

# CHRIST LUTHERAN LEARNING CENTER

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## PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

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## PROGRAM

### Welcome!

The staff and Board of Directors at Christ Lutheran Learning Center (CLLC or The Learning Center) proudly welcome your family to our early learning center. We hope that your involvement and investment in our center proves to be an enriching experience for both you and your child(ren).

### Purpose

During their early years, children need a stimulating environment which will provide them with experiences that will aid in developing their potential. They need supportive experiences which will help them develop a positive self-concept.

Christ Lutheran Learning Center offers a program which will provide your child with a wide variety of learning experiences. In a Christian environment, your child will be free to explore his environment and will receive guidance in participating in activities in which he/she will be able to experience success.

### Goals

To provide opportunities for Christian learning of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through formal classes, chapel, and informal living-learning environments.

To provide opportunities and activities to help your child have a healthy self-concept which includes accepting himself/herself, his/her limitations, and his/her talents as God has given to him/her.

To provide experiences and activities which will fulfill your child's basic individual needs (spiritual, emotional, psychological, intellectual, and physical).

To provide guidance as your child becomes less self-centered and starts taking part in small group and large group activities.

To provide interests and experiences which broaden your child's aptitude for future learning.

### Administration

The Learning Center is part of the education program of Christ Lutheran Church. The policies and activities of the school are controlled and guided by the Administrative Board of Christ Lutheran Learning Center. This board is appointed by the Faith Formation Committee at Christ Lutheran Church. It is operated as a non-profit ministry to the children in our community.

### Staff

Our teachers are crucial to the quality of this program. Providing good physical care is just the beginning point in building trusting, secure relationships needed for a child to thrive. Our teachers have been carefully chosen for their warmth and nurturing skills. They are sensitive to the individual and recognize that each child is unique and different from every other child. Our teachers participate in

training that includes leadership training conferences, staff meetings, and workshops. Our teachers are certified in pediatric CPR and first aid. They also receive a minimum of 24 hours of training/enrichment each calendar year.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Christ Lutheran Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Christ Lutheran Learning Center is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and follows the policies that are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501.

## **CURRICULUM**

As educators, we are aware that each child develops according to his or her own internal time clock. Therefore we gear ourselves to your child's individuality and encourage him or her in all areas of growth.

Our program may appear informal and flexible, but the curriculum and environment are the result of careful, detailed planning based on the best available knowledge of child growth and development. Young children learn best through activity and personal experimentation with toys, equipment, and materials. We emphasize **process** and not the end product.

Our goals are:

### **Physical development**

- \* To provide opportunities to develop large and small muscles.
- \* To develop an awareness of the five senses.
- \* To learn to take care of one's own physical needs.
- \* To introduce children to the principles of good nutrition, physical fitness, and personal hygiene.

### **Social development**

- \* To help each child develop and enhance his or her interpersonal skills and respect for others.
- \* To help children understand how people function in groups.
- \* To provide children with a positive experience exploring similarities and differences among people.
- \* To encourage children to respect other cultures.
- \* To build a tie between the home and the school.
- \* To encourage children to develop a positive attitude toward teachers, school and learning.

### **Emotional development**

- \* To foster each child's sense of personal worth and value.
- \* To help children develop a good self-image, a wholesome attitude toward their bodies, and a good start toward reaching their potentials.
- \* To provide opportunities for acceptable outlets for emotions.

- \* To encourage independence.
- \* To encourage freedom of expression, understanding and acceptance of limits.

### **Intellectual development**

- \* To nurture within each child the qualities of curiosity, imagination and independent thought.
- \* To provide stimulating experiences which encourage children to think, analyze problems, and arrive at different possible solutions.
- \* To stimulate language development through hearing and using language.
- \* To use imagination, participate in and appreciate different forms of personal and group expression.

### **Moral development**

- \* To stress courtesy, respect and genuine concern for each person's well-being.
- \* To aid in the establishment of a moral foundation, that each child will learn to value honesty, kindness, responsibility, and the importance of respecting and sharing with others.
- \* To learn tolerance of other cultures and religions.
- \* To empower young children to counter bias.
- \* To help children notice and do something about unfair behavior and events.

## HISTORY

Christ Lutheran Learning Center began in the fall of 1977 with one class of twelve four year olds with Carol Holley as the first teacher and director. At that time Christ Lutheran Church was located on Austin Avenue here in Georgetown.

In September of 1980, Becky Bernhard was hired to teach the three year old class. A few months later Carol Holley moved out of state and Becky became Director in January 1981. Becky then hired April Peters to teach the four year olds and Becky taught the three year olds as well as being Director. Christ Lutheran Church moved to its current location and additional classes were added to the preschool program in May 1982.

In June 1996, April Peters became Director when Becky retired. Since April has become Director, new programs were created such as our toddler class, Summer Kidz Kamp, Early Morning Drop Off, Afternoon Extended Care, Parent Meet & Greet Social, Community Garage Sale, and the annual "Committed to Kids" teacher conference. However there are many things that have stayed the same: activities that the children love no matter what generation... such as our annual Mud Day, Thanksgiving Brunch, Texas Days, and Art Show.

