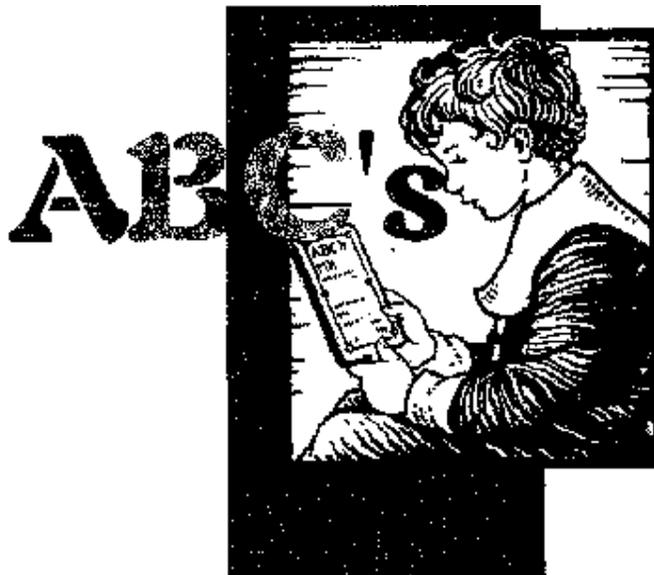


OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN
EARLY CHILDHOOD
HANDBOOK



PARENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN EARLY CHILDHOOD
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

500 W. Tidwell Houston, Texas 77091
(713)290-8277 / Fax (713) 290-0850

MISSION STATEMENT
“Serving Families for Jesus Christ”

PHILOSOPHY

Our Savior Lutheran Early Childhood program is designed to nurture the whole child through intellectual, physical, social, emotional and most importantly spiritual development as we seek to build a foundation for classical Christian education.

- To develop a child intellectually to reach his/her God given potential as he/she discovers, communicates, conceptualizes and creates and to lay a foundation for school readiness skills.
- To develop a child physically in both fine and gross motor skills, to establish habits that lead to a healthy and safe development, and to recognize his/her body as a creation of God.
- To develop a child socially in recognizing his/her relationship to others as Jesus commanded us to love one another, to resolve conflicts in a God-pleasing manner and to promote a sharing, cooperative, and respectful environment.
- To develop a child emotionally in a loving, nurturing, Christian environment so that he/she will have a positive self image and recognize that he/she is a beloved child of God.
- To develop a child spiritually so that he/she knows God’s love and grace as revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior and to instill Christian values for daily living.

In conclusion, early childhood is that special time when both fact and fantasy can live joyously in the heart of a child, and so it is a time to be enjoyed and preserved. Yet it is a pivotal time, for whatever the child hears, sees and does today will greatly influence his/her tomorrow. It is a time when seeds of positive self-worth, self-mastery, self-discipline and Christian growth need to be planted so that they may ripen in the child's future life.

POLICIES AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

The program's policies and procedures are outlined in this handbook and in supplemental notes and newsletters we will send you from time to time. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please contact the Preschool Director, Lynette Cherington or the Principal, Lance Gerard. We are a fully accredited Early Childhood Program through National Lutheran School Association (NLSA) and the Consortium for Classical and Lutheran Education (CCLE).

CURRICULUA

These early years are crucial in building the foundation for success in future school learning. The following are the curricula we use at OSL:

We use the Christian based *A Beka* curricula for learning the alphabet, phonics and handwriting. We also use *A Beka* for learning numbers and early math skills. This is a traditional, classical Christian approach to teaching early literacy in math and language. It is age appropriate with lots of interaction between the student and teacher. Along with the *A Beka* curricula, students will be exposed to favorite childhood classic stories, poems and nursery rhymes.

Character training in Christian values is also intentionally taught throughout the day. Through orderly classroom routines, use of manners, teacher examples, Bible story time, and discipline, Christian values are taught, practiced and reinforced.

