

'Sharing Jesus with All Ages and Nations'

Child Care Center Parent Handbook

Establishing a Solid Foundation

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to provide a general overview of the Holy Trinity Lutheran Academy Child Care Center's (hereinafter called the **Center**) activities and policies. Please become familiar with the handbook and let us know if you have questions.

Our Mission

The Center is an early childhood ministry of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and Academy (WELS). Our mission is to spiritually nurture the children in our care in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Word.

We strive to provide positive role models and the environment needed to help each child develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

Our Devotional Program

We seek to spiritually nurture the children in our care by combining the teaching of God's Word at an age-appropriate level with the modeling of Christ-like love and behavior from the staff. To develop their relationship with God, the children will be taught the following Bible truths:

The true God is Triune—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All people are born sinful.

Sin separates us from God.

The Holy Spirit brings us to God through the Gospel in Word and Baptism (we practice infant baptism).

God's will for us is revealed in the 10 commandments.

Jesus came to take away the sins of the world.

Everyone who believes in Jesus and is baptized has forgiveness of sins and everlasting life.

As God's children through faith, we can pray to Him and He will answer our prayers. We want to obey God out of thanksgiving for His love.

We have daily Bible studies and Chapel on Friday morning. Our pastors also visit us for devotions on Wednesday mornings. Additionally, we pray before each meal.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES Licensure

The Center is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services' (DHS) Division of Licensing. Our license number is 1046394. You may reach the DHS at (651) 431-6500 with any questions. The Center is visited regularly by state officials, and we go through a thorough licensing evaluation at least every other year.

Operating Hours

We are located at: 4240 Gettysburg Ave N, New Hope, MN 55428. The main telephone number is (763) 533-0600.

Room extensions are:

Infant	206
Guppy	207
Goldfish	208
Preschool A	204
Preschool B	205
Preschool C	206
Director's Office	209

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7am to 5:30pm. We operate 12 months of the year, except for major holidays and observations:

New Year's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day (July 4)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and the following day Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the following day

Nondiscrimination Policy

The Center admits all children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the children at the Center.



Staff and Personnel Qualifications

All of our staff members—teachers, assistants, aides and volunteers—meet or exceed the requirements of the DHS. They have been carefully screened and interviewed, and DHS background checks have been administered to assure the children's safety while in the Center. The staff participates in continued education opportunities through meetings, classes, and conferences to keep abreast of the best practices for early childhood learning centers. We are committed to providing opportunities for our staff to develop to their full potential.

At the same time, we select our staff on the basis of their appreciation for children, positive attitude and love of teaching.



Our low ratio between staff and the children ensures that your child will receive optimal care, attention and opportunities for learning and development.

Employee After-Hours Disclaimer

We discourage soliciting our staff members for work outside the Center. Should you choose to engage one of them to work with your family, we are not responsible for your child or the actions of the employee outside of the Center.

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

The Center serves children from 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten age. We will enroll children based on age, development, and class size at each level. These levels are:

Infant: At least 6 weeks but less than 12 months Ones: At least 12 months but less than 24 months

Toddler: At least 24 months but less than 36 months

Preschoolers: At least 36 months but not yet attending kindergarten

Our licensed capacity is 105 children, and we make every effort to keep the numbers at a level that works best for the children and the staff.

Initial Registration Fee

A non-refundable fee of \$150 is due for the first child and then \$50 per child thereafter. The required information included in each registration packet must be received by the Center prior to attendance, unless approved by the Director. Forms include, but are not limited to, the registration form, an emergency card, the health history form, the non-prescription medication form, etc.

Tuition Policies

Tuition is due in advance of service. The SmartCare app will send out an invoice on Thursday. You must pay the tuition each Monday morning or the morning of your child's first day of the week. Late payments may be assessed a \$10 late fee. If paying

by check, they should be placed in the mailbox in the hall.

Checks are payable to Holy Trinity Lutheran Academy. We also offer automatic withdrawals from checking or saving accounts.

We take credit card payments through our Center app or in the office.

Tuition must be current for continued enrollment. All accounts overdue by 2 weeks may be asked to discontinue enrollment until tuition is paid in full and made current in accordance with our standard policy.

NSF service charges will be assessed for returned payments (\$60 per returned charge by bank).

You may issue 1 payment for all enrolled children in your family.

Upon enrollment your family will sign a full time or part time service agreement. At no time will we be able to change contracts weekly, although you have the option if you need something long term.