Although a lot of changes have taken place since Christ Lutheran Learning Center started in 1977, our goal has remained the same. We continue to strive toward providing an excellent program and meeting the needs of the families that we serve.

## 1. Enrollment

Enrollment at the Learning Center is limited in order to maintain a low student-teacher ratio. The birthday cut-off for each preschool class is September 1st. All children in the three and four year old classes must be toilet trained. An occasional accident can be expected of any preschool child. However, children who regularly soil themselves cannot be enrolled. Priority for enrollment is given to families who currently have children enrolled in the program and to members of Christ Lutheran Church. Thereafter, openings are filled on a first come, first serve basis. Upon selecting CLLC to meet your child's educational needs, the following enrollment paperwork is required before your child can start our program:

- Enrollment Application
- Admission Information
- Child Assessment Form
- Media Consent Form

All enrollment forms must be turned in by July 15. If these forms are not submitted in the time stated, enrollment will be suspended until all forms are submitted.

## 2. Registration

Beginning in February the registration process for the next year begins. At this time, a registration fee of \$90.00 is required per child per year for enrollment in this program. There is an additional fee of \$30 for either the optional Monday program or Friday program (\$60 for both). A detailed copy of the enrollment form can be requested at the preschool office.

The registration fee is a **non-refundable fee**. By June 1, all families pay for May's tuition for the next year. You may mail it in or drop it off at the preschool office. This tuition is refundable only if withdrawal is done before July 15. After July 15, no tuition is refundable, unless it is due to a job transfer or military reassignment. Please submit a letter on letterhead regarding the transfer.

If mailing your tuition, please send it to:

Christ Lutheran Learning Center  
P.O. Box 895  
Georgetown, Texas 78627

## 3. Immunization

Each child enrolled must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education. This requirement applies to all children in care from birth through 17 years of age. All immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) describes the conditions under which individuals can seek exemptions from Texas immunization requirements. Exclusions from compliance are allowable on an individual basis for medical

contraindications, reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, and active duty with the armed forces of the United States. The school will accept only the originally signed and notarized official affidavit forms developed and issued by the Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch. No other forms or reproductions will be allowed.

A copy of either your child's immunization record or affidavit form must be submitted with your child's enrollment paperwork.

#### **4. Vision and Hearing Screening**

All children enrolled who are four years old or older by September 1 must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems before admission, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment. A licensed or certified screener or a healthcare professional must conduct the screening.

The preschool must have on file the individual visual acuity and sweep check results, or an affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which the affiant is an adherent or member.

#### **5. Tuition**

This preschool is a non-profit organization and exists to provide a ministry. Tuition rates are determined by the Learning Center Board and reflect a non-profit policy. The rates are based on projected needs for the nine month period divided into a monthly fee. Tuition, therefore, cannot be reduced for months with holidays. Payments are due on the first day of each month and considered late after the fifth day of each month, unless other arrangements are made with the Center director. Payments received after the fifth of the month are subject to a late fee of \$25.00. A \$25.00 service fee will be charged for returned checks. Repayment of the check must be made by cash, cashier's check, or money order.

There are no refunds for illness, absences, or withdrawals after the first of the month. Thirty days written notice is required for withdrawal so we may fill the vacated spot. You are responsible for the full amount within that 30 day period. Tuition payments should be returned in the tuition payment envelope. These payments may be given to a staff person or left in the basket outside the Learning Center office. Families with more than one child enrolled will receive a \$25.00 per month discount for the second child. Make all checks payable to:

**CHRIST LUTHERAN LEARNING CENTER or CLLC**

#### **6. Non-payment of Tuition**

After the 5th of the month, the preschool will either send you a text or a reminder note regarding your late payment. If after 15 days of non-payment, a letter will be sent with the following options: (1) bring the account current; or (2) withdraw child(ren). If these options are not taken, your child(ren) will not be allowed to continue after the end of the month in which tuition has not been paid. It is our hope that at this point action to pay this bill would keep us from having to take any further steps to collect. Enrollment in The Learning Center at a later date will not be permitted under any circumstances if account is not paid in full.



## 7. Items to Bring

Here are the items you should bring to school:

- Lunch box filled with a nutritious meal
- Water bottle
- Backpack with extra clothes (pants, shorts, shirts, socks, and underwear).
- Nap mat or bed roll
- A blanket and a pillow case to cover the nap mat
- Optional items: “comfort” toy or object (i.e., teddy bear, doll, cloth diaper or any other toy or object which will help your child feel at home).

Everything must be labeled. Please use a laundry pen or “Sharpie” indelible pen.

## 8. School Attendance

Regular attendance is important in any school program. It is difficult for the child to feel part of a group if attendance is irregular, and bad habits and poor attitudes toward school may be formed. Also, it can be disturbing to your child, besides the other children, to enter a group already involved in an activity if he is always tardy. Please make it a habit to have your child here no later than 8:40 a.m. so that they can participate in all activities.