We use *One in Christ* from Concordia Publishing House as our religion curriculum. Our Bible stories are introduced in chapel and then retold in a variety of ways throughout the week along with doing Bible crafts to reinforce the Bible truths learned. Our Bible stories are chronological beginning with Creation, Old Testament stories, the birth of Christ, His ministry, death and resurrection and some stories of the Apostles.

The truth of Jesus Christ is always our focus in everything, and our teachers are committed to bringing that truth into all parts of the curriculum.

Additionally, children will attend a music class with Mr. Armstrong once a week. For the further development of gross motor skills, and students will attend weekly a gym class with Ms. Lunsford. Daily playground (weather permitting) and center time is provided. Through unit themes and observation of nature, social and scientific concepts are studied as well.

Furthermore, Your child's experience is enriched by visits from special guests and programs on campus and celebrating special days such as Teddy Bear Day, Gingerbread Man Days, Winter Wonderland Day, etc. Off campus field trips are also planned to enhance our early childhood program.

ENROLLMENT

RACIALLY NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY: Families are invited to enroll their child(ren), whether or not they are members of Our Savior Lutheran Church. Our Early Childhood Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin which entitles them to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students at the Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies or any other administrative programs.

1. All students must register for enrollment each year.
2. The registration fee must accompany a student's online enrollment package. **No refunds or transfers of the registration fee will be made. The registration fee will be refunded if the Board of Parochial Education declines to accept a student for enrollment.**
3. State law requires that an immunization record be provided for the child's records before the beginning of each school year. This may be obtained from your doctor.
4. When re-enrolling, all student fees, charges, and balances must be current prior to enrollment.

AGE REQUIREMENTS: Children who are **three years old on or before September 1st of the current school year and potty trained** are eligible for in enrollment in our preschool 3 year old classes. Children who are **four years old on or before September 1st of the current school year** are eligible for the pre-kindergarten classes.

Once the child is enrolled in the program it is assumed that he/she will be with the program throughout the school year (August-May).

In the event that there is space available for preschool students, the following is recommended:

Children who turn three between September 1 – December 31 of the current school year, would be able to enroll at the beginning of the second semester in our 3 year old preschool class if space was available. It is understood that any child who was not three before September 1 and is currently enrolled in our preschool program, would need to be re-enrolled in the three year old preschool class for the following school year, not advancing to pre-kindergarten until age requirement is met.

Once the school year has begun, the right to move a child from one class to another is at the school's discretion only, if his/her needs can be better met in another group. This will be discussed with the parent, prior to taking place.

If a child has special needs which cannot be adequately met in the classroom, the school reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment with a return of a prorated registration.

CLASS SIZE: The class size will be limited to no more than 15 students in each Pre-K class and 12 students in each preschool 3 year old class to maximize the amount of attention each child receives from teachers and aides.

FINANCES

Tuition/Extended Care Payments: Non Members

Pre-Kindergarten and Preschool 3's: All non-member families (families who are not members of Our Savior Lutheran Church) pay tuition monthly through FACTS.

If tuition payments are 30 days in arrears, the family shall be informed, and the child will not be allowed to attend classes until the account is current.

Members of Our Savior Lutheran Church:

Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten Tuition ONLY: Our Savior Lutheran Church views the program of its Parish School as an integral component of the total ministry of the congregation. Accordingly, the church does not require its members with children in the school to make direct tuition payments. The congregation does; however, expect that the contributions of its member parents will represent 10% of the total family income (a Biblical Tithe) or, if the contribution is less than a tithe, that it represent the "Member Contribution Rate" established by the Board of Parochial Education each school year. The board of Parochial Education will monitor member contributions to ensure faithful Christian stewardship is being practiced and at least minimum support levels are maintained.

Extended Care (Members & Non Members): For both Pre-K and Preschool 3's, you will be billed monthly for the Extended Care program you choose. Payments for Extended Care will be paid monthly through RenWeb.

