

FAMILY HANDBOOK



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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Our primary goal is to provide a safe and healthy place for children to be cared for within a loving, Christian environment. Within this framework, our objectives are to promote appropriate social behavior within a group, at the same time, to recognize each child's personality and needs in order to provide a positive group experience.

First Lutheran Early Education Center {EEC} is owned and operated by First Lutheran Church and guidance is provided by the Oversight Committee. The EEC was originally begun in 1967 as Zion Lutheran Child Care located at Zion Lutheran Church in response to a growing need of the community for quality child care. The Center moved to First Lutheran Church in August 2005 when Zion Lutheran Church closed.

First Lutheran Early Education Center is non-discriminatory in regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, or sex in accordance with K.S.A. 44-1009.

MISSION STATEMENT & PHILOSOPHY:

First Lutheran Early Education Center serves the early educational, developmental, and spiritual needs of the children of our community by nurturing them in a Christ centered environment.

We welcome all families to First Lutheran Early Education Center. Families will feel nurtured and supported in their child rearing efforts while attending. Parents may bring their child for an orientation period before the first day of regular attendance to assure their comfort. Options for orientation are varied. Please contact the office at 913-677-2230 for arrangements.

CONFIDENTIALITY

First Lutheran EEC respects a family's right to privacy and confidentiality regarding all health, behavioral and developmental records and information concerning their child. These rights to privacy and confidentiality are protected by various federal and state statutes, local ordinances, accreditation standards, and regulatory rules. For example, if your child is involved in a biting incident with another child, First Lutheran EEC cannot reveal the biter's identity to you without written prior consent from the biter's parents, except as required by law. We strive to maintain confidentiality at our center. Please do not discuss other children with the classroom staff.

Written consent will be needed from the family before any information about a child will be shared with other relevant providers, agencies, or programs. The administrators, teachers, child's parents or legal guardians, and licensing authorities have access to the child's enrollment records.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

First Lutheran Early Education Center will make reasonable accommodations to provide services to persons with disabilities. All children are accepted on a trial basis.

If a child requires an IEP, special educators will be allowed to provide services at First Lutheran Early Education Center or children may be transported to school district locations by school district transportation. First Lutheran Early Education Center staff will attend IEP meetings as requested and follow guidelines which are established.

GENERAL POLICIES

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The center will open at 7:00 am and close at 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, with a few exceptions. A list of those exceptions may be obtained from the Director.

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

- Full-time or Part-time Preschool with Extended Child Care for children ages 2 1/2-5.
- Summer Program- If you decide to not have your child attend FLEEC for the summer but would like to hold their spot for the fall session, you may choose our special summer option of 1 day a week of care for 25% of the summer tuition. For example, if the summer program runs 11 weeks and tuition for a full time student is \$220/week, we would require \$605 to hold their spot for the upcoming fall session. This 1 day must be a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday unless you choose to pay the \$75 summer activity fee to participate in swim lessons which are held on Thursdays.

These two programs feature:

- Certified or degreed preschool teachers
- Developmentally appropriate preschool or pre-kindergarten programs from 8:30-11:30 AM, 5 days per week
- Extended child care, which includes outdoor play, story and nap time, music, snacks, arts and crafts, games, and more
- Special guests, activities, and field trips
- Care provided from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm

GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE

*subject to change

7:00-8:00 Breakfast served in lunchroom

8:00-10:00 Classroom Center Time

A.M. Snacks:

9:30 2.5-3 year old class

9:30 3-4 year old class

10:00 4-5 year old class

A.M. Playground or Gym:

10:00-10:30 2.5-3 year old class and 3-4 year old class



10:30-11:00 4-5 year old class

10:00-12:00 Classroom Center Time, Circle Time, Academic Activities

Lunch:

11:30-12:00 2.5-3 year old class and 3-4 year old class

12:00-12:30 4-5 year old class

After Lunch Playground:

12:00-12:30 2.5-3 year old class and 3-4 year old class

12:30-1:00 4-5 year old class

12:30-1:00 2.5-3 year old class and 3-4 year old class use bathroom and get ready for nap

12:50-1:00 4-5 year old class use bathroom and get ready for nap

1:00-3:00 All children rest for at least 1 1/2 hours

Afternoon Snack:

3:30 2.5-3 year old class and 3-4 year old class

4:00 4-5 year old class

Outside or gym after snack

5:00-6:00 Classroom Center Time

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Stretch N Grow- Monday

Gym Bus- Wednesday

Tippi Toes- Thursday

ENROLLMENT FORMS:

All forms must be completed before attendance can begin.

