

At Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center, We Believe. . .

Each child is a unique and special child of God and we encourage and celebrate the development of their individuality.

Children learn best through play and developmentally appropriate activities provided as avenues for learning.

The young child is a gift from God and learns best about God’s world through experimentation and exploration.

Early childhood education provides a warm and loving Christ-centered environment where each child can develop to their fullest potential physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually.

It is the position of Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center that children need to hear and experience the love of Jesus on a daily basis.

***“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in My name welcomes me.”
(Mark 9:37)***

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is a Christ-centered learning community for young children and families

- Jesus is the center of each activity and experience.
- Children are valued for their ability to do meaningful work, their wonder and curiosity, their perspective and their ability to play.
- Families are valued for their bonds and traditions, their commitment to work, home, community, and their dreams for children.
- Staff are valued for their vision, mission and purpose, their delight in children, their skill, heart and knowledge and a commitment to children and families.

Our Program is divided into age appropriate groups:

| | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Infants | 8 weeks - 14 months |
| Toddlers | 15 months – 24 months |
| 2’s | 2 years |
| 3’s | 3 years |
| 4’s | 4 years |
| School Age | Kindergarten - 10 years |

We welcome an open line of communication in the center and encourage parents to bring questions, comments or concerns to the staff and/or the administration at any time. Families are encouraged to visit the facility frequently to interact with and/or observe their children on a regular basis. Also, please take time to talk with your child’s teacher to ensure that we have a complete understanding of your family’s needs.

LICENSING REGULATIONS

The Center is required to follow the licensing regulations Illinois Department of Child and Family Services, Illinois Department of Public Health, Fire Marshal, Coles County Health Department and USDA

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Frequent exchanges between parents and teachers enrich the child care experience for teachers, children, and parents. Teachers are interested in knowing about a family's concerns, difficulties, and pleasures in their child's experiences at home. Knowing that a child had a hard night, or exciting company, or is planning a trip, can help the teacher understand that child's mood, and better plan the day. Be sure to tell us of any crisis in your child's life so we can help him or her cope with it.

STEP ONE:

Conference with staff member: Clients of the Center can schedule a specific time to meet with the staff member to express problems or concerns by either contacting the staff member or the director. Should matters still not be resolved by the client and staff member, and if the client seeks further review of the matter, the client may request a conference with the Director.

STEP TWO:

Conference with Director: The request for a conference shall be made orally or in writing. At the time of making the request, the client shall indicate whether he or she desires that the staff member involved be present at such conference.

At the conference, the client and the staff member, if present, will explain his or her problem or concern to the Director. If the staff member is not present, the Director shall discuss the matter with him or her. The Director may contact other appropriate parties and conduct further conferences with the client and/or the staff member prior to taking any action in response to the matter.

After he/she has had an opportunity to gather all necessary information, the Director shall determine what action, if any, should be taken. The Director shall advise the staff member and the client of the decision. If he/she is not satisfied with the Director's decision, the client may request further review of the matter by the Administration and Preschool Ministry Team.

STEP THREE:

Conference with Administration: The request for a conference shall be made orally or in writing. At the time of making the request, the client shall indicate whether he or she desires that the staff member or director be present at such conference.

The conference and any determination by administration will be held as stated above in Step Two.

Teachers are also eager to share the child's interests, skills, problems and strengths with the parents as they emerge at the Center so conferences are available for each child. Conferences are offered when your child enters a new room. The teacher(s) will introduce you and your child to the new room, to explain routines, and to share information and expectations. To better facilitate a smooth transition, the teacher may ask you for information about your child. This would be a good time for you to share any concerns and/or strengths which you feel are important for teachers to know.

POTTY TRAINING

As children near the age of two, parents begin to think about potty training. Over the years of working with two year olds, we have found several things helpful. First, and most important, are the signs from the children themselves; such as:

- Diapers being dry upon awakening in the morning and after naps.
- Diapers are dry for a period of one hour or more.
- The child willingly sits on the toilet or asks to sit on the toilet.
- The child has mastered the concept of putting something into a container and taking it out.

Potty training should be a learning process just as learning to walk, eating with utensils, putting clothes on and taking them off, holding crayons to color, etc. It is a process that takes time. What this means for teachers and parents is patience during this process of development. It means there will be times when the child urinates or has a bowel movement in the toilet and lots of times when the child doesn't.

A child may be placed in regular underwear when the child has gone 2-4 weeks with dry, unsoiled diapers and after parent-teacher consultation.

Our goal is to help children achieve potty training success in the most pleasant and patient atmosphere possible.

Children attending in the 3 Year Preschool Program and up must be potty trained prior to the start of the school year.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

In the event of bad weather, the Center Director will determine if child care will close. ProCare messaging is in place and will notify families of closings or changes in schedule. Closings are also posted on the Immanuel Lutheran Child Care Facebook, and on WCIA 3 News.