Our tuition schedule is provided separately in the parent folder.

Financial Child Care Subsidies

If you qualify for state assistance, you must contact the county in which you reside for the steps that must be taken.

Vacation and Holding Fee

A holding fee of \$150/week for part time, or \$175/week for full time, per child, is charged when there is no attendance for an entire week. A 2-week notice is required unless extenuating circumstances arise and are approved by the

Director. This non-refundable holding fee arrangement can be used for a maximum of 4 full weeks, unless approved by the Director.

If a parent plans to remove the child from the Center for a period of 4 to 12 consecutive weeks, with the intention of returning after that time, a holding fee of 1 week of tuition will be assessed. This fee will be paid prior to taking the extended break. If the break is longer than 12 weeks, we cannot guarantee a space will still be available in the child's room.

Multiple Child Discount

Families with two children will receive a 10% discount off the second child each week. Families that have three children in the Center will get 20% off the third child each week.

Attendance and Absence

Please notify the Center if your child's starting time varies from the normal schedule or the child will not be in attendance for the day to ensure that we have proper staffing.

Safe Arrival and Departure

A parent or guardian must enter using their 5-digit door code and sign their child in using their Kiosk QR code—and make certain that a staff member knows the child has arrived in the classroom. We ask that you help the child with outerwear and belongings as needed.

Children are released only to parents and guardians. Specific written permission is necessary for other arrangements. That person must show proper identification, such as a driver's license, if staff members are not familiar with them. Please refrain from sharing your door code with authorized pickups as we must check ID upon their arrival.

Please keep your child with you at all times to guarantee safety while on school premises. We are

not responsible for any accidents or injuries that may occur when the child is not under the care of the Center's staff.

The Center's hours of operation are 7am to 5:30pm. If you will have trouble with those times, please call the Center and contact another authorized person to pick up or drop off your child if possible. Regardless of the reason, a fee of \$1 per minute may be assessed for any child present in the Center before 7am or after 5:30pm.

Courtesy Tips for Arrival & Departure:

- Please turn off your vehicle and take the keys out of the ignition before entering the Center in the morning and afternoon.
- Turn off or turn down loud music.
- Please drive slowly when approaching the building in case a child is in the area.
- Please do not leave other children unattended in your vehicle.

Custody Arrangements

When parents do not reside in one household, the parent listed on the registration form will be considered the child's primary parent. All communications about the child will be with the primary parent.

The Center will abide by all court-ordered custody or visitation arrangements. Please share those orders with the Director when appropriate; she will ensure all staff members are aware of the limits around access to the children.

If, however, there is no such order, the Center must remain neutral on all issues relating to the custody dispute, and—by law—we cannot restrict access to the child by either parent.

Withdrawal and Termination of Enrollment

We require **written** notice to the Director at least 2 weeks in advance of withdrawal from enrollment. Tuition is required in full for the 2-week duration, regardless of the child's attendance or absence. Parents will sign a contract to this effect upon registration.

The Center may terminate a child's enrollment for reasons of family non-compliance with the Center's policies. Additionally, the Center may terminate enrollment if it is determined that the Center is not reasonably able to meet the child's needs. The Center will communicate with families in an effort to resolve difficulties; termination of enrollment is the last resort.

Grievance Procedure

The Center is eager to meet the needs of families. Please consult your child's teacher **FIRST** if you have a concern. Within 2 working days, your child's teacher will confer with you and, if needed, initiate a plan for resolution of the concern.

In the event that your child's teacher is not able to resolve the issue in a timely way or to your satisfaction, please consult the Director. Within 1 week, the Director will confer with you to develop a plan for resolution of the concern.

We are confident that the combined efforts of the family and the Center will satisfy expectations. However, if necessary, please consult one of the pastors of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. You may expect to confer with a pastor no later than 2 weeks after initial contact.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Immunizations and Physicals

The DHS requires that we keep current health and immunization summaries on file for each child. At registration, current immunizations and a medical checkup are required. Within 30 days your child must have a medical checkup, and a Health Care Summary signed by the physician must be produced.

Families must keep their child's health information current by informing the Center of any recent vaccinations. This record must be updated at least annually. In addition, the child must have an updated exam when transitioning from one room to the next.

First Aid Procedures and Emergencies

All of the Center's staff members are trained in pediatric CPR, first aid, SUIDS, AHT and containment of blood-borne pathogens. We maintain first aid kits in compliance with the requirements of the DHS and OSHA. If a child needs minor first aid, a staff member will assist the child.