## 9. Class Times

Classes are held at The Learning Center from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday nine months out of the year beginning in September.

Other optional classes offered:

- Monday and/or Friday enrichment classes (8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)
- Early morning drop-off at 8:00 a.m.
- Extended care from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Extended late pick-up to 4:30 p.m.

## 10. Arrivals and Departures

Children are not allowed in the classroom until 8:25 a.m. as teachers may still be preparing for the day and may not be in the classroom. The only exception are those children that are participating in early morning drop-off.

Children should enter the building through the double glass doors by the Bell Tower. If your child is potty-trained, we ask that you have your child stop by the restroom before entering the classroom.

### Early Morning Drop-off:

The children that are registered for early morning drop-off may enter the building at 8:00 a.m. and be dropped off at the early morning classroom.

Arrival and Departure in RAIN: If it is raining significantly at 8:25 a.m., the children will be able to enter the building through the sanctuary doors beneath the overhang. The staff door monitor will be waiting at those doors to receive your child. We ask that you remain in your cars until you reach the sanctuary

doors. If it is raining hard at pick-up time, we ask that you remain in your cars as well. We will bring the children to the sanctuary doors, and will load them into your cars as you pull forward under the overhang.

**Upon arriving children must be signed in and out each day** by the custodial parent or adult person approved by the parent(s). Each classroom teacher will have a weekly attendance log posted outside the classroom for the parent/guardian to complete upon arrival and departure of their child and must be maintained.

Plan to pick up your child on time. All children are released from the classroom. Written permission is necessary before anyone other than parents or other designated persons may take the child. Anyone picking up a child who is unknown to the school staff will be asked to show a picture identification card before the child will be released. A child will NOT be released to anyone under 18 years of age.

**If your child is not picked up within 10 minutes after dismissal time, you will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child as a late pick-up fee. Late pick-up fees will automatically be charged to your account at the time you pick up your child. Failure to pay late fee may result in the dismissal of your child from school.**

If a parent appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, as determined by the Director upon arrival, a member of the staff will offer to take call a person of their choice for help or them home. We want to insure that the child and the parent arrive home safely. If the parent refuses, the police will be called immediately.

Helping children to comfortably separate (say good-bye) from their parents is a key component in our program. This may be your family's first experience with separation. Please know that we are sensitive to individual needs and feelings. In order to ease the process, parents and teachers should work together to create a bridge between home and our program. We have found that when a parent feels comfortable at The Learning Center, their child will as well. The building of a relationship between parents and teachers is the foundation for the child's positive experiences in school.

We recommend that parents say a quick "good-bye" to their child and tell him/her when they will return. We ask that if your child is upset at arrival time, that you allow the teacher to take your child from you so you can leave quickly. The teacher will then be able to interact with your child and engage him/her in the classroom activities.

Staying too long will also make the separation more difficult. If you are concerned, you may wait out of sight of your child, and we will gladly report back to you. Children generally become eagerly engaged in a classroom activity shortly after a parent leaves.

## **11. Custody Situations**

The Learning Center has no legal authority to refuse either parent the right to pick up their child unless a court has granted temporary or permanent custody to one parent or to a third party. The Learning Center will follow a court order

exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, The Learning Center has the right to terminate care.

## 12. Emergencies or Delays

Please call the school as soon as you realize you will be delayed or if there is any problem that will affect your child while at school. We want to give teachers the opportunity to reassure your child regarding any change in routine.

## 13. Bad Weather or Snow Days

If Georgetown ISD closes schools or has a late starting time due to snow or other bad weather, the preschool will also close or start late. Please listen to local TV, radio stations, and the website for announcements.

CLLC reserves the right to close the preschool to ensure the safety of our staff and students even if GISD chooses to have school during inclement weather. Teachers will make every effort to contact parents as soon as the decision is made.

## 14. Illness

Children may not be brought to school if they are ill. We are depending on you to help us maintain this policy. A child who has fever, sore throat, or any other symptoms of contracting a contagious disease should not be sent to school.

A child should be free of symptoms for **24 hours** before returning to school. (See the chart at the end of this Handbook for specific illnesses.) Please also notify the school when your child is ill or will be absent for any other reason. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified and asked to pick up your child from the school office. **Your child may not return to the preschool for 24 hours from the time they are picked up at preschool.**

### OTHER HEALTH POLICIES

**Allergies** – You must notify the Preschool of any allergies your child may have on the admission information form. You will need to see the Director if your child has severe allergic reactions requiring the use of an EPI-PEN. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that any emergency use medication is current. A copy of your child's allergy plan must be submitted to the preschool office.

**Nut Allergies** – The Preschool is **not** a nut free environment. You must notify the Director and indicate on the admission information form if your child has a nut allergy.

**Emotional Well Being** – Please let us know if your child has or is experiencing a traumatic situation at home. The Preschool staff will be supportive at all times. The church staff is also available to help in difficult situations.

