

Emmanuel  
Lutheran Preschool  
Parent Handbook



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool! This handbook contains important information about our school to help parents prepare their child for a successful experience in our program. We strive to provide excellence in early childhood education in a distinctly Christian environment. For some children, this may be their first experience with an educational setting. An understanding of the program and close cooperation between the parents and the staff will help to ensure a good adjustment for the child. Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to ask questions or share comments with us at any time.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Based upon our Christian faith in God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we believe that God has given children and every other human being a marvelous potential for a creative and successful life in this world. Children, in their early years, are growing rapidly in all aspects of life. By the time they are ready to enter the elementary grades, they have already formed many patterns and attitudes which will shape their personalities in this ever-changing world. We provide a comprehensive program that will prepare children for future schooling.

We believe that effective guidance and teaching at the preschool level must involve a total approach to the child. Ours is one of love as we guide each child in the development of his/her physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth.

## **PURPOSE**

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is established as an integral part of the total ministry of Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Its purpose is to joyfully follow the command of Jesus, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these," by providing an outreach of love to children and providing a Christian education in partnership with parents so that:

1. Children may be provided with a comprehensive program of education, so that they may develop their talents and skills for responsible Christian living and service.
2. Children may be nurtured in the word of God.
3. Children may believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and grow in their relationship with Him that their faith and service might increase.
4. Children by God's grace may experience a full Christian life on earth and be assured of eternal life.
5. Children may learn to recognize themselves as persons of worth made by God in His image.
6. Children may learn to understand and appreciate their talents from God.

The above purpose shall shape and direct all policies and programs of our school.

## **CURRICULUM GOALS**

The primary goal of this school is to provide an organized, Christian environment suited to the maturity level and growth pattern of the child. To this end, the five major areas of development will be emphasized as follows:

1. **PHYSICAL:** Provide an opportunity for children to develop large and small muscle skills, to use old skills in a variety of new activities, to learn good health and safety habits, and to identify and learn through the senses.
2. **SOCIAL:** Provide an opportunity for children to play and to work with others, to share, to take turns, to plan and participate with other individuals and groups, and to increase awareness of self and others within a group in order to develop independence.
3. **INTELLECTUAL:** Provide opportunities and experiences for children to acquire new concepts; to strengthen previously acquired concepts; to use language fluently and comfortably; and to develop responsible, self-directed individuals who can function as members of a group, family, community, and world.
4. **EMOTIONAL:** Provide an opportunity for children to explore appropriate ways of expressing ideas and feelings about self, and to recognize their growing sense of self and God in order to help them be more aware of their personal value.
5. **SPIRITUAL:** Provide an opportunity for children to learn and grow in their faith with Jesus as the center of that faith; and in particular to recognize the Bible as God's inspired word, to become familiar with various Bible stories, to learn and appropriate the main teachings of the Bible, to realize the power and blessing of a personal relationship with God through prayer, to grow in the desire and ability to express praise to God through songs and musical experience, to develop a feeling of thankfulness for the many blessings from God, both material and spiritual.

## **PROGRAM**

We use the One in Christ Early Childhood Curriculum as well as "Voyages – Exploring God's Word" published by Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis, Missouri. These programs use weekly Bible stories with various activities to reinforce the concepts being taught. Learning centers in the preschool are provided each day for the children to experience science, math, reading, language, art, crafts, drama, cooking, music, manipulatives, puzzles, building blocks, and physical development.

Group interaction, individual discovery, quiet and active experiences all contribute to a balanced program in our preschool. Our school setting is one in which children are encouraged to ask questions, investigate, experiment, explore, and be creative. In addition, good attendance and punctuality at school is crucial so as not to interrupt the continuity of the curriculum for the child.

## **STRUCTURE**

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is an agency of education governed by Emmanuel Lutheran Church. It has been established as an evangelical outreach ministry to Rifle and its neighboring communities. All policies and administration of the organization are supervised by the Board of Christian Education. Responsibility for the day-to-day detailed planning and operation of the school is vested in the director.

## **STAFF**

Our staff currently consists of a director/teacher, a substitute teacher, and two instructional aides. We're equipped with qualified individuals who share the joy of the Gospel of Christ because of a personal commitment and dedication in an academic/social environment suited to the needs of the students. All staff is required to maintain current certification in First Aid/CPR, have a background check conducted by the Colorado and Federal Bureaus of Investigation, and complete several hours of instructional classes as mandated by the Department of Human Services.