If an injury requires non-emergency professional medical attention, the family is contacted by telephone. In the event of a health or safety emergency, the Emergency Medical System (911) is activated. The family or responsible adult, as designated by the family, is contacted. It is **CRUCIAL** that your child's file contains **up-to-date emergency contact information**. If a child is transported to North

Memorial Medical Center, it is at the family's expense.

Medication Procedures

The Center will administer prescribed medications to children when all doses cannot be given in the home. The parent must complete a Medication Permission form. The parent's responsibility also includes noting on the daily sign-in page that the medication is to be administered.

"Over-the-counter" medications—sunscreen, diaper cream, etc.—may be administered at the parent's request and at the discretion of the Center's staff. A Medication Permission form must be completed and may last up to 3 days without a doctor's prescription. For children under 2 years, a dosage chart may be brought in from a physician's office.

All medications must be in the original container with the pharmacy label. They will be stored securely by the Center.

All medications must be presented to Center staff directly and must never be sent in the lunch box or backpack for self-dosing.

Tylenol and other fever-reducing pain medications will not be given by the Center employees without a doctor's note indicating the reason why it is to be administered. We will also require the specific times and the dosage to be given to the child. Thank you for your understanding.

Illness/Exclusion of Ill Children

The Center is not permitted to provide child care to ill children. If your child becomes ill, (s)he will be made comfortable under the supervision of a staff member. Parents or family-designated adults will be contacted and advised to retrieve

the child. Once a parent is contacted, the child must be picked up within <u>60 minutes</u>. (An Illness Report form will be presented for signature at this time.)

Symptoms of illness may include, but are not limited to: undiagnosed rash or mouth sores, fever (temperature of 100°F "auxiliary" or higher), vomiting, diarrhea or abnormal stool (2 consecutive occurrences), significant respiratory distress or the inability to maintain scheduled daily activities. Children will be sent home at the discretion of the Center.



In the event of respiratory distress, your child must be back to normal, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to the Center.

If your child is diagnosed with pink eye, the child may not return to the Center until he or she has been on medication for 24 hours and there is no continuous eye drainage or matting.

If your child has lice, the Center has a **no nit or live egg** policy. The child may not return to the center until they are nit-free. Upon return, the teacher will examine the child's hair to confirm. We engage professionals to check our children twice per year to ensure that we are maintaining a lice-free environment.

Families are expected to protect the health of their own children and the children of others by keeping a child home if there are any symptoms of a communicable disease. You are **required to notify the Center within 24 hours** if a child has contracted a communicable disease.

The Center will inform families by posting a form on the doorway of each room of the

presence of a contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, etc. so attention is paid to symptoms.

These health policies may be subject to change without notice, as the Center follows all policies of our state health consultant. When their policies change, ours will as well.

Hand Washing

To help control the spread of illness, children (and teachers) wash their hands several times a day. We also wash the infants' hands after every diaper change.



Disinfectants

To further control the spread of germs and illness, every evening the floors, tables, and toys are disinfected using a bleach solution as required by the DHS.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Reporting Child Abuse

The Center is required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect. Each of our staff members are instructed to report suspected incidents <u>directly</u> to DHS or the National Abuse Hotline.

Safety Checks

We regularly check recall notices for toys and our cribs to ensure the safety of the children.

Building Security

For the safety of our children, we take every precaution to monitor the doors that access our space, and we reserve the right to screen

visitors. Please contact any staff member if you suspect the presence of any unknown person in or near our facility.

Safety Drills

The Center practices year-round monthly fire drills. From April through September, we practice monthly tornado drills. ALICE drills (for lockdowns) are held twice per year.

Severe Weather Procedures

When a major storm arises during any day when the Center is in operation, we will follow this procedure:

We will closely monitor the weather situation.

In cases of severe weather, parents should plan accordingly and pick up their children before the Center closes for the day.

Parents may telephone to notify us if another authorized adult will pick up their children if they cannot.

We are proactive in enhancing the safety of both the children and our staff. In order to release staff, we may consolidate classes. DHS ratio and staffing requirements will still be met.

In an immediate emergency, such as a tornado warning, we will move the children to a designated safe area.

The Center may close if Robbinsdale School District 281 is closed due to snowfall, blizzard, ice or other hazardous road conditions. The Center will not close due to extreme temperatures.