**Health Check** - A visual or physical assessment of a child may be made by the teacher to identify potential concerns about a child's health, including signs or symptoms of illness and injury, in response to changes in the child's behavior since the last date of attendance.

A child who is too ill to participate in outdoor activity should remain at home until they are able to participate. If a child is absent more than one day or is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please call the Director to discuss the nature of the illness so that we may alert others to possible exposure.

**Medication** – The Preschool will not administer medication to any child. We feel that our hours of operation are such that parents will be able to administer medications to their child at home. Please plan in accordance of this. **DO NOT LEAVE** any medication in your child's bag as this creates a health hazard for other children in the room. If your child has a severe allergy that requires medication (i.e. bee stings, nuts), please notify the Director.

**Tuberculin Testing** – Requirements for tuberculosis screening and testing vary across the state. At this time, the Preschool is not required to have its students tested for tuberculosis.

## **15. Serious Injury or Illness**

In an extreme medical emergency, 911 will be called. The child will be transported to the hospital designated on the child's admission information form unless EMS determines otherwise. Any expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the child's family. Always be sure the school knows where to contact you. Keep all phone numbers and addresses current in our records.

## **16. Discipline and Guidance Policy**

Guidance (or discipline) will be based on an understanding of the child's needs and development. The staff will focus their attention on positive, appropriate behavior.

Children are encouraged to use words to express their feelings as well as to work out difficulties. Even the very youngest children are exposed to verbal problem-solving. Teachers try to help the child put his or her feelings into words: "You are angry because \_\_\_ took your toy." "Mommy leaving makes you sad". It is important to show how physical acts can be expressed verbally and to allow children to express their feelings verbally no matter how negative they sound.

Guidance will be direct, firm, and consistent when necessary. A "time out" will only be used as a time to think and get emotions under control. If usual measures are unsuccessful, parents will be asked to come for a conference so we can discuss ways of helping a child learn to behave in acceptable ways. Every effort will be made to assimilate the student and correct disruptive behavior. If necessary, parents may be encouraged to seek professional intervention or family counseling. After these options have been exhausted and the child's behavior continues to interfere with the orderly care and education of the other students, alternative arrangements must be made for your child.

The following guidelines are provided by the Texas Health and Human Services and is required information per 26 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) minimum standards §744.501(7), §746.501(a)(7), and §747.501(5).

**Discipline must be:**

- 1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- 2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- 3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

**A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:**

- 1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- 2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- 3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- 4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

**There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:**

- 1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- 2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- 3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- 4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- 5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- 6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- 7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- 8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed or open; and
- 9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

## **17. Biting**

It is our policy that children will not be withdrawn from The Learning Center because of biting. Biting is a normal stage of development that many young children experience. Our role as caregivers is to evaluate our classroom environment, supervise the child's behavior patterns closely, and keep open lines of communication with the parents concerning this behavior. Each situation will be evaluated individually and if extenuating circumstances cause the situation to continue, the Director and Teacher will meet with the parents to determine the best solution. Reading materials pertaining to biting are available upon request.

## **18. Security System**

Christ Lutheran Church has installed a security system for the safety of our preschool. Each parent and authorized adult will have the opportunity to be

entered into the security system. The system will allow both a code and fingerprint access to the building. The main door next to the bell tower is where the fingerprint scanner is located.

## 19. Visiting School

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. Normally, these visits are best made after the first weeks of school. We ask your visit be unobtrusive as children are very easily disturbed. Remember that your child may not display typical behavior during your visit. Questions and comments for teachers should be saved until after class.

## 20. Clothing

Comfortable, washable, and weather appropriate clothing that a child can manage by himself/herself should be worn to school. Shoes should be sturdy and should protect the feet. For your child's safety, we ask that your child wear tennis shoes instead of boots, flip flops, jellies, or sandals as these are not appropriate for playing on the playground.

Label all removable clothing such as raincoats, sweaters, jackets, hats, backpacks, gloves, mittens, etc. Fasteners on clothing and shoes should allow children independence in dressing themselves. Parents are to provide disposable diapers or Pull-Ups for children who are not yet using the toilet.

All children **MUST** have a complete change of clothing (this should include socks, underwear and outer clothing) in their bags every day. This includes the three and four year old children as preschoolers of all ages have accidents from time to time! Staff will use the articles as needed if there is a mishap and will return the soiled clothing in a plastic bag.

## 21. Birthdays

We like to celebrate! You may provide a small treat for the day of or near your child's birthday. It will be offered to the children at snack time. Please follow these suggestions:

- Ask your child's teacher for suggestions.
- Plan a simple special treat.
- Please no cake or cupcakes.
- Party invitations must be passed out to every child in the class, if passed out at school.
- No gifts at school, please.
- For summer birthdays, a day in late spring will be selected as their special day.

## 22. Holiday Parties

Parties are scheduled for these holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. Parents are asked to plan the parties and to provide snack for that day. Besides providing snack, party parents may want to plan activities (games, craft activity, puppet show, stories, etc) for the children to do during their party time. Most of the parties are from 8:45 to 9:30 a.m.. Even if

you are not a party parent, you are more than welcome to join in the fun as the children enjoy having their parents attend.