ADMINISTRATION

The administration of Our Savior Lutheran School Early Childhood Center rests primarily with Board of Parochial Education elected by Our Savior Lutheran Church. Each board member is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church and is elected by the voting body of the church. The Director is the chief administrator of the Early Childhood Center and works with the Principal of the school and the staff. The

Director is directly responsible to the Board of Parochial Education who in turn is accountable to the congregation.

ABSENCES AND WITHDRAWALS

When your child is absent due to illness, please contact the school's director as soon as possible. After two weeks of successive absences without any notification from parents/guardians, the school will drop the child from its roll and an opportunity will be extended to another child to fill the opening. In this case, no tuition refund will be made.

POTTY TRAINED POLICY

Children should arrive in underwear and wear the underwear during the entire school day. This includes naptime. Pull-ups and plastic pants are not considered underwear. While there are designated times when each person in the class takes a turn using the potty, children must be able to recognize when they need to use the restroom and tell their teacher.

Children must be able to use the potty independently. This includes aiming, wiping and flushing. Children must be able to pull down and pull up their clothing items independently. Teachers will most certainly help with buttons, snaps and zippers, etc.; however, the goal is to foster independence and self-confidence. With that being said, we ask that you consider this when choosing clothing for your child to wear to school.

We do recognize that from time to time an accident will happen because someone has waited too long to head to the potty. However, children should be able to recognize when an accident has occurred and alert the teacher. A potty-trained child does not play in or sit in the remnants of an accident.

MEDICATION POLICY

All medicine administered by Our Savior Lutheran School is given by the school secretary. ALL medication must be current. Written orders are to be submitted to the school from a physician for prescription medication detailing the name of the drug, dosage, and the time interval in which the medication is to be taken. These orders are to be reviewed periodically as deemed necessary by the school. The label on the prescribed medication needs to meet these requirements:

1. Prescription medication must be brought to the school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. The label must be current including the child's name, the doctor's name, and dosage.

2. Over the counter medications such as cough drops, cough lozenges, headache medicine and the like must be brought to the school in the original container and have a note from the parent to the school allowing the child to have them during school.
3. An Authorization Form must be signed by the parent at the sign-in counter before any medications, prescription or over the counter, will be administered to a child by the school secretary. The school does not have any supply of aspirin or non-aspirin medications for students. Records are kept of all medicine administered to the students by the school office.

FOOD ALLERGIES

A physician's statement must be on file for all children with food allergies. Special needs will be addressed on an individual basis.

ILLNESS & EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

Children may not attend school or will be sent home from school for the following reasons:

1. Oral or ear temperature of 100.4 or higher
2. 2 episodes of vomiting within a 24 hour period
3. 2 episodes of diarrhea with a 24 hour period
4. Lice, rashes, or other skin irritations which require medical attention

Students may NOT return to school until they are symptom free without medication for at least 24 hours.

If a student becomes ill at school, he/she will be kept at the front lobby or the Director's office until parents are able to pick up the child.

Please notify the school immediately when your child becomes ill with any communicable disease.

EXTENDED CARE

Our Extended Care program is a Monday through Friday program. Our hours of operation on school days are: 7:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Our Extended Care program is only offered to those students who attend Our Savior Lutheran School (preschool - 8th grade).

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students will be placed in Extended Care if they arrive before 8:45 a.m. and/or have not been picked up by 2:15 p.m. and will be charged accordingly.

Please see the school calendar or the Extended Care Rate schedule for the days in which all facilities are closed and no extended care is offered.

Note that on school holidays when school is not in session the Extended Care hours are 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

RATE FOR NONE SCHOOL DAYS: We will follow the same extended care rate schedule and will include a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack for all age levels.

Late fees are incurred should a child be picked up after 6:00 p.m. The late fee is \$1.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m. This fee is added to the monthly payment.

During the afternoon a snack will also be given to the children who are staying in extended care.

DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES

Drop Off Morning Procedures:

If your child arrives between **7:00-7:45 am**, please walk your child to room B111 in the ECE Building where they will be checked in by a staff member.