When the Center is closed, it will be listed on KARE 11 as well as on Holy Trinity Lutheran's Facebook page. A decision will be posted by 6am.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

General Behavior Practices

The behavior guidance policies of the Center are in accordance with the guidance of DHS Rule 9503.005 Subpart 106. The policies comply with these requirements and:

Ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior

Are tailored to the developmental level of the child the Center is licensed to serve

Redirect children and groups away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict

Protect the safety of children and staff

Provide immediate and directly-related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior

The following actions by the Center's staff members are prohibited:

Subjecting a child to corporal punishment
Subjecting a child to emotional abuse
Separating a child from the group except as
provided in the classroom separation policy
Punishing a child for lapses in toilet habits
Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing or
medical care as a punishment for
unacceptable behavior
Physically restraining a child, other than to
hold a child when containment is necessary

Persistent unacceptable behavior of a child will be handled as follows:

to protect a child or others from harm

Staff will observe and record the behavior of the child and staff responses or interventions.

Staff will consult with the child's family to address the behavior and develop a plan of

action. This may include consultation with other staff or other professionals.

Professionals outside the Center will not be actively involved without the family's permission.

Continuing enrollment may depend upon the family's cooperation and partnership in resolution of behavior or developmental concerns.

Classroom Separation

At times, we may remove a child from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other behavior management techniques. This "time out" space, usually a chair, is located away from the current classroom activity but in the teacher's sight. In some extreme instances, the child may be taken to the administrative office. After a short period of time, the teacher will talk with the child again to reiterate the appropriate behavior. After returning to the class activity, the child will be treated with the same affection shown to the other children.

Your Child's Day

Educational Program Plans

Education programs are designed specifically for each age level. Age-appropriate activities promote learning and development.

Our infants receive individual attention and care with a variety of activities, such as talking, singing and play. The teachers keep a written record of each infant's activities during the day.



The Center uses American Sign Language to help infants communicate their needs in a manner adults can understand.

Teachers create lesson plans that reflect a balance of teacher-guided and child-initiated activities. Consistent routine and stimulating activities give children a sense of security and encourage learning.

We strive to create a setting in which the children find an abundance of opportunities for movement, exploration, and discovery. We provide daily access to interest areas that are supported with toys, equipment and other materials need to carry out at least 5 stations:

Creative arts and crafts
Construction
Dramatic or practical life activities
Science and music
Fine motor activities
Large motor activities
Reading/quiet time
Sensory stimulation



Reading aloud from a large collection of books helps to develop children's language skills and imagination. At this age, children learn by doing; they like to spend their time pretending. Dress-up clothes and puppets are a few of their favorites. Play helps children develop physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively.

Outdoor Play

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Our children play outdoors daily as required by the DHS unless weather conditions prohibit. Temperature limitations include, but are not limited to, actual temperatures of below 0 degrees and above 95 degrees. The amount of play time spent

outdoors will be adjusted based on the varying conditions. Outdoor activities may include nature walks, water play and playground time.

Please consider your child's needs for appropriate outdoor clothing. Children are encouraged to dress themselves as much as is age-appropriate. Independence and ease are key factors in choosing jackets, snow pants, boots and gloves. Items must be labeled with the child's full name. In the summer, please bring sunscreen for your child. Proper gym/running shoes are required for outdoor play.

Large Motor Room

We are able to use our large motor room daily for physical development. This room encourages large muscle movement.

Field Trips

Preschoolers may go on field trips with signed permission from a parent. A staff person trained in CPR and first aid will accompany them. When preschoolers go on field trips, parents may sign up to chaperone. Toddlers may also go on field trips with parents' permission; there is always a 1:1 ratio between toddlers and chaperones.



Transitioning from Room to Room

When transitioning children from one room to the next, we will provide you with information on what you and your child can expect from the new class. Each classroom transition requires an updated social résumé and an updated Health Care Summary from the primary physician.

Meals and Snacks

The Center provides table service, 1% milk (for children ages 2+), and whole milk as morning and afternoon snacks for your child.

You will need to bring an unopened box of cereal or breakfast bars (which will be used only for your child) if you wish for him or her to eat breakfast at the Center. Children are able to eat breakfast until 8am.

We ask that you bring a dishwasher safe water bottle for your child to use throughout the day. The staff will sanitize them throughout the day, and they will be sent home on Fridays.