For Halloween the Learning Center will be following a NOAH'S ARK theme. Costumes should depict an animal. Costumes may be as simple as a tail or pair of ears or as elaborate as you wish. It is our goal to retain the fun of dressing up without the violence and fearfulness that some costumes cause for young children.

## 23. Indoor / Outdoor Play

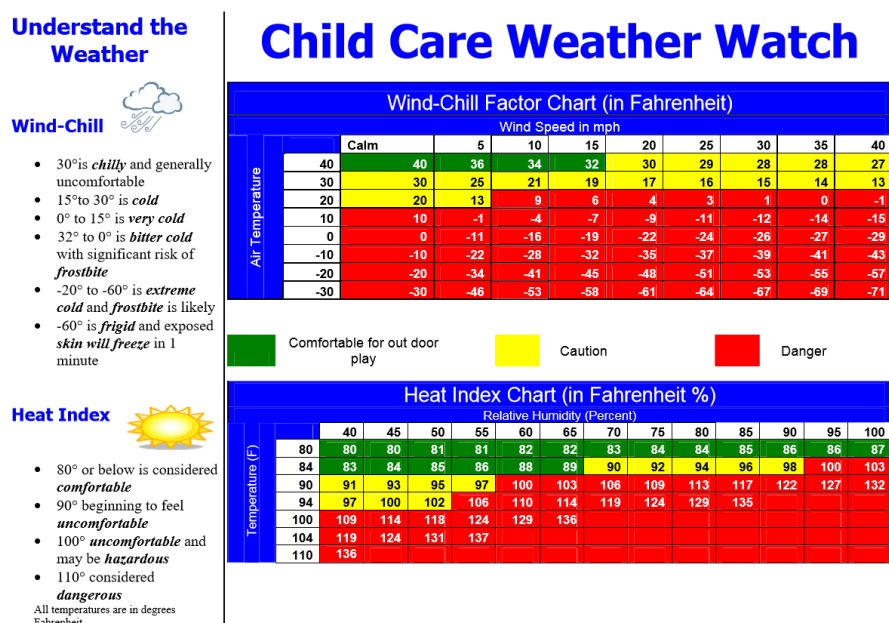
Weather permitting, we will spend some part of the day outside as this is extremely important for development of the body and mind. Asking for exceptions to this activity should be very rare. It usually puts the child in an uncomfortable and isolated position. Unless it is bitterly cold or raining, classes **will go** outdoors. Parents should provide appropriate clothing, including hats and gloves. During warmer weather, please put sunscreen and/or insect repellent on your child before school, if wanted or needed.

The Learning Center will follow the Child Care Regulation from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission which states that a toddler (18-35 months), or a pre-kindergarten age child must engage in outdoor play for a minimum of 60 total minutes daily.

A balance of active and quiet play that incorporates group and individual activities, both indoors and outdoors must be included daily. A minimum of 60 minutes of active play will be provided for toddlers; and a minimum of 90 minutes for pre-kindergarten age children.

When adverse weather conditions prevent children from playing outdoors, they will instead gather in the gymnasium. Here, they will have the chance to engage in activities that promote the development of their large muscle skills. These activities may encompass riding tricycles, dancing, running, utilizing scooter boards, and participating in ball games, among others.

The preschool will refer to the Child Care Weather Watch chart below to decide the appropriate times for children to enjoy indoor or outdoor play.



2009

#### Child Care Weather Watch

Watching the weather is part of a child care provider's job. Planning for playtime, field trips, or weather safety is part of the daily routine. The changes in weather require the child care provider to monitor the health and safety of children. What clothing, beverages, and protections are appropriate? **Clothe** children to maintain a comfortable body temperature (warmer months - lightweight cotton, colder months - wear layers of clothing). **Beverages** help the body maintain a comfortable temperature. Water or fruit juices are best. Avoid high-sugar content beverages and soda pop. **Sunscreen** may be used year around. Use a sunscreen labeled as SPF-15 or higher. Read and follow all label instructions for the sunscreen product. Look for sunscreen with UVB and UVA ray protection. **Shaded** play areas protect children from the sun.

**Condition GREEN** - Children may play outdoors and be comfortable. Watch for signs of children becoming uncomfortable while playing. Use precautions regarding clothing, sunscreen, and beverages for all child age groups. INFANTS AND TODDLERS are unable to tell the child care provider if they are too hot or cold. Children become fussy when uncomfortable. Infants/toddlers will tolerate shorter periods of outdoor play. Dress infants/toddlers in lightweight cotton or cotton-like fabrics during the warmer months. In cooler or cold months dress infants in layers to keep them warm. Protect infants from the sun by limiting the amount of time outdoors and playing in shaded areas. Give beverages when playing outdoors. YOUNG CHILDREN remind children to stop playing, drink a beverage, and apply more sunscreen. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens). They may resist applying sunscreen and drinking beverages while outdoors.

