

**Messiah Lutheran
Preschool**



**Parent Handbook
2020-2021**

**324 South Howard Street
South Williamsport, PA 17702
570 326-9171**

Notes:

The purpose of the Messiah Lutheran Church Preschool is to encourage the educational and social development of young children. The primary goals are to help each child grow physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and intellectually in a climate of understanding. It is not the intention of the school to infringe upon the realm of regular public kindergarten, nor is it a pressured learning situation.

ENROLLMENT

The school aims for an enrollment of no more than 12 and 8 children in the 3-4 years old classrooms and 20 students in the pre-kindergarten class. Students are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests for specific teachers will not be considered.

TUITION

Tuition for the five-day programs is \$210 per month. The \$30 registration fee is non-refundable unless we are unable to place your child. **Each monthly payment is due by the 2nd of the month** in order for your child to remain in school.

Tuition checks should be made payable to Messiah Lutheran Preschool, 324 S. Howard Street, South Williamsport, PA 17702. Payments may be made to the school coordinator in the preschool office or be mailed to the church office. We also will have online billing available through the Brightwheel app. Please be advised that Brightwheel does charge a convenience fee. If you choose to pay online with a credit card there is a \$6.09 charge. However, if you choose to pay ACH, there is a .60 cent charge. All payments through Brightwheel do have the option of auto-withdraw.

Should any questions regarding tuition arise, please contact the school's coordinator. No adjustments will be made for absence due to illness, extended out-of-town visits, early withdrawal, etc. Parents must notify the coordinator or teacher one week in advance if they are planning to withdraw their child from the school.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions no visitors of preschool age may attend classes.

Notes:

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

You may walk your child to the door of the classroom by using the rear entrance to the building. Also, you may drive into the church alley, and your child will be escorted to his classroom by school personnel. **All student's temperatures will be taken before they enter the building. If a child's temperature is 100.4 or above, he/she will not be permitted to attend class. To return to school, they child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine.**

For the first week of classes, parents may walk new students (those not enrolled in Messiah Preschool last year) to the classroom. After the first week, students must be dropped off at the **Bald Eagle Alley entrance**. With Covid, we would like to allow the children to have some sense of normalcy.

All students that have attended last year will be permitted to have their parent drop them off the first day only (as they are already experienced in the normal drop off routines at the preschool). **In order to limit the amount of people in the alley, the preschool will use a staggered start system.**

The **Pre-K** students (**Mrs. Jones class**) will begin class at **8:30 a.m.** This class will dismiss at **11:30 a.m.**

The **3-4 year old** (**Mrs. Cooley's**) class will begin at **8:45 a.m.** This class will **dismiss at 11:45 a.m.**

Students in these two classes will be dropped off at the **Bald Eagle Alley entrance**.

Please make sure you are timely for pick up. If unforeseen circumstances arise, please call and let the preschool staff know you will be late. A \$5.00 fee will be charged if pick up is more than 10 minutes after dismissal time. **Reminder: The staff will only release your child to the person(s) listed on your registration form. No exceptions.**

Notes:

COMMUNICATION

Newsletters will be emailed or sent home at the beginning of each month listing describing the kinds of activities the children will be doing in school that month. With the use of the Brightwheel, you will be able to watch your child's day unfold in real time! You can communicate with your child's teacher and see what he/she has been learning. Lesson plans, monthly updates, pictures, and any last minute information can be communicated all through this app! We are excited to utilize this program and keep everyone connected.

We want the preschool to be a comfortable, happy place in which your child grows and learns. At times, you may have questions, concerns, or suggestions you want to discuss with your child's teacher, which you can do with the use of the Brightwheel app. If you would rather meet with the teacher, that is fine too. Please feel free to schedule a time with her before or after class.

EMERGENCY CANCELLATIONS

The preschool will follow the weather emergency decisions of the South Williamsport Area School District. If the district's schools have one hour delay, our classes will begin one hour later than normal. If there is a two hour delay, classes will begin two hours later than normal. If the district announces an early dismissal, our preschool will dismiss at regular time. They will make up these missed sessions. If the district cancels, then Preschool is canceled. Check your radio and television for information. The days will be made up with the make-up days built into the calendar. The Coordinator will also email all parents, post on our preschool facebook page, and communicate any cancellations through Brightwheel with the latest information on weather-related days.

Notes:

PARKING

Parking is available in the large church parking lot along South Howard Street. Use this lot if arrangements have been made for a teacher conference or other activity. Do not park in the church parking lot in the Bald Eagle Alley. These parking spaces are strictly for church employees and handicapped individuals.

If someone other than a parent will pick up your child, please inform the teacher or call the church office. The person picking up your child must be named on the registration papers. **No exceptions.**

CLOTHING

Will we allow smocks from home, will we provide and wash regularly?

Perhaps ask parents to provide an old oversized shirt that can be used as a smock? ALSO MUST BE LABELED!

Because the children will often be working with art materials such as glue and paint, and because they will be playing outside, they should not wear good clothing to school. **Smocks are available at school and will be worn when possible. ????????** Smocks may be sent from home. This, as well as all outer clothing such as sweaters, coats, and boots should be clearly marked with each child's name.