Our Center provides a catered hot lunch for children ages 12 months and older. In our Center, you either enroll for hot lunch or you bring your own lunch. Pricing for lunches is included in child care costs. If you have a special allergy, we will charge a \$7 upcharge for special allergen pricing per meal. If you decide to pack your child's lunch we ask that your child's lunch has components of each food group. If we consistently have to supplement meals, a \$0.50 charge will be assessed per item.

Our staff members sit at the tables with the children to encourage conversation and interaction. They are also able to reinforce table manners and teach self-help skills, such as eating alone without being served.

If your child has or develops a food allergy, please tell us immediately. We will have forms to fill out, especially for our infant classroom, when they have tried a new food and are approved to have it at the center.

We welcome birthday treats. Let your child's teacher know that you will be celebrating your child's birthday with a treat. Per Minnesota state law, please remember that birthday and other treats to be served to children may not be homemade. Treats must be in their original packages with ingredients listed to help the teacher identify ingredients for children with food allergies. We monitor and adjust snacks for food allergies on an individual basis. We reserve the right not to serve candy and fruit snacks based on the MyPlate guidelines.

Nap and Rest Time

Each day the Center is quiet for a flexible period of time following lunch. The Center provides a cot for each child. Children may bring a pillow, blanket, soft toy or other comfort items. These items should be clearly labeled with the child's name. They are sent home to be laundered a minimum of every week or sooner if necessary.



The staff promotes restfulness by darkening the rooms and playing quiet music. Children are required to rest quietly for at least 30 minutes. More time can be allowed if needed. Security items such as a blanket to comfort 1-year-olds or toddlers are welcome at resting time. Pacifiers are not recommended for older toddlers and preschoolers.

Infants have their own cribs, and they sleep according to their own schedules. Please refer to the policies in the Infant Registration Packet for further details. No "loveys," fleece, or 2-ply blankets may be in a crib with an infant.

Clothing and Diapers

Each child brings multiple sets of extra clothing from home to be stored in a container at the Center. These items must be labeled with both the first and last name. Keep in mind seasonal changes in clothing needs. The Center is supplied with limited extra clothing items.

Families supply disposable diapers only, wipes, and ointment and these items need to be labeled for your individual child's use. We accept pull-ups/easy-ups for children during potty training.

Classroom staff will notify families when supplies are low. Please label everything that belongs to your child, from pacifiers and bottles to snow boots, with first/last name.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a part of the toddler program.

Comprehensive guidelines for this process have been established and will be provided when your child enters the toddler classroom. We stress cooperation with the parents.

Families are asked to share their toilet training plans with the teachers in advance so we may ensure consistency with the child.

Teachers will encourage the children to make toilet training a positive experience.

. Parents will continue to pay the toddler rate in the preschool classroom until their child is toilet trained. Pull-ups are required in the preschool room.

Being toilet-trained in the preschool room means no urine in the underwear or pull-up and 2 or fewer bowel movements (BM) in underwear or pull-ups per week. Please note: The preschool teachers are focused on student learning and scheduled daily activities. We ask that parents primarily assist their children with toilet training techniques and tools at home.

Toys

We cannot allow children to bring toys from home, except on special occasions. When the time comes, please be aware that we cannot allow any toys resembling weapons of <u>any</u> kind. All toys will be kept in the child's cubby, labeled with their name, until the appropriate share time.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, which owns and operates the Center, desires to serve your entire family with the good news of God's love in Christ. From time to time, the Center will promote the church's ministries and can, at your request, provide you with information to learn more about our church.

Preschool children participate in Holy Trinity's Vacation Bible School program in early August, the Christmas children's service and holiday events and gatherings. They also sing in church throughout the year.

Parent Information Folders

Along with day-to-day greetings, our teachers communicate with parents about their child's day. Information about each room's events and other announcements will be placed in a parent folder outside of the classrooms. Please check your folder at pick-up. We also send out newsletters weekly via email.

Public Relations

We obtain written permission in accordance with DHS regulations when children are involved in research, public relations or other ventures in which identity may be disclosed. Student observation projects and occasional publicity photos in the Center (where identity remains confidential) do not require specific written permission, but we will inform families of occurrence.

School Portraits

Your child may have the opportunity to have school pictures taken. Parental permission is required before this is done.

Conferences

Conferences are held twice yearly, in late fall and in spring. The teachers will share specific observations and information about the development of each child. Goal setting and conversation is key to the continued success of the home-school partnership. Conferences are a time for parents and staff. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of families or educators, and the Director may be present.

Visitation

Adult family members can visit the Center at any time during its hours of operation. Please notify the Director if you plan to do so.