**Condition YELLOW** - use caution and closely observe the children for signs of being too hot or cold while outdoors. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of outdoor time. INFANTS AND TODDLERS use precautions outlined in Condition Green. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of time for outdoor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may insist they are not too hot or cold because they are enjoying playtime. Child care providers need to structure the length of time for outdoor play for the young child. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens), applying sunscreen and drinking liquids while playing outdoors.

**Condition RED** - most children should not play outdoors due to the health risk. INFANTS/TODDLERS should play indoors and have ample space for large motor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may ask to play outside and do not understand the potential danger of weather conditions. OLDER CHILDREN may play outdoors for very short periods of time if they are properly dressed, have plenty of fluids. Child care providers must be vigilant about maximum protection of children.

#### Understand the Weather

The weather forecast may be confusing unless you know the meaning of the words.

**Blizzard Warning:** There will be snow and strong winds that produce a blinding snow, deep drifts, and life threatening wind chills. Seek shelter immediately.

**Heat Index Warning:** How hot it feels to the body when the air temperature (in Fahrenheit) and relative humidity are combined.

**Relative Humidity:** The percent of moisture in the air.

**Temperature:** The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

**Wind:** The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

**Wind Chill Warning:** There will be sub-zero temperatures with moderate to strong winds expected which may cause hypothermia and great danger to people, pets and livestock.

**Winter Weather Advisory:** Weather conditions may cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is exercised, these situations should not become life threatening.

**Winter Storm Warning:** Severe winter conditions have begun in your area.

**Winter Storm Watch:** Severe winter conditions, like heavy snow and ice are possible within the next day or two.

\*\*\* The Learning Center curriculum includes Mud Day in the fall for all ages which includes water activities. To help with supervision with the activities, we encourage parents to be in attendance.

## 24. CLLC / Parent Communications

Monthly newsletters and other notices will be e-mailed to each family informing you of many activities involving your child. Special notices or changes in school schedules will be found in the newsletter. Please read these letters and other notices carefully so that your communication with the school and teacher will be maintained. If your e-mail address changes during the school year, please make sure the school office is aware of these changes. Newsletters are sent monthly so if you do not receive an email monthly please check with the preschool office to make sure we have your correct email address.

Your child's teacher will be posting her weekly schedule outside the classroom. Daily information will be available on the marker board outside each room.

If your child is hurt while at school, the supervising adult will complete an "Incident Report" for you to sign. This report will include details of the injury and will be kept in your child's file after being signed by the parent or guardian.

The Learning Center will also send text reminders about parties, school closures, picture day and other activities. We ask that you download the [remind.com](http://remind.com) app to receive these messages.

## 25. Parent Concerns

Please discuss any concerns first with your child's teacher as she would like to work with you to solve problem(s). If you have unmet needs, then please contact The Learning Center director.

## 26. Conferences

Scheduled parent-teacher conferences, which are held during school hours, are arranged in March and April. If you feel the need for additional conferences, teachers will be happy to meet with you. Please schedule an appointment with your child's teacher. Visits with the teacher before or during class are not appropriate. This is the teacher's time with and for the children.



## 27. Parent Participation

Parents are welcome and encouraged to be active in our program by sharing talents, hobbies, and joining field trips. In addition, let the Director know if you would be willing to substitute on occasion or be a library volunteer. We also welcome parent participation in planning holiday class parties. Your child's teacher will be asking for volunteers during Open House.

## 28. Lunches

Your child should eat breakfast before he/she arrives at school. If your child must finish their breakfast, it would be most helpful to the teachers if you could have your child finish eating before entering the classroom....whether it be outside the church entrance or in your car. Once your child is finished, we ask that you have them go by the restroom and wash their hands before entering the classroom. This will help us as we strive to keep the toys and classroom manipulative clean.

Each child will bring his / her own lunch. Lunch time is very important and is greatly anticipated by the children. To comply with minimum standards, the child's lunch should provide one-third (1/3) of his/her daily food needs. Please help us and your children by sending nutritious lunches. Each child may bring a drink in their lunchbox or drink from their personal water bottle.

Please send a water bottle to school each day to use in the classroom and on the playground.

**\*\*\* We ask that no food be sent for lunch that needs to be heated. \*\*\***

**According to state guidelines, all food served must not present a risk of choking for infants and toddlers. As a result, we ask that all grapes, hotdogs, corny dogs, cherry tomatoes, etc. be cut up horizontally per state request.**

## 29. Rest-time

All children (18 months - Pre-k class) will have a quiet time after lunch and are encouraged to rest. Each classroom follows a routine of toileting, hand washing, and listening to or looking at books and quiet tapes/music. Lights are lowered during this time. Special rest items such as favorite blankets or stuffed animals are permitted during this time. All children must have a plastic, foldable Kindermat or bed roll for use during rest time. Please label your child's mat with his/her name. We highly recommend that your child's Kindermat is slipped into a king size pillowcase as it helps eliminate noise when children move on their mats.

Children in the Kinder-Prep class do not need to bring a nap mat or blanket. These children will have a quiet reading time.