1. Child Enrollment Form
2. Attendance Contract
3. Authorization for Release/Visitation of Child
4. Medical Record {signed by the child's physician}
5. Authorization for Emergency Medical Care {notarized AND signed by child's parent or guardian}
6. Walking Field Trip Form
7. Sunscreen Permission Form
8. Confidentiality Form
9. Photo Release Form

Revised January 2015

PHONE NUMBERS:

Please notify First Lutheran Early Education Center of changes in any phone numbers or work numbers immediately. This is important so that we can reach you in case of an emergency.

TUITION, FEES, AND PAYMENTS

A current list of fees and payment schedules may be obtained from the Early Education Office. Payments should be placed in the locked tuition box located outside the EEC office.

1. Tuition fees are due on Monday for the week. The fees will remain the same even when the center is closed for holidays, building maintenance, staff in-service, etc. No credit will be given for vacation or sick days.
2. A 10% tuition discount is granted for a second child enrolled from the same immediate family for full time care.
3. A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed for every 5 days that tuition is late. Fees will be assessed on Friday mornings.
4. There is a \$25.00 returned check fee.

CHECK IN AND CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

1. Parents and guardians, or other persons authorized in writing by the parents or guardians must come in to the Center to sign their child in and out every day.
2. Let your child's caregiver know that you have arrived and are either dropping off your child at the Center or picking your child up. **IMPORTANT:** Please alert other authorized persons who may be unknown to our staff to identify themselves to the child's teacher. A driver's license will be checked.
3. Please check the Parent Information Board, note pocket and clipboard for communication that you may need to know.
4. For security reasons, the only doors which are unlocked during the day are the main south doors to the EEC and the west doors to the church.
5. There will be a charge of \$1 per minute when a child is picked up after closing time at 6:00 pm.

ABSENTEE DAYS

1. Parents or guardians must contact First Lutheran Early Education Center by 9:00 am any day their child will not attend. The Early Education Center phone number is 913-677-2230. You will be contacted by the Center if your child is absent and we do not hear from you.
2. If you know that you will be on vacation and your child will be absent for two or more days consecutively, we ask that you notify us as far in advance as possible.
3. There will be no reimbursement for days on which your child is absent due to illness, family vacations, or other reasons.
4. Two weeks written notice is required to withdraw your child from First Lutheran Early Education Center's program. If immediate withdrawal occurs, the family is still responsible for the two weeks of tuition.

ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME

1. Cubbies and coat hooks are provided for all children.
2. We cannot be responsible for toys or other items which your child may bring from home. If personal belongings become a problem in the group, they will be put in the child's cubby.
3. Please do not send guns, war toys or weapons with your child.
4. Please do not send candy or gum unless it is a special occasion. We encourage alternative selections for treats.

MEALS AND SNACKS

First Lutheran Early Education Center believes that good nutrition plays a vital role in the mental, emotional, and physical growth of children. A hot, catered lunch incorporating each of the 4 food groups is served daily. A morning and afternoon snack is also served. If your child arrives between 7:00 and 8:00 am, he/she may also eat breakfast.

Children who are allergic, or require special diets, will only be served foods recommended by the parent. To avoid allergy concerns, we request that treats for birthdays and other occasions be store-packaged with ingredient labels attached.

OUTDOOR POLICY

All children will play outside for a portion of each day unless weather does not permit. First Lutheran Early Education Center uses the Child Care Center Watch chart located in each classroom as guidance.

1. In the winter, please make sure that your child comes to the Center with appropriate outdoor clothing including: coat, scarf, mittens or gloves, and snow boots if appropriate. The children will go outside unless the wind chill makes it unsafe to do so.
2. All children will need a permission slip for sunscreen. Each parent is asked to provide sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Sunscreen will be applied prior to each outdoor period during the summer months.
3. Outdoor play is limited when the air quality is poor. Poor air quality could be due to air pollution, smog, allergens, etc. Alerts from local media or health department will be used as applicable.

