will be observed every day between 1:00 PM and 2:30 PM. Your child will be required to rest quietly or sleep at this time.

Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Complaint

Under Colorado State law we are required to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according the state law. Any caregiver or staff member who knows or suspects that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the Archuleta County Department of Social Services, the Police Department, or Archuleta County Sheriff.

Archuleta County Department or Social Services

P.O. Box 240

Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

(970) 264-2182

Under Colorado State law we are required to post the Department of Human Services. If you have any questions or concerns about Our Savior Lutheran Preschool license you may contact:

Department of Human Services

Division of Child Care

1575 Sherman St., 1st Floor

Denver, CO 80203-1714

719-866-5958 or 970-564-4275/Edythe Eberhart

Edythe.Eberhart@state.co.us

School Closure/Inclement Weather

If it becomes necessary to close the center because of severe weather or other emergency, parents will be notified by phone. Staff will keep children at the center until a parent or authorized person can pick them up. If severe weather conditions develop through the night, area radio stations will be contacted. Staff will contact parents when there is to be a school closing.

Student Withdrawal

Two weeks (14 days) advance notice is required if you intend to withdraw your child from the program. Childcare charges can be prorated according to the amount for the month your child will be in attendance. If Our Savior Lutheran is closed you will be given a notice at the beginning of the year.

Television/Video Viewing

Commercial television/video viewing is not considered a part of the developmentally appropriate curriculum at Our Savior Lutheran Preschool. However, there may be times, when children at the Center are participating in learning activities or special events so videos may be used in the classroom.

Toys/Articles from Home

We have stimulating toys and play materials at Our Savior Lutheran Preschool. Therefore, we request **NO PERSONAL TOYS AND MONEY BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL** (including dolls and stuffed animals). Toys brought from home creates confusion among the children and interfere with the daily curriculum. Parents, please help us enforce this policy. (On Fridays and occasions we do have show and tell, and toys may be brought for show and tell we will notify you of these occasions).

Visitor and Volunteer Policy

At Our Savior Lutheran Preschool we have an open door policy. It is essential for parents to take an active interest in their child's preschool experiences. Parents are encouraged to visit, have lunch, and share their time with the children. Let us know what you are comfortable doing at the preschool. If you are not comfortable working directly with the children we have secretarial needs. The kids love to see their family in the room doing anything and it promotes a great positive self image. Please be observant of naptime. Visitors are any persons not directly associated with Our Savior Lutheran Preschool. Visitors must sign in on the visitor sign-in sheet located by the front door. Anyone not known to the staff of the preschool will be asked to show proper identification and reason for the visit.

Volunteers must also sign in by the front door. All volunteers must be approved by the Director.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of a major emergency (lost children, tornadoes, fires) requiring evacuation of the center, we will see to the safety of the children first. After the building has been cleared, authorities and parents will be notified. Children may then be picked up.

Transportation

At the time of enrollment, Our Savior Lutheran Preschool will obtain written permission from parent or guardian for transporting children on excursions during childcare hours. Children will be transported in vehicles equipped with safety belts. Children will not be permitted to ride in the front seat of a vehicle. Children at least 4 years but less than 6 OR at least 40 pounds must be secured in a child restraint system conforming to applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard. Children will be secured with seat belts if not in a car seat. Parents and volunteers will be instructed on policies and procedures before a field trip or outing. Instructions will include the following: permission forms from parents, road side emergency procedures, proper use of safety devices, maintaining a low ratio per child to assist and supervise children at all times, and emergency procedures. Children, who arrive late or don't have proper paperwork on a field trip or excursion day, will not be able to attend.

Parent Information

Important notices, parent newsletters, and children's items will be kept in cubbies at the front entry. Please check these regularly. Every few months a progress report will be going home in your child's cubby. If you have any questions about this report please talk to your child's teacher.

We acknowledge and respect that all families are different in their traditions, values, beliefs, etc. We try to model appropriate behavior for the children to follow with regard to these beliefs. If there are ever any issues that you may have with curriculum, activities, material, etc., please let me know and we can try and resolve and/or accommodate them.

Please work with me to keep communication open between the staff. The parent/staff relationship is as important to us as the staff/child relationship. Please avoid discussing problems and concerns in front of your child. Call during naptime at 731-3512 or Anette in the evening at 731-3548 by 8:00 p.m.

Revised 8/7/2014