State guidelines require that all bedding be washed weekly. Please take your child's blankets and/or sheet home at the end of each week and return to school on your child's next school day. If your child uses a pillowcase or mat cover of any type, we ask that it be replaced by a parent when it is returned to school each week. Minimum standards state that a child may not use a mat that has any inside foam showing from a crack or tear.

### **30. Potty Training Policy**

Our approach towards potty training is one of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Potty training is a learning experience just like learning to ride a bike. Children are not punished or shamed into using the toilet. If you desire to bring Pull-Ups, we ask that you bring the kind with the Velcro sides. Cooperation between parents and teachers is essential for potty training to be a successful, positive learning experience for the child. Please realize that it is not the responsibility of The Learning Center to potty train your child. We will make every possible attempt to support the potty training process, but it is our belief that an “accident” is something that happens occasionally. If a child requires a change of clothes multiple times in one day, he or she is not ready to be wearing underwear on a regular basis. Please try to be patient and understand that potty training may be a long and frustrating process.

Children in our 3 & 4 year old classes must be potty trained prior to the school year starting.

### **31. Chapel / Bible Stories**

The Learning Center is part of the education program of Christ Lutheran Church. Weekly Bible stories that emphasize God’s love and care are a part of our Chapel curriculum. Teachers may also include Bible story activities during the week. Chapel will be held once each week in the sanctuary and will be led by the Pastor, Center Director, Faith Formation Director, or other staff person. We welcome your participation. See the monthly newsletter for dates and times.

### **32. Animals in the Classroom**

All parents will be notified in writing when animals are or will be present in the classroom.

### **33. Share Time / Bringing Pets to School**

Children love to bring their belongings to school, but many times the child will leave the school upset because of a lost or broken toy. Therefore, please do not let your child bring unnecessary items to school. Your child’s teacher may designate a “Show and Tell” time. Please follow her directions as to the type of items she prefers. It is very popular for children to want to share their pets, but we ask that you consult the teacher before bringing any animal to school. Parents must provide proof of rabies vaccination for all cats and dogs. There can be no exceptions. Parents should remain with the animal for supervision. Small animals should be in cages.

### **34. Book Orders**

Periodically the Learning Center will send home book order forms. If you wish to purchase these children’s books, you may do so online or by completing the form and returning it with the required money to school by the date on the form.

Book orders provide families the opportunity to purchase quality children’s books at a reasonable cost. Book orders are not a fundraiser for the school, however the school does earn bonus points from each purchase which are used toward free books for the preschool.

### **35. Picture Policy**

On occasion, pictures may be taken by The Learning Center staff, professional photographers, and/or local newspaper personnel. These photos may be used on our website, social media (Facebook and Instagram) and our print advertising. Each family will be required to sign a Media Consent Form each year as part the registration paperwork. Participation is optional.

### **36. Emergency Preparedness Plan**

In the event of a gas leak, chemical spill, or other emergency that requires us to evacuate the children, the children shall be lined up immediately by the staff person in each room and shall be counted to be sure that no one is left behind. If time permits, the staff person shall be responsible for organizing the putting on of coats, etc. for the class. The children shall be placed in private automobiles belonging to the staff and other church employees and taken away from the area as directed by emergency personnel.

- If evacuation to the WEST is necessary, the children shall be taken to Tippitt Middle School, 1601 Leander Road, Georgetown, Texas (512-943-5040).
- If evacuation to the EAST is necessary, the children shall be taken to First United Methodist Church (The Learning Tree), 410 East University Avenue, Georgetown, Texas (512-863-2370).

If necessary, the children will be evacuated to a designed area determined by the Incident Commander at the time. The director shall be responsible for the removal of pertinent children's records.

In the event of an emergency, parents or guardians identified in the child's admission file will be notified by phone, email, or text of the type of emergency, sheltering location and any additional details specific to the emergency as soon as all children are safely sheltered. Additional notification will be sent when the emergency situation is remedied and sheltering precautions are lifted. For lock-downs, children will not be released until the area is deemed safe by local law enforcement.

Please ensure changes to contact information are immediately communicated with our office to ensure receipt of important communication.

The Director will notify the state licensing representative at 1-800-252-5400 as soon as possible after any occurrence that renders all or part of the program unsafe or unsanitary for a child.

### **37. Fire / Severe Weather / Lockdown Drills**

Fire, Severe Weather, and Lockdown drills are practiced routinely. An evacuation plan is in place in case of an emergency requiring evacuation of Christ Lutheran Church.

### **38. Changes in Operational Policies**

Parents will be notified in writing (newsletters, special notes, etc.) of all changes in operational policies. This notice acknowledgement must be signed and dated by the parent and will be kept in the child's permanent file.

### **39. Reviewing Inspection Reports**

Parents may view the most recent fire inspection report, sanitation inspection report, gas inspection report, and the licensing minimum standards in the school office.

### **40. Gang-Free Zones**

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature, information about gang-free zones must be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers.