SECURITY SYSTEM

The Center has locked access point doors for the safety of children and staff. Parents will be issued a key fob at their start date that will open the school doors between 7:30 am and 5:30 pm: Additional fobs may be purchased for \$15 if you need them for grandparents, nannies, etc. If you lose or break your fob, a \$20 replacement fee will be charged. When your child is no longer participating in the Center, the issued fob(s) should be turned in by the last day of care or the replacement cost will be billed to you. **Please do not open the security doors for people you do not know. Let a staff member know that a guest has arrived.**

SMOKING POLICY

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the buildings, on the playgrounds or anywhere on church property.

STAFF

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center staff is experienced with children and/or have educational backgrounds in child development or a related field. Child care employees are required by the State of Illinois to obtain continuing education in-service hours each year based on their scheduled working hours to keep up to date in the latest trends in child development. The Center staff are required to have Pediatric First Aid and CPR.

A criminal background check, as required by state child care licensing regulations, will be done on each new employee and anyone who is to have contact with children. This policy includes administration, full-time and part-time teachers, cooks, administrative assistants, and custodial staff who are employed by the Center. Background checks are completed through the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services.

TUITION POLICIES

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is pleased with the opportunity to care for your child and can secure your child's enrollment with our facility after we have received the annual registration fee. We welcome your family to our program upon confirmation of space, receipt of your completed enrollment and the registration fee.

Our payment policies are as follows:

- The tuition rate is based on which classroom the child is enrolled. Tuition is due, in full, on the tenth business day of the month or childcare will be terminated.
- Client fees are charged on the basis of enrollment, not attendance. The charge remains the same if the child is ill, visiting a relative or out for any reason as well as Center closings for Holidays, teacher in-service or inclement weather. The fee for the week is as stated on the fee schedule and enrollment agreement.
- There is an annual registration fee of \$95 per child. This fee is due at initial registration and annually thereafter at the end of July. If you have more than one child in your family, additional children registration fees are \$40.
- If you enroll multiple children in the Center, the highest tuition rate for one child will be reduced by 10% each month as a multi-child discount.
- Fees are considered past due and delinquent if not received within 5 days of the invoice due date. After 5 days, a late payment fee of \$25 will be assessed. If payment has not been made one week after the delinquency date, your child may be asked to withdraw until payment has been made in full.
- Payment of fees may be made by checking or savings account, credit or debit card using the ProCare App.
- A late fee of \$20 per child will be charged for child pick-ups after the Center closing time.
- Daily absences or late arrivals should be called in to the office before 8:45 a.m.

Parent Acknowledgement

Through the enrollment process, I have agreed to the contents in this handbook. I understand that this Parent Handbook does not contractually bind Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center and is subject to change without notice by Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center administration or governing body.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER FAMILY VALUES POLICY

Immanuel Lutheran Child Care is operated by Immanuel Lutheran Church. Immanuel Lutheran Church is a Member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Immanuel Lutheran Child Care is a school *with* a mission, but it is more than that. Immanuel Lutheran considers Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center to *be* a mission, one form of Christian mission to its members and to the community. We believe that the purpose of education is not ultimately to prepare people for life in this world, but to “make people wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.” (1 Tim. 3:15).

Christian beliefs, as understood and taught in the LCMS, pervade everything that is done at Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center. Christian instruction is not only carried out formally, but it is integrated into the study of every subject. Students are immersed in a Christian atmosphere, surrounded by teachers, administrators, and school employees whose very presence is a testimonial to the Lutheran faith and way of life.

We are a creedal church with definite beliefs on many points of Christian faith. We affirm the historic creeds of the Church, and in various moral areas where the Church’s historic teaching is being debated, we are firmly rooted in the Scripture as God’s Word for us today. For instance, we affirm the sanctity of human life, including the life of an unborn child. The beliefs of our congregation and of Early Childhood Center will be clearly taught, as it is our belief that they are in accordance with God’s design for our lives.

We also believe that we are all sinners, that is, that we all fall short of God’s standards in one way or another. We are dependent on God’s mercy and grace; we are dependent on His love – God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3: 16). We gather together as Christ Schools in an effort to encourage one another in our walk with Jesus, to urge one another to respond in love toward God by conforming to the wonderful plan that He has for each of our lives. While not all of our families or students may believe the teachings of our congregation or school, while none of us are perfect, nevertheless, family members may not promote beliefs that are contrary to ours or otherwise weaken the Christian atmosphere at the school. If a family member of a student or applicant for enrollment publicly challenges our teachings or conducts his or her life in a way that is contrary to those teachings, and if this becomes disruptive to the learning environment, the student or applicant may be expelled, suspended or refused enrollment.

LCMS doctrine and practices are derived from the Christian Scriptures, the Lutheran confessions, and the applicable resolutions of the LCMS. For the purposes of this policy, the decision of the Administration and Preschool Ministry Team of what constitutes the beliefs and teachings of the LCMS and what actions or conduct constitutes a violation of this policy shall be final and binding. Family members who are unfamiliar with our church's beliefs and teachings on any subject should inquire about them from the Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church.