



Preschool Handbook

Director: Jennifer Horacek

Introduction

We acknowledge that each child is a unique gift from God with individual needs and abilities. We strive to develop each child's positive feeling about self, others, and learning in general through the sharing of God's love and word.

Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool was established in 1996 by Theresa Nelson. Formerly named Trinity Lutheran Church Child Development Center. Theresa opened a playgroup in 1995 and then added a preschool in 1996. Currently, we are a part-time preschool offering classes 3 days a week. We operate under the umbrella of Trinity Lutheran Church.

Enrollment in the school shall be granted without discrimination in regard to gender, race, color, creed, LGBTQIA status, or political belief. Enrollment is open to any child that is three years old and is not beyond kindergarten age. We follow all regulations as described in accordance with State mandates.

Developmental Areas of Our Program

Our program is designed to provide an enriching preschool environment for the children in our community. We believe the function of early childhood education is to care for the whole child and to help him/her flourish in a Christian atmosphere.

Our early childhood program promotes growth in each of the following areas of development:

Physical Well-Being: Our staff helps each child to adapt to routines, to develop both large and small muscle skills and to best utilize all of his/her sensory experiences.

Emotional Health: Warm and professional teachers use consistent policies to develop and encourage an atmosphere of trust while helping each child establish self discipline, increase self-control, and develop a positive self image.

Social Development: We encourage each child to share with others and recognize that everyone has rights that are to be respected by everyone else.

Spiritual Guidance: Discussion as well as sensory motor experiences are used to involve each child in discovering God in his/her own terms, along with the use of prayer before snacks, Bible stories, and hymns.

Creativity: We encourage originality and the use of a variety of self-expressive art materials, while using curriculum content designed to be relevant and interesting at each age level.

Language Skills and Academics: In our curriculum we accompany cognitive learning with the development of listening and language skills.

Preschool – 3-year-old program: This program is experiential with informal learning situations. The teachers promote learning to function in a classroom by getting along with their peers and following the teacher's directions. The children are exposed to concepts such as weather, holidays, animals, matching, opposites, health, and food. In addition, the children are exposed to colors, shapes, numbers, and name recognition. Praise and encouragement are used to promote a good self-image.

Pre-Kindergarten – 4-year-old program: The four-year-old program includes more academic preparation for kindergarten. The class concentrates on many concepts such as colors, shapes, matching (visual and verbal), left to right progression, rhyming words, sequencing, opposites, and other concepts (over, under, behind, below, beside). Math concepts include rote counting to 30, written numerals to 10, and informal addition and subtraction. For reading readiness, they work on letter recognition. The children are taught how to print letters found outside of their names. Praise and encouragement are used to ensure the job of learning and help develop a good attitude about school.

Children learn in different ways, so we incorporate different activities to accommodate different learning styles. We seek parental involvement and concern in helping us meet our goals and in providing a happy, healthy atmosphere for growth and maturity.

Television, Video, and DVD Viewing

Occasionally, movies are used in conjunction with a specific lesson or holiday. It is our policy that this type of lesson presentation be used on special occasions and is not intended to be the norm. Actual television viewing is never a part of our curriculum.

Personal Belongings and Show and Tell

All children are asked to keep personal belongings at home unless pre-approved by their teacher. Pre-kindergarten classes will participate in show and tell. The activity provides an excellent opportunity to encourage each child's use of language and communication skills. Children may choose what to bring for show and tell. We ask that no guns or toys of destruction be brought to school.

Hours, Days of Operation, and Holidays

Sessions run from 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. Students may arrive no earlier than 5 minutes prior to class start time. Students must be picked up within 10 minutes of class ending. Late fees will be assessed at \$0.50 per minute beginning at 11:40 a.m.

Preschool (3 year olds)- Tuesday/Thursday

Pre-K (4 year olds)- Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

We will follow the Mat-Su School District calendar for days off. This will include in-service days as well as school holidays or other vacation periods during the school year. This includes snow days as well. If the Mat-Su schools are closed because of inclement weather, we will also be closed. You can listen to the local radio station KMBQ 99.7 for updates on snow days. The director may also decide to close school if necessary for the safety of children. Missed days will not be made up. Vital information will also be shared on the Trinity Preschool Facebook and website.

Class Sizes

Class sizes shall be limited to 10 children in the pre-kindergarten class and 8 in the preschool class.

Class Sessions and Tuition

Children must be fully potty trained to join the class. No diapers or training pants allowed.

Preschool (3/4-yr-olds) - Children must be three years of age by September 1st prior to the start of the school year. Pre-kindergarten (4/5-yr-olds) - Children must be four years of age by September 1st prior to the start of the school year. Children must be current on all immunizations.