What is a gang-free zone? A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where certain gang related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. Specific locations where certain gang related criminal activity is now prohibited include, but are not limited to, public schools, playground, video arcade facilities, and day care centers. Certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 1000 feet of a school or daycare center is a violation of the law.

### **41. Parent Code of Conduct**

Please understand, young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. The Learning Center prohibits swearing or cursing on our property.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and The Learning Center. The Learning Center has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

The Learning Center must follow rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property.

### **42. Child Abuse and Neglect**

All children have a right to live free from abuse. Children depend on their parents, family members, teachers and child care providers to love, nurture and protect them. As a child care provider, we will provide for the emotional and physical well-being of your child(ren) while in our facility.

#### **Defining Child Abuse and Neglect**

Child abuse happens when somebody or some situation threatens the development, security and survival of a child. Many forms of abuse are criminal in nature. The definition of child abuse is a child who has had non-accidental

physical injuries inflicted upon him, injuries which are at variance with the history given of them. The definition of child neglect is a child who has been abandoned, denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally or morally.

## **Recognizing Signs of Abuse**

Children show many different signs of abuse or neglect. While all children have scrapes, bruises and birthmarks, it's good to know some common signs of abuse and neglect. The State of Texas requires all licensed child care providers to obtain one hour of annual training in prevention techniques and the recognition of symptoms of abuse and neglect as well as the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect.

## **Reporting Abuse and Neglect**

The law requires any person who believes that a child, or person 65 years or older, or an adult with disabilities is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report the circumstances to DFPS. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability provided they make the report in good faith, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Any person suspecting abuse and not reporting it can be held liable for a a misdemeanor or state jail felony.

### **Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline**

1-800-252-5400 or <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

For reporting abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children,  
the elderly, or people with disabilities.

## **Increasing Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect**

Parents and employees will be notified about workshops or presentations in the local area concerning the issues of child abuse and neglect, including warning signs and prevention techniques.

### **43. Dept. of Family and Protective Services**

The Learning Center is licensed and regulated by Texas Health & Human Services Commission and we follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review of a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at [www.hhs.texas.gov](http://www.hhs.texas.gov)

Local Licensing Office: 512-834-3426

HHSC Address: 14000 Summit Drive, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78728

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Texas Family & Protective Services website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

### **43. Provider's Guide to Parent's Rights**

Senate Bill 1098 from the 88th Legislative Regular Session added Section 42.04271 to the Human Resources Code and states that a parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child-care facility during its hours of operation and without advance notice;
- File a complaint against the child care facility;
- Review the child-care facility's public accessible records;
- Review the child-care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the child care facility's online compliance history;
- Have the facility comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child;
- Be given the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
  - Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
  - The parents or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and
  - The parent or guardian of any other child in the video receives prior notice from the facility;
- Obtain a copy of the facility's policies and procedures handbook;
- Review the facility's staff training records and any in-house training curriculum; and
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the facility.

#### **44. Children with Special Needs**

Christ Lutheran Learning Center is committed in providing the highest quality education to all students, in full compliance with the special education laws of the State of Texas and federal government. We will work to ensure that no individual is subjected to discrimination based on special needs.

Our desire is to partner with every child and family so that their child succeeds in our program. We will make reasonable accommodations in our program toward that goal, but it is important to acknowledge that there may be certain situations where we are unable to effectively address a child's needs.

Our partnership commences at the time of registration, during which families are encouraged to initiate communication with the preschool regarding their child's special needs and history. This can be accomplished through a meeting with the Director and the submission of relevant documentation, including written recommendations from doctors or health professionals, assessment/progress reports, and, if applicable, the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

During this process, the Director will assess the child's needs and consider whether one-to-one care is required, as well as what accommodations can be implemented. However, it is important to note that due to our current funding constraints, The Learning Center may not have the capacity to offer one-to-one

staffing. In cases where one-to-one care is necessary for a child's reasonable participation in the program, parents would be responsible for arranging and funding a professional aide to provide one-to-one care. If health professionals need to provide services such as speech, occupational therapy, or occupational therapy on site, we will collaborate to establish a consistent time and location on our campus for these sessions.

The Learning Center is committed to making reasonable modifications in its policies, practices, or procedures as needed to provide childcare services and facilities to children with disabilities. These modifications will be implemented unless they fundamentally compromise the supervision, safety, health, welfare of the children, or the overall effectiveness of our program.

## CLLC HEALTH POLICY STATEMENT

Our first priority at The Learning Center is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. Children/staff will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100 (armpit reading) or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications). Child may not return to preschool until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not infectious by a licensed health care professional
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting - the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- Head lice, from the end of the day until after first treatment
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed

- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)

### CLLC HEALTH POLICY STATEMENT - Continued

- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling
- Covid 19: Stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home. End isolation after 5 full days if you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and your symptoms are improving.

A child who becomes ill while at The Learning Center must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent to arrive.

The Learning Center reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

**Please keep your child at home until these symptoms disappear or until your physician determines that your child can return to school without spreading an infection to others.**