NAP OR REST TIME

Kansas Health Department regulations require all children who are in care for more than 4 hours to be offered a rest time according to their individual needs. Children who do not sleep are encouraged to rest on their cot for at least 30 minutes, but are not required to remain on their cots for longer than one hour. Center policy does not allow for staff to keep a child awake at a parent's request so that the child will go to bed early at home. Children who fall asleep during nap shall be allowed to rest until they wake up or are awakened at the end of nap time. Children rest on individual cots. All families should supply a crib sheet and blanket. Bedding is laundered weekly by the parent. Children that do not sleep will be permitted to have a quiet time through the use of equipment which does not disturb the other children.

TRANSPORTATION

School bus transportation is provided by First Student Inc. for all school field trips. All children will be secured in their seats with a lap seat belt. A first aid kit and cell phone will be on every field trip. Attendance is taken before boarding the bus, upon arrival at the destination, at departure of the destination and upon arrival at school. A Field Trip Attendance form will be used.

SNOW DAY POLICY

It is First Lutheran EEC's main priority to keep staff safe while arriving to work during inclement weather. The Director will determine if the staff can arrive safely. It is also important that the grounds are clear and that it is safe for the children to get in and out of the building. Based on these criteria, the Director will determine if the EEC will be open, closed, have a late start or early closure. Closures will be listed on Fox 4 and NBC Action News {both online & on TV}.

ILLNESS:

Children who are ill may not attend First Lutheran Early Education Center. We follow these guidelines:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
2. The illness results in greater care need than the EEC staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following conditions:
 - a. Axillary {under the arm} temperature of 99 degrees or greater that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until the child is fever free without the assistance of medication or a medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility.
 - b. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness {such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs} until medical evaluation allow inclusion.
 - c. Two episodes of diarrhea or one episode of vomiting. This includes episodes that may occur at home.
 - d. Unknown rash
 - e. Purulent conjunctivitis {pink eye}, until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
 - f. Untreated head lice, scabies or other infestation.
 - g. Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stage.
4. Please notify the EEC by 9:00 am if your child will be absent due to illness. The Early Education Center phone number is 913-677-2230.
5. Contagious diseases such as strep, chicken pox, measles, pink eye, etc. should be reported to the Director so parents can be informed if their child has been exposed. This policy is a health department regulation.
6. Children who become ill while at the Center will be cared for away from the other children. The child's parents will be notified and expected to pick up their child within one hour.

7. Children should be free of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to First Lutheran Early Education Center. The EEC staff has the authority to prohibit a child from entering the Center if the child appears ill.

MEDICATION:

Prescription and non-prescription drugs may be administered at First Lutheran Early Education Center, but parents must first fill out an "Authorization to Give Medicine" form. We must have your child's name, name of medication, dosage, dosage intervals, and date to be given for any medication to be administered at the Center. In addition, prescription medicine must be in the pharmacy container with the name of the physician and date that the prescription was filled. While at the Center, all medication will either be kept in a locked box in the refrigerator or in a locked box in the Early Education Office.

COMMUNICATION:

Communication between parents and teachers is the key to making sure your child has a happy and healthy experience at First Lutheran Early Education Center. Each child has a note pocket or mailbox where information for parents is sent home. A newsletter will be published at the first of every month to keep parents informed about the EEC and upcoming activities. A parent board with information is in each classroom and outside the Early Education Office. Each teacher sends home a class newsletter once a month to let the families know what their child's class has been working on. We encourage daily discussion with your child's teacher at drop off and pick up times. First Lutheran EEC has an open door policy and your feedback is always welcome. If you wish to discuss any problem or concern, please call the Director or your child's teacher. If phoning is not convenient, notes and messages may be left on the classroom sign-in clipboard or in the teacher's note pocket.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

Children:

- To be respected
- To have a safe and reliable environment
- To have staff members who care about them

Parents:

- To be respected
- To have open and clear communication with staff
- To visit anytime
- To voice concerns and ask questions

- To schedule conferences with teacher(s) and/or Director

Staff:

- To be respected by children, parents, and other staff
- To work in a safe environment

RESPONSIBILITIES

Children:

- Share with others
- Clean up after themselves
- Treat staff and other children with respect
- Use appropriate language
- Take care of toys, friends, and their school

Parents:

- Treat staff with respect
- Use appropriate language in the school
- Respect the confidentiality of other families and staff
- Pay tuition and fees on time
- Share concerns with the staff
- Pick child(ren) up on time
- Keep child(ren)'s records up to date
- Inform staff when child is sick or taking a vacation

Staff:

- Treat children and parents with respect
- Provide a safe and caring environment
- Communicate with parents
- Be good role models
- Use appropriate language

FAMILY INVOLEMENT:

First Lutheran EEC has various opportunities for family involvement open to everyone. Parents and guardians are welcome to join us on any field trips or special activities here at school. Parents are welcome to volunteer in the classrooms or share any special talents/hobbies with the children. We also have yearly events that all families are invited to. These are not limited to but include,

Thanksgiving Feast, Holiday Breakfast and Sing, Family Picnic, Donuts with Dad, and Muffins with Mom.