The following sessions are available for the school year.

Preschool (3 year olds)- Tuesday/Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. \$525.00 per semester

Pre-K (4 year olds)- Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. \$725.00 per semester

To be officially placed on the class list, you must complete a registration form online, in-person, or over the phone and submit a \$75.00 non-refundable registration deposit. You will need to provide the following:

An Emergency Contact & Medical Release form

A signed Parent Financial Agreement form

A signed Parent Involvement form

Your child's up-to-date immunization records

To maintain enrollment in the class, half or more of tuition is due by the first week of class unless special arrangements have been approved by the director.

Upon the maximum number of children being enrolled in each class, a waiting list will be established. A child will be placed on the waiting list on a first come, first serve basis. To qualify for the waiting list, there must be a completed registration form on file. When space becomes

available, the director will notify the first person on the list. That person will have 48 hours to provide the non-refundable registration deposit (and first tuition payment if class has already started). If that person does not respond within 48 hours with the mandatory requirements as stated, the opening will be offered to the next person on the list until the opening is filled.

Tuition is paid by semester (fall and spring). It is broken into semesters (\$525/\$725 per semester) with half of the payment due the first week of each semester. There is a \$25 discount for tuition paid in full. We also allow staggered payment plans. Please start a conversation with the director to set that up. We accept currency, check, and Stripe (A 2.9% credit card processing fee and a .30¢ Stripe fee will be charged with the tuition).

The director will send invoices in the email. There will be a link attached to pay with your card. Additionally, you can pay by check, currency, or using the payment form on our website. Payment is due on or before the date specified on the invoice unless otherwise discussed with the director. If payment falls two payments behind, parents will be contacted by the director to discuss a payment plan. If the first payment of that payment plan is not received by the date specified, the child's enrollment will be terminated. Reinstatement will be at the discretion of the director. The director will decide on the continued enrollment of any child in the preschool.

The payment schedule for each semester is:

Half of tuition paid the first week of class

One-fourth the next month

One-fourth the following month

The dates will be outlined on invoices.

There is a fee of \$25.00 for bounced checks.

There is a very limited amount of tuition assistance for those families who find themselves in a financial crisis. If you need to make use of this assistance, please contact the director in writing via email or paper stating your needs.

If a child needs to withdraw from the preschool, the director must be notified in writing via email or paper. Tuition for the two weeks following notification of withdrawal is forfeited. If tuition has been paid past those two weeks, remaining tuition will be refunded based on the average cost per day of class for that semester.

Tuition will be refunded for a child who is unable to attend class based on an unforeseen emergency requiring extended absence from class (more than two weeks) or permanent withdrawal. Notification must be made to the director in writing by email or paper, and final decision for tuition refund is up to the director.

Tuition is not refundable for days missed due to a child's illness or vacation. Tuition is charged on a semester basis, not month-to-month, even if using a payment plan.

Other days not refundable include emergency class cancellations due to snow, power outages, or

any time class cannot reasonably and safely be held.

Preschool is a time when children are still learning boundaries and proper behavior in a classroom setting. It is the duty of both parents and teachers to help guide children in this area. However, if a child is frequently violent or continually disruptive in such a way that the safety and learning environment of the other children in class are threatened, that child will be removed from the program. This will be based on the teacher and director's recommendation after all other options have been exhausted. Tuition for the two weeks following enrollment termination will be forfeited, after which time any remaining paid tuition will be refunded.

Children must be able to use the toilet on their own without the assistance of an adult (including wiping). It is understood that a child may have an "accident" while getting used to the school routine and environment. Teachers will be responsible for reasonably cleaning the child and putting him/her in fresh clothing. However, if a child has more than two accidents during the course of a semester, the child may be removed from the program based on the recommendation of the teacher and director. Tuition for the two weeks following removal from the program will be forfeited, after which time any remaining paid tuition will be refunded. The child's slot may then be opened to another child on the waiting list. If a slot is available once the child has achieved a greater mastery of toilet usage, the child will be gladly welcomed back to class.

Parents must provide snacks and supplies. Please follow the Meals guideline from this handbook. The director will notify you of the supplies needed. You are welcome to volunteer in class, if desired. Please follow the Volunteering guidelines from this handbook.

Our plan for the care of children who develop symptoms of an illness or who are injured during preschool will include the following:

The teacher will notify the parents and follow their instructions.

The teacher shall make arrangements with the parents for the child to be picked up.

The teacher will obtain emergency medical treatment when necessary when the parent cannot be reached. If injury or illness warrants, paramedics will be called for an emergency transport to a hospital.

The child shall be provided a place to rest quietly under supervision until removal from the class. No medication will be given to the children by the staff during the preschool hours of operation, unless for emergency purposes.