Clothing that is easy for children to manipulate encourages independence and makes them feel good about themselves. It also greatly helps the teachers at dismissal time. Please practice these skills at home.

It is imperative for all students to be appropriately dressed for outdoor play to keep safe and warm. All students should have at least a winter coat during the colder months, and absolutely no flip flops may be worn during warmer months. Children may play outside if the temperature is 40 degrees and above. This includes the wind chill factor.

Each child should have a backpack for school. It should be able to hold full-size sheets of paper. Do not send backpacks with wheels; they do not fit in our "cubbies." ??????????????????

ILLNESS

We want to limit the spread of illness among the children to the greatest extent possible. Please help by following these recommendations:

1. Children are encouraged to be toilet-trained prior to admission to school. An occasional accident may occur, but parents may be called if accidents become frequent. This may be the first time your child uses the toilet without a familiar adult close by.

Gently speak with him/her about using toilet paper, flushing, and hand washing.

2. You should keep your child home if any of the following symptoms are present: sore throat, fever of 100.4 or higher, nausea or vomiting, skin rash or sores, inflamed or swollen eyes, diarrhea, coughing, or headache. Please inform us if your child contracts a communicable disease.

3. We expect that most medications can be given at home, before or after school hours. However, if your child needs to take medication of any kind during school hours, a Student Medication Form must be completed. All medication must be delivered in its original container **and must have the prescription label attached. All medications must be delivered** to the preschool coordinator to be kept locked in the preschool office during school hours. Medication will be administered by preschool staff only, and each administration will be documented appropriately in the Medication Administration Log.

4. If a student is found to have head lice, the coordinator **must** be notified immediately, and the student may not attend Preschool until he has been treated and is no longer contagious. The parent will be given a list of procedures that must be followed before the student may return to Preschool. After the procedures are completed, the parent may bring the student back to Preschool, and the coordinator will check the student's head for active lice or unhatched nits (eggs). If none are found, the student may attend class; otherwise the student must return home with the parent for continued treatment.

*Do we need a copy
of the actual
prescription?*

As soon as possible after the coordinator has been made aware of a lice case in the Preschool, all students' heads will be checked by Preschool staff. If anything appearing to be lice or unhatched nits is found, the student will be removed from the classroom and the parent phoned immediately to take the student home. Students' coats and hats will be followed for a minimum of two weeks. All parents will receive a written note the same day informing them of the possibility of lice, the action taken and the results. Head checks will be repeated on the first day of each school week for a minimum of 3 weeks.

BRINGING TOYS FROM HOME

At this time, we ask that no toys be brought from home due to COVID-19.

Eventually, we will allow toys from home when it is deemed safe. Teachers will be in charge of designating their own show-and-tell days.

SNACKS

Each child should bring his/her own snack to school each day. In addition, each child should bring a filled water bottle each day. In case of an accidental spill, the school will have water on hand to give the child.

SNACK SUGGESTIONS

Jelly Sandwiches, cut in half or quarters

Cheese chunks

Cheese and crackers

Washed and cut fruit

Washed and cut vegetables

Cream cheese spread may be used with cut veggies but **please do not send peanut butter due to possible student allergies.**

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The primary goal of discipline at our school is self-discipline. Discipline is defined as communicating limits on behavior to help a child develop positive social interactions, concepts of acceptable behavior, understanding of limits, built-in controls of behavior, and a healthy self-image appropriate to the child's age. In reaching this goal, our teachers will use positive reinforcement techniques.

In the event the child needs more guidance, our teachers use the "time-out" method as a tool for discipline. If "time-outs" do not achieve the goal of effective self-discipline, the following steps may be taken:

1. A parent/teacher consultation is arranged to make the parents aware of the classroom situations and to try to find alternative methods that may work in the classroom and at home.
2. The preschool coordinator is contacted to help with further discipline and may temporarily remove the child from the classroom until the child can return to safe participation.
3. At the teacher's request, a conference is arranged for the parents, teacher, and Pastor. In the course of this conference, the Preschool staff may refer the child to another children's program which may better suit his/her needs.*
4. If the child continues to be disruptive parents/guardians will be asked to remove the child each day he/she exhibits the same behavior.
5. The child is referred to the Preschool Committee for further review of the situation and a final decision on whether the child should remain in the school.

*If a child exhibits violent behavior directed toward person or property, the procedure begin at step #3. The child will not be permitted to return to the classroom until a conference is held.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND FIELD TRIPS

The daily schedule includes various instructional activities, as well as songs, stories, and arts and crafts. The Pastor assists with Bible stories on major religious holidays.

Without exception, all students must ride school transportation to and from all field trips. This eliminates confusion which could lead to compromises in our students' safety.

NOTES

Please report immediately any changes in address, phone number, or emergency information to the preschool coordinator or to the church office.

If monthly newsletters or additional information is needed by more than one parent, please make arrangements with your child's teacher.

BRIGHTWHEEL APP

We will be utilizing the free app Brightwheel! With this app you get real-time feed of activities throughout the preschool day. Teachers can share photos to your device as the day unfolds. And you are able to stay connected with our teachers and strengthen school learning with activities at home. Teachers will be posting all lesson plans, monthly calendars, and responding to any messages you may have! We are also able to provide the option of Paperless billing. Simply download the app and connect to our school!

Need to work on wording here...