## **CLASSES OFFERED**

We offer a 3-year-old preschool class which meets Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00-11:30. We also offer two 4-year-old pre-kindergarten classes which meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 8:30-11:30, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons from 12:45-3:30. We have approximately 15-16 students in each preschool class.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Emmanuel Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENROLLMENT**

Children must be 3 or 4 years of age by October 1<sup>st</sup> to meet the minimum age requirements for enrollment in their respective preschool classes. All children must be independent in the bathroom to be eligible for enrollment.

Children of Emmanuel Lutheran Church and families that are currently involved in the school are given a priority in admission; all others are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. When a class is filled, a waiting list will be initiated to fill any vacancies as they occur. A child with special needs is welcome provided the educational program, facility, and staff qualifications are able to meet the needs of the child.

## **REGISTRATION**

At the time of enrollment an annual, non-refundable registration fee will be collected. This fee guarantees a place for your child in the program and will be used for enrollment costs and consumable supplies. The preschool registration is \$60.00.

The following forms need to be completed and on file at the school before a child can begin attending class:

- Completed enrollment and registration forms
- Identification and Emergency Information form
- Permission to Participate in School Activities and to Receive Emergency Care form
- Child's Medical Statement (annual physical) form
- An up-to-date Immunization Record

## **TUITION**

Our preschool is a non-profit organization supported by tuition, which is based on operating costs. Tuition is always due at the beginning (the 1<sup>st</sup>) of each month from Sept.-May. The tuition for Aug. will be pro-rated and is due when school begins. If tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, a \$5.00 late fee will be added to the amount due. In addition, if payment is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, \$1.00 for each additional overdue day will be added to the amount due. The tuition amount is based on yearly costs, divided into monthly payments. Therefore, tuition will not be adjusted due to illness, vacation, or inclement weather.

A 10% discount is given on tuition (not registration fees) if a family has more than one child enrolled. Please make all checks payable to "Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool" depending on the class your child is enrolled. There will be a \$15.00 charge for returned checks. Payments can be put in the manila envelopes that the newsletters are distributed in at month's end and then placed in the "Tuition Tub" located on the table next to your child's classroom. Tuition for the entire school year (includes a 3% discount) or for several months at a time can be paid in advance as well.

Current monthly tuition amounts for our various classes are listed separately. Our women's group at Emmanuel offers scholarships at the beginning of the school year. These give a bit of assistance to those with unusual financial needs. Applications will be available mid-Aug. and require completing a written form and showing proof of income.

## **CHANGES IN ENROLLMENT**

In order to function successfully, the school must be able to fill slots from the waiting list as they become available. Therefore, if a parent needs to withdraw a child from the school, it is requested that a 30-day written notice be given to the director. If the school is not notified 30 days prior to a child being withdrawn, the family is still accountable for

the regular month's tuition. (Emergency withdrawals will certainly be taken into consideration.)

The following may constitute just cause for dismissal from the school:

1. Missing or incomplete forms
2. Unwillingness by the parent/guardian to comply with the tuition collection methods outlined in this handbook
3. Improper or incomplete toilet training unless there is a special medical issue
4. Specific needs of a child which cannot be properly met by the school program
5. Behavior determined by the staff to be disruptive to the total learning environment

### **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE**

Children enrolled for the Tues.-Thurs. am preschool class should not arrive before 8:55 am and should be picked up no later than 11:35 am.

Children enrolled for the Mon.-Wed.-Fri. am preschool class should not arrive before 8:25 am and should be picked up no later than 11:35 am. The Mon.-Tues.-Wed.-Thurs. pm class should not arrive before 12:40 pm and should be picked up no later than 3:35 pm.

According to state law, every child must be escorted into and out of the school. Children also need to be signed in and out at each session by a parent, guardian, or another authorized person. It is required that people use their first and last names when signing this daily record.

When you bring your child to the school, park your car in one of the parking spaces (avoid back of building) and walk your child into the building. Please enter through the main entrance (glass) doors on the east side of the church/school facility. After signing your full name by your child's name, and the actual time of arrival on the sign-in/daily record sheet located near the room, please bring your child into the classroom.

When you come to pick up your child, please sign your full name again by your child's name, along with the time of departure. When leaving, please follow the arrows in the parking lot and drive around the building to exit. This is extremely important for safety reasons. A late pick-up fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes after the end of the session will be charged, unless a courtesy phone call is received before the end of class. This fee will be added to the next tuition payment.

Children will only be released to those adults listed on the Identification and Emergency Information form, unless written notice by a parent/guardian is given to a staff member prior to dismissal that day. Only in an emergency will the child be released to an adult for whom the child's parent/guardian has given verbal authorization. If the staff member who releases the child does not know the adult, photo identification and/or a driver's license number will be required to assure that the adult is authorized to pick up the child.