The teachers will contact your emergency contact that's on file as they see fit.

When a Child Should Stay Home Due to Illness

Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool regulations require that children exhibiting symptoms such as (but not limited to) the following be kept at home:

- Severe pain or discomfort particularly in joints, ear, or abdomen
- Acute diarrhea, characterized as two times the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with loose consistency within a 24-hour period
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting with 24 hours

- Severe coughing or sore throat
- Any temperature over 99° F – Must be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to class
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches or lesions
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Severe itching of body or scalp
- Skin rashes lasting more than one day
- Swollen joints
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- Stiff neck
- Unusual behavior for the child characterized by lack of appetite, no playing, confusion, or persistent, inconsolable crying
- Symptoms that indicate any contagious illness, including the following: Chicken Pox, Impetigo, Lice, Scabies, Strep Throat, Pink Eye, Croup, Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease...
- Any contagious illness requiring antibiotics – Must be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to returning to class

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease or must be absent due to illness. Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool will not permit a child or staff member with a reportable communicable disease to be admitted to or remain at the preschool.

Insurance

Our school carries liability insurance in full accordance with the state regulations. Families are responsible for individual medical insurance for their child. All drivers for field trips must have proof of current vehicle insurance.

Animals

Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool does not have any animals or pets that are a part of its program. With prior approval from a teacher, children may bring a pet for a special event. Pets must always be on leashes or restrained in some manner. Approval to bring a pet to school is always dependent upon specific allergies that may exist from year to year.

Field Trips and Transportation

Special trips outside of our school are a planned part of our curriculum. A signed permission slip to participate in field trips must be on file at the school. There may be additional fees required for field trips, which are not included in the cost of school tuition. If parents elect not to have their child attend the field trip, they must stay home for that day. Transportation will be provided by parents with current vehicle insurance. Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool does not provide transportation to and from the preschool. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a proper car seat, or booster seat (if they are at least 5 years old and have passed 1 or more of the limits of their current car seat). Please do not provide a ride safer vest. If you do not provide a proper safety seat, your child will not be allowed to participate in the field trip.

If you are a volunteer driver, all children have to sit in the back seat and be restrained in a proper safety seat, provided by the child's parent. Regardless of what you allow, all safety seat rules must be followed to ensure everyone stays safe.

Smoking

Trinity Barn Plaza is a smoke-free building. Regulations prohibit smoking where children are present. This includes all areas inside the building and within a 50-foot radius of the building.

Physical Contact

When dealing with young children, a certain amount of physical contact is expected between teachers and students. Examples include but are not limited to: holding a sick or injured child, softly placing a hand on the child's back to gently guide him/her in the right direction, taking a hand when climbing stairs, helping a child in/out of dress-up clothes, returning a hug from a student, etc. Children who do not desire physical contact are never forced into it unless it is a matter of safety.

Child Abuse

The Department of Health and Human Services and Alaska State Statues require that all childcare providers report all incidents of suspected or actual abuse and neglect of children regardless of whether they occur in or are related to the facility. This facility is therefore obligated by law to report such incidents within 24 hours. We are also required to report incidents that allege a child was abused or neglected during the time our preschool was responsible for the child.

Discipline and Behavioral Management

If a child physically injures another person or causes a disruption in class, the child will be removed from the situation and talked with about appropriate behavior. He/she will also be asked to apologize to the child or children hurt. If the behavior continues, teachers will seek a consultation with the child's parents. If the behavior still continues, the director will be contacted and will help decide what is in the best interest of that child and the other children in the program.

Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool does not believe in corporal punishment. Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool will not allow a child to be spanked during the time the child is attending school by anyone (this includes parents).

The following guidelines from Constructive Discipline may be helpful to you as a parent:
Ask yourself if the standards of behavior you are setting are within the child's ability to achieve.
Once you have asked that a thing be done, follow through.
Be consistent.
Make your requests "Do's" instead of "Don'ts" whenever possible.

Special Needs

Any child with special needs will be individually evaluated by our director to determine if the preschool would be able to meet the special needs of the child prior to enrolling in our program.

We require that all children be ambulatory because we are unequipped and not staffed for evacuation in case of an emergency for those who are not.

Meals

Parents should provide snacks that are healthy and simple. Please do not bring juice or any other kind of drink. Water will be served. You do not need to bring napkins and cups. For special occasions such as holidays and birthdays, parents may wish to bring a special treat. Please notify your child's teacher if you would like to provide a special treat. Occasionally, we ask parents to provide cookies or other treats for special programs or parties.