VISITS

First Lutheran EEC has an open door policy. Families are welcome to visit the center during regular hours of operation. We encourage families to not visit during naptime so that the children can get their rest. Naptime is from 1-3 pm daily.

CURRICULUM:

First Lutheran Early Education Center implements the Creative Curriculum in the daily programming. The curriculum is designed to help children achieve developmental goals in the areas of physical, social/emotional, cognitive, and language development. Classrooms are set up in interest areas which promote development through active, hands on learning. Assessment and documentation are an integral part of the curriculum.

ASSESSMENT:

Children at First Lutheran Early Education Center are assessed regularly for progress in the areas of Social/Emotional, Physical, Cognitive and Language development. In keeping with our philosophy and mission statement, all assessments are developmentally appropriate, individualized, and a positive, non-stressful experience.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING:

First Lutheran Early Education Center utilizes the Ages and Stages Questionnaire {ASQ} as a developmental screening tool. All children will receive developmental screening within three months from the time of entry to the program. If necessary the teachers will use these results to make referrals to appropriate professionals.

CONFERENCES:

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held twice a year. At the start of the new school year, parents will be invited to a "Get Acquainted" conference with the teachers to learn about the child and family. Habits, customs, language, likes and dislikes will be discussed to assure a healthy and happy transition for the child. The second Parent/Teacher conference will be in the spring. Developmental progress will be discussed at that time. Sign up lists will be available for scheduling. Parents or teachers may request an additional conference time whenever the need arises.

TRANSITIONS

First Lutheran Early Education Center strives to provide continuity of care for children over time. We believe that children learn best when their environment is predictable and stable. However, as the

children grow it becomes necessary to transition to another classroom. Teachers collaborate with each other and with you to determine when this change should take place.

DISCIPLINE PLAN:

First Lutheran Early Education Center complies with all state regulations regarding discipline and punishment.

The first step in our discipline plan involves informing children, parents, and staff of the general rules we follow. The general rules are:

1. Be kind to one another and yourself.
2. Use walking feet and indoor voices.
3. Respect property of Center and one another.

Once the children understand what is expected of them, then logical consequences are used to help the children toward learning self-control. The teachers provide children with choices to make a positive change in their behavior. When the positive choice is not made, the teacher redirects the child to another area for play. When redirection is not helpful the children are encouraged to "take a break." Each classroom is equipped with a quiet area where the child may "take a break". The teacher then follows up with a short discussion with the child concerning plans to help prevent the behavior from happening in the future.

On the rare occasion that a child's behavior warrants further intervention, the child will be asked to "take a break" in the EEC Office. Whenever available, the Director spends a few minutes interacting with the child. The approach is to help calm an angry or upset child while encouraging the child to verbalize what happened, accept responsibility for their role, and express their feelings about it. The child is then accompanied back to the classroom and the teacher, child, and director briefly discuss the situation and possible ways to resolve it.

Occasionally, the behavior modification options above do not work and a conference is scheduled with the parents. Teachers, families and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Prohibited punishments, according to Kansas Regulations for Licensing, #28-4-47(d)(2) are:

1. Corporal punishment.
2. Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.
3. Binding or tying to restrict movement, or enclosing in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, or similar cubicle.
4. Withholding or forcing foods.

The Early Education Center Director should be notified immediately if you have knowledge of any prohibited punishment being used.

First Lutheran Early Education Center approaches discipline in such a way as to create an environment where all children can feel safe and secure. This is accomplished when the EEC Staff, parents, and children work together.

TERMINATION OF CARE:

The Center reserves the right to terminate care of any child, with given notice two weeks in advance for the following reasons:

- Non-payment or frequent late payment of fees
- Consistent abuse of policy
- Any reason deemed sufficient by Director and the Oversight Committee

If a parent initiates termination of care, for any reason, they must also give two weeks' notice, or pay for the two weeks.