If your child arrives between **7:45 – 8:45 am**, please bring your child to the appropriate Extended Care room in the ECE Building:

All Pre-K students will have morning Extended Care in room B107.

All Preschool students will have morning Extended Care in room B111.

Pre-K and Preschool classes begin promptly at 9:00 am and teachers will begin receiving students in their rooms at 8:45 am. When your child arrives, the teacher or aide will sign them in.

Pick-up Procedures at 2:00 pm:

Teachers will release students ONLY to their parents or regular pick-up person as designated by the parents. If an individual other than the parents or regular pick up person will be picking up your child from school, please e-mail or give the director a call noting the change of person picking up your child. The person will need to stop by the ECE front desk or Director's office to present their ID before the child will be released.

At 2:00 PM children are picked up at their classroom door. Upon pick up, your child's teacher or aide will sign him/her out for the day.

Extended Care Pick-up after 2:00 pm:

If you are picking up your child along with an older sibling at 3:15 pm, please let us know, so that we can get them ready and waiting for the car pick up line. The Extended Care teacher will sign your child out once they have received notification that you picked up your child. Two staff members will supervise the car pick up line in front of the ECE Building from 3:15 – 3:30 pm.

With exception to above-mentioned situations, you will need to check your child out of Extended Care through the staff member at the front desk of the Early Childhood building.

**** To officially check your child out of Extended Care, go to the staff member at the front desk of the ECE building. The staff member will check out your child through the computer system and then you may go to the Extended Care room to meet your child.***

DRESS CODE

We do NOT require a uniform in preschool or pre-kindergarten. However, we do suggest your child wears appropriate play clothes and closed toe shoes (**i.e. no flip-flops, sandals, Crocs**). We do have pebbles on the playground and the closed toe shoes are a must. At the beginning of the school year, each child should bring an extra set of clothes labeled with their name and placed in a gallon size Ziploc bag in case of accidents.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Backpacks, lunch kits, jackets, nap mats, etc. must be labeled. **We reserve the right to label anything not labeled.**

Please do not allow your child to bring personal toys, video/audio tapes, books or any other personal items to school. We cannot be responsible for items if lost, damaged or destroyed. Our program is equipped with an adequate supply of toys and manipulatives.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS

During the school year, both pre-kindergarten and preschool students may go on occasional field trips. There are usually at least two field trips a year, one in the fall semester and one in the spring semester. We encourage parents to attend field trips as teachers do need help with supervision. All field trips will be taken on the OSL school bus with an authorized driver. An emergency first-aid kit is kept on the bus at all times.

Families will be informed about the field trip several weeks prior to the date. Emergency medical consent forms and emergency contact information will be taken with the sponsors on the bus. All children participating in the field trip must wear a field trip t-shirt. This shirt may be purchased in the school office.

For the safety of our children, we require a background check on all chaperones attending field trips.

The adult/child ratio on field trips will be one adult to three children.

COMMUNICATION

Good communication between parents and the school is important and fosters an understanding between parents and the school. So that we may better meet the needs of your child, please keep us informed of such things as birth of new siblings, a severe illness or death in the family, or anything that may cause stress and strain in your child's life.

Weekly newsletters will go home in your child's folder to keep you informed of happenings in the classroom, and the director will send home a monthly newsletter to also keep you informed. Please check your e-mail often to stay informed.

Your Parents-web in Renweb is another source of information. Also you may consult the school's website for additional schedules, calendars and menus.

If at any time you have a question concerning the school's policies and procedures, please discuss with the director your concerns.

For your child's benefit, please keep us informed of any changes in phone numbers, physicians, employment or any other pertinent information.

CONFERENCES

Parents of our early childhood students are asked to participate in two conferences during the school year. Prior to the parent/teacher conference, you will be asked to sign up for a time to meet with your child's teacher. You may request additional parent/teacher conferences if the need arises.