In the event that a child arrives late for a session and the class has already left for a field trip, the parent/guardian can either bring the child personally to the place where the class has gone, being certain that the teacher is aware of his/her arrival, or make other arrangements for the child. The field trip information sign/schedule will be posted on the front door to remind the parent where the class has gone for their trip. If the child is to be left in the care of the teacher while on the trip, the parent needs to make certain that there is a space with a seatbelt available in a vehicle, or a car seat left for the child for the return trip to school.

All visitors are required to sign the Guest Book located at the entrance to the classroom. They are also asked to check in with the director or other staff member. Also, a class enrollment list will be provided as soon as possible to any parent wishing to arrange car-pooling with other parents. This will be updated occasionally to keep parents informed of any changes in information.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

*Late Pick-up:* In the event that a child is not picked up by the parent within an hour after a class session is finished and no other authorized person can be reached, the child will be taken to the director's home and kept until he/she is picked up. If this happens after a morning session, the child will stay at the school as another class will be arriving.

*Lost Child:* All children are under the direct supervision of school staff members at all times. However, in the unlikely event of a lost child, the following procedure will be followed: 1.) The daily record will be checked. 2.) The area in the building as well as the areas surrounding the building will be searched. 3.) If the child is not located within approximately 15 minutes, the staff will call 911 and the child's parents.

*Fire/Tornadoes:* The school maintains a fire alarm system and has posted evacuation plans. Fire drills will be conducted on a regular basis. If the building is not safe due to fire or other emergency situations, the children will be taken to a safe location and parents will be notified immediately. In the rare case of a tornado warning, the staff is specifically instructed in what procedures should be followed.

*Lock down:* If there is a serious incident that could jeopardize the children then the staff will lock the doors and place the children in the safest place possible in their classrooms or the nearest safe room that can be locked.

*Evacuation:* In the event that we would need to immediately evacuate the preschool we will take the children to E. Dene Moore Care Center across the street. 970.625.1514

## **WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS**

In the event that the Garfield Re-2 School District schools are closed due to inclement weather, our school will also be closed. Listen to local radio and TV stations for announcements about school district closings. In addition, you will receive a phone call or text from school personnel informing you of any schedule changes.

In the event of a blizzard when parents are not able to pick up their children, the staff will remain at the school with them until the parents, or a designated person, can pick them up. Food will be provided should such an event occur.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR & SCHEDULE**

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool will follow the same basic schedule as the Garfield Re-2 School District with the exception that we do meet on Fridays. We begin and end the school year at approximately the same times. A yearly calendar and detailed class schedules will be provided before school begins. Monthly newsletters will be given to keep parents well informed of activities and events.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

In order to inform parents of the child's progress the preschool teachers will schedule a mid-year conference with the parents. A written evaluation of the child will be given and discussed. Parents can request a special conference with the teachers at any time during the year.

## **SNACKS, & SPECIAL EVENTS**

In the preschool, parents are encouraged to send a nutritious snack periodically. A snack suggestion list is distributed to everyone and a monthly sign-up calendar is on the information table. At mid-session each day, a snack will be served to the children. This will usually include milk or water. Please bring a water bottle to keep in the classroom. Occasionally the class will experience "cooking" themselves as we make the snack together.

If you and your child would like to bring refreshments in celebration of his/her birthday, please make arrangements with the teacher. In the spring, a special party will be held for those having summer birthdays. There will be classroom celebrations for various holidays throughout the year and the students will participate in at least two programs.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are always welcome to volunteer in the classroom. A monthly sign-up calendar is available on the preschool information table. We also offer an Open House/Ice Cream Social shortly before school begins in August to acquaint families with the staff and the school setting.

The school may be having various fundraising events during the school year to raise money for special projects or to purchase equipment. If you would be interested in helping with these, please speak with the director. Your support is appreciated!

### **FIELD TRIPS**

A rich source of learning lies in the community life around us. We may take a “walking trip” and you will be informed whenever we are out of the building for such an event. We will also have guest speakers visit us whenever possible. When a field trip is planned away from the school, a note will be sent home informing you of the event. Parents (insured motorists) may be needed to drive and/or help supervise on these trips. All children must be seat-belted when going on an outing. Parents need to provide a car seat for children under four years of age and weighing less than forty pounds. Children at least four years of age, but less than eight years of age, must be properly restrained in a car or booster seat. Children will not be left unattended in a vehicle and all children will be loaded and unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles.