TLC Preschool wants to be as inclusive as possible to all, including those with food allergies. If your child has any type of food allergy, we ask that the child bring his/her own snack each day or have a bag of snacks kept at school. Snacks are provided by parents. They are usually willing to find foods that all children in the class can eat. However, if a snack is brought that contains an allergen your child cannot consume, the teacher will have your child eat his/her own personal snack. An allergy list will be posted in the classroom.

Parent Involvement

We believe that the parent is the most influential person in the child's life. Parents are given an information sheet each month with an overview of the lessons planned. We are thankful to get to know you and your child. We hope you will encourage your child to want to come to school. We will encourage your child to love school and learning.

We believe that parents are the first teachers. We are here to be in partnership with you in the education of your child. With that in mind, it would be helpful for each teacher to be aware of the observations you have made regarding your child. Each family is required to complete a Child Observation form. This information will help bring your teacher up to speed about your child's strengths and areas that may need special attention.

Feel free to become an active part of our program by offering comments and suggestions as well as financial and moral support to our school. There is a Feedback form on our website. We encourage you to leave your suggestions as well as a testimonial of our preschool. You are welcome to sit in on our class or share a special talent with the kids. Parents will be required to assist with field trip transportation. Additional volunteering with fundraisers and others events is always appreciated, but not a requirement unless the teachers feel the extra help is necessary. The cooperation and caring of parents and staff members together will make a warm and loving environment for all of our children.

Volunteering

Thank you in advance for your help in our class. Siblings are welcome to attend class if you are volunteering. While they are in the classroom, they are expected to follow class rules and the teacher's directions to the best of their ability. If the child becomes a frequent distraction that interrupts the class, alternate arrangements will need to be made for them on days that you volunteer.

Accompany children to the restroom. Please remain outside while the child uses the restroom. Never be alone with a student behind a closed door or assist with clothing or wiping. If the child needs help, please tell the teacher. Make sure children flush the toilet and wash hands thoroughly.

Interact with children during playtime. Talk with them about what they are doing. Read books to them. Help them use words to express themselves. Play with them. Keep conversations between adults to a minimum.

Help children with conflict when needed. Help them use their words to resolve problems. Always use positive suggestions. Help children to recognize other people's feelings.

Help with snack time when directed by a teacher. Assist children with hand washing. Wipe tables and sweep the floor as needed.

Help pick up after class. As needed, put toys away, put craft supplies away, sweep the floor, empty the trash, and wipe down surfaces.

Parent Involvement Form

Please check one:

- I (or my representative) intend to volunteer in my child's class when required.
- I (or a representative) am unable to physically volunteer in my child's class when required.

Child's Name: _____

Class enrolled: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Financial Form

My child will attend Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool and participate fully in its educational programs.

I agree to pay tuition and fees to the amount specified by the school.

I understand that failure to make financial payments in accordance with the payment agreement will terminate the enrollment of my child in the school. Reinstatement will be at the discretion of the director. The director and teachers shall decide upon the continued enrollment of any child in the school.

I understand and agree to pay a late fee of \$0.50 per minute for pickup after 11:40 p.m.

I will provide the school two weeks notification prior to removing my child from the school.

I understand that there will be a \$25.00 fee assessed to my account for any checks returned for insufficient funds.

I understand that temporary, non-emergency leave from the school does not exempt me from payment of tuition during the leave of absence.

If for any reason I believe that I will not be able to continue to meet this financial obligation, either temporarily or indefinitely, I will discuss this matter with the director.

Your signature below indicates that you have read this handbook carefully and provided correct information to the best of your knowledge. You give consent and agree to all of the above.

I have read and agree by the Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool handbook.

Child's Name: _____

Parent or Guardian's Name: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Child Observation Form

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

Does your child have allergies?

Does your child take medication regularly? If so, what?

Are physical activities limited? If so, Why?

Does your child have any of the following? If yes, please explain:

- Learning Disabilities
- Hyperactivity
- Problems with Coordination
- Tantrums
- Other

Please explain further:

Special Concerns: Emotional, Speech, Behavioral, etc.:

Other information you feel would be helpful to our staff:

Website/Picture Information Form

Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool has a website and Facebook page. We would like to post photos of some of our events so people can see what happens at preschool. Pictures that are posted will not include the names of any children. Please sign a picture release form stating if it is okay to post pictures that your child may be in. If you prefer not to have your child's picture posted but your child is in one of the pictures, his/her face will be blurred to maintain privacy.

Picture Release

- I give permission for my child's picture to be posted on the Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool website or Facebook page. I understand that any pictures posted will not include my child's name.

- I do not want my child's picture posted on the Trinity Lutheran Church preschool website or Facebook page. I understand that my child's face will be blurred if he/she is in a posted picture, and my child's name will not be posted.

Child's name _____

Parent signature

Date