PARENT TEACHER LEAGUE (PTL)

Our school has a very involved parent group. We invite every family to get involved. Our PTL (Parent/Teacher League) is very supportive of what our school needs. It is a wonderful way of finding new friends who have the same interests and goals for their children. Each class has room mothers who assist with all parties and special celebrations. We encourage every parent to get involved.

DISCIPLINE

A well-planned day, with smooth transitions and a variety of activities should keep discipline problems to a minimum. However, if challenges occur, discipline will be handled in a kind and loving way. Discipline is not punishment, but an opportunity to teach self-control, acceptable behavior, and Christian attitudes and orderliness. God's Word will be our guide in evaluating these actions and determining appropriate discipline. Positive examples of behavior will be discussed with the child. A private discussion with the student may follow to reinforce the classroom guidelines. However, a child may be held firmly or removed from the room if the behavior is such that it would harm themselves or others. NO corporal punishment will be directed toward any student.

LUNCH TIME /SNACK TIME

During our school hours of 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM a morning snack and lunch is provided. The monthly menu will be sent home for each family. If a child does not want the snack or lunch provided, he/she may bring one from home. Usually once a week, snack will also consist of various recipes prepared by students during their cooking experience time.

CHAPEL

On Wednesday mornings at 10:00 am, we will have chapel. There will be a short chapel talk about the Bible story for that week, and we will praise God with songs and prayers. Parents are encouraged and always welcomed to attend.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

We have planned parties at the following times: Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and at the End of the School Year. These parties will be held during school hours and room mothers will plan them along with the teacher.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Teachers recognize individual children's birthdays in their classrooms. In addition, birthdays may be celebrated during morning snack time or at lunchtime. Please notify your child's teacher if your child will be bringing a special birthday snack to celebrate his/her birthday. Please do not send whole cakes; cupcakes and cookies are recommended. Please do not send party favors. Birthday invitations will only be handed out if the whole class has been invited.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Children are to be supervised at all times on the playground. Throwing rocks is not permitted. Climbing on the fences is prohibited. Children should not be permitted to play on the school playgrounds without adult/parent/teacher supervision. Children are to use all playground equipment properly and safely.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

The posted speed limit on campus is 10 M.P.H. Exceeding that limit places our children in danger. **Parents, please remember it is an unlawful act to leave a small child unattended in a car. We would appreciate everyone abiding with this.**

CLOSURES

When the school must close due to an act of God, i.e., loss of electrical power, flooding, etc. parents will be contacted as early as possible. The school cannot make alternate arrangements to cover those situations. When school must close due to severe weather, we will inform parents through a Parent Alert Text Message, e-mail and on our school's Facebook page.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

If parents have questions about any minimum standards, a copy of the Minimum Standard Rules for Texas is in the director's office for your perusal. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have. If a parent needs to contact the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services you can reach them at 713-940-5277. They can be reached at their website address: www.tdprs.state.tx.us

RESOURCE NUMBERS

Local Child Care Licensing
713-767-2521

Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-252-5400

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are required at least once a month. The children are to exit the building immediately and go to the parking lot behind the ECE building. They are to remain there with their teacher until the "all clear" is given.

SEVERE WEATHER DRILL

The state requires us to have a severe weather drill at least once each six months. They are assigned specific locations where they are to remain until the "all clear" is given.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES CAMPUS ALERT

Our Savior Lutheran School has specific emergency procedures in place for other emergencies where the school is in lock down until the emergency has passed.

PARENT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is to acknowledge that Our Savior Lutheran Early Childhood program has provided me with a copy of the Parents Policy and Procedures. I have read and become familiar with this handbook.

(Print name of parent/guardian)

(Name of child)

(Signature of parent/guardian)

(Date)

STAFF'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

_____ (Print name)

This is to acknowledge that as a member of the Our Savior Lutheran School Early Childhood Program, I have received and read a copy of the Early Childhood Handbook.

(Staff Member's Signature)

(Date)