### **SCHOOL ATTIRE**

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes with shoes appropriate for running and playing outdoors. Be sure to send a jacket or other appropriate outerwear (hats, mittens) for the season. In boot weather, shoes must be worn inside so both boots and shoes are necessary. We will try to go outdoors daily as long as weather permits.

Please mark all belongings with your child’s name. A coat hook and “cubbie” will be designated for your child’s jacket/coat and backpack. Items for “show and tell” should be kept in the backpack until needed.

We recommend that each preschooler have a change of clothing at the school in case of accidents (spilled drinks, paint, etc.). Please put this in a plastic bag with your child’s name on it and bring it when your child begins attending class.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Our goal concerning discipline is to help children learn to respect God, others, and themselves. Rules and limits will be consistent and identified in advance. Children will be given clear instructions and training to prevent problems from arising. We try to listen to what each child has to say, giving warm hugs, encouraging words, and praise to let every student know that he/she is loved. Unacceptable behavior is pointed out to the child and the child is then told what is expected. We do not use physical punishment, withhold privileges, or isolate children without adult supervision. At all times we strive to treat the children with love and affection for the unique and precious individuals that they are.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Good health habits will be maintained and taught to the students. Washing hands under warm running water with soap upon arrival at school, before snack time and after using the restroom, covering coughs and sneezes with the arm instead of the hand, dressing appropriately for the weather, eating nutritious foods, etc. will be built into the daily routine and curriculum. Physical exercise/activities are also vital in our daily schedules.

If your child is sick and is not able to attend class, please contact the school before the session begins if possible! If no one answers the phone, please leave a message as the answering machine is checked on a regular basis.

***Parents are requested to keep their child at home if the child has a fever or until a normal temperature has been maintained for 24 hours;*** if the child has been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours; if the child has a constant cough, runny eyes, runny nose, excessive sneezing, exposed skin sores, rashes, or other symptoms of a possible or suspected communicable disease. When children have been exposed to communicable diseases such as hepatitis, chicken pox, measles, strep infection, impetigo, or head lice, parents will be notified by the school so that they can keep track of the incubation period and be alert for symptoms. Parents are to notify the school if their child becomes ill, especially with a communicable disease, or exposed to a communicable disease outside of the school so that others can be notified.

If your child becomes ill during school hours, a parent/guardian will be called. If one cannot be located, the staff will call the emergency number(s) listed in the child's file to arrange for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. The child will be isolated from the other children until he/she is picked up. In the case of minor accidents (scratches, bruises, etc.) children will be treated by the director or staff trained in first aid. In the

event of a serious injury or illness and the child's parent, guardian, or other authorized contact cannot be reached, the child's physician will be notified. First aid or CPR will be administered if needed in an emergency situation and other appropriate emergency personnel will be contacted as necessary. The expense of any medical services will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

All medications must be kept in the school office or in the specially designated container in the refrigerator. It will be administered only by a staff member and can only be dispensed after the parent has completed one of the center's medical authorization forms. In order to administer non-prescription medication, a special form must be signed by the child's doctor. All medication should be brought in an appropriately labeled container with instructions for dispensing the medicine given to the director.

Each child may bring a bottle of sunscreen with his or her full name written clearly on the bottle. If a child does not have sunscreen at the center, a staff member will apply sunscreen from the first aid kit. It is the law that every child must have sunscreen applied before playing outdoors.

A child's immunization record should be kept at the center and be updated annually. If your child has not/will not receive required immunizations for medical, religious, or personal reasons, a signed Request for Exemption form must be on file.

### **TERMINATION POLICY**

Occasionally, a child will experience some difficulty in adapting to the preschool or abiding by the preschool rules. A parent conference will be scheduled if your child should experience some difficulty. We will work closely with you to see if the problem can be resolved. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the group, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from the center.

### **THERAPY**

If your in need of a family therapist we would recommend Jennifer Glynn. She can be reached at 970.987.1171.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

Any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, shall immediately report to the Garfield County Department of Social Services.

### **LICENSING COMPLAINTS**

Our school is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care. Copies of all our licenses and regulations for childcare programs are on file at our school. If you are concerned that Emmanuel (or any other childcare program) is in violation of city, county, or state regulations, contact the above agency at 303.866.5958.

### **INVITATION TO WORSHIP**

The congregation at Emmanuel invites and encourages you to visit and worship with us at any time. Our worship service is at 9:00 on Sunday mornings with Sunday School and Bible Classes following at 10:30. Mid-week services are offered during Advent and Lent. If you are interested in learning more about Emmanuel Lutheran Church or the faith we profess as members of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, please call our church's phone number at 970.625.2369.