



Located inside EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement & Goals	p.3
Formal Assessments & License.....	p.4
Registration, Hours of Operation.....	p.4
Class Schedules, Staff/Child Ratios.....	p.5
Daily Schedules.....	p.6
Tuition/Fees, Payment Policies.....	p.6
Late Pick Up.....	p.7
Withdrawing a Child.....	p.8
Weather, Supervision Policy.....	p.8
Shared Parenting, Custody Agreements.....	p.9
Emergency Transportation.....	p.10
Guidance Policy.....	p.11
Snacks.....	p.12
Food Allergies.....	p.12
Birthdays.....	p.13
Early Drop-off.....	p.13
Accidents, Emergencies.....	p.13
Communicable Diseases.....	p.14
Medications.....	p.16
Outdoor Play.....	p.17
Parent Participation.....	p.17
Additional Policies, Information.....	p.17
ODJFS Center/Parent Info.....	p.21
Preschool Staff Info.....	p.22
School Year Calendar.....	p.23

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Epiphany Lutheran Preschool is to inspire children's natural curiosity to learn through discovery and play in a loving, Christian environment.

WELCOME!

We welcome you and your family to the Epiphany Lutheran Preschool Program. We invite you to visit with us often and to communicate your ideas to the Director or to anyone on the Preschool Board. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it available as long as your child is enrolled in our program. It will answer many of the questions you may have about Epiphany's Preschool. We hope you and your child have a very enjoyable preschool experience!

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool, established in 1977, was the first preschool in the Pickerington area. Our staff has met the educational standards required by the ODJFS (Ohio Department of Job and Family Services). The staff recognizes the importance of balanced growth and provides opportunities for mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual development through a variety of creative experiences. Children are encouraged to discover and learn at their own speed in areas that interest them, yet they are also challenged to explore new areas. Our curriculum is based on the kindergarten readiness criteria as determined by Pickerington Local School District, and the Early Learning Content Standards of the state of Ohio; we are also free to follow student interest. We strive to allow children to learn through play, as well as through structured activities designed by the staff, with the students in mind. We focus on developing early literacy as well as math, language, and science skills, fine and gross motor skills, developing social/emotional skills, encouraging imagination and curiosity, independence, and physical development. Our preschool is a loving, Christian environment where we strive to support families and early learning. We are pleased that you have chosen to include us in the growth and development of your child.

The goals of Epiphany Lutheran Preschool are to:

- ❖ Encourage individual participation by each child.
- ❖ Provide alternating times of active and quiet play for children in groups or by themselves.
- ❖ Create a variety of learning experiences for children using their five senses involving exploration and discovery through developmentally appropriate practices, following the Ohio Early Learning Standards.
- ❖ Create a loving, caring environment for children to experience a healthy separation from home, with positive adult interactions and opportunities to be with children in a similar age group.
- ❖ Start children on a path of learning, creating the foundation for future academic and personal success.

Formal Assessments

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool does not conduct formal assessments on enrolled children. We do not report child level data to ODJFS pursuant to 5101:2-17-02 of the Administrative Code.

ODJFS LICENSE

At the end of the handbook you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take the time to read this information.

REGISTRATION

A child is enrolled at Epiphany Lutheran Preschool only after the non-refundable registration fee, and registration form have been received. The Director will then confirm the availability of space and declare the child enrolled. After enrollment, but before school begins, the parents/caregiver, will receive via email, the required paperwork, which includes basic enrollment, health information, permission forms, and an electronic payment form. All paperwork must be filled out completely, if a portion of a form does not apply to your child, please mark it as "NA". A medical form with the child's immunization record, signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner, is required to be submitted before the child can attend preschool. This medical form must be updated every 12 months. A child is not able to attend preschool if the medical form has expired; this is required by ODJFS. Any changes on the required forms must be communicated to the Director immediately so that current information is always on file. This is for the safety of your child.

Toilet-Trained

It is the policy of Epiphany Lutheran Preschool that each child be toilet-trained. Accidents will occasionally happen and we keep a variety of spare clothing available for those times. We ask that you provide a change of clothing to be kept at school. If your child is struggling with potty-training, please inform your child's teachers. We will work with you and your child to be sure this is not a stressful time for your family.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The preschool offers classes for children 2.5 year olds to five years old, Monday through Friday in the morning according to the schedule outlined below. After preschool care is available with a predetermined schedule and proper registration. Aftercare is available until 3:15pm and follows the same age restrictions and licensing rules as morning preschool. It is not an alternative to preschool, but rather an addition. Scheduled days off for staff training, holidays, and breaks are found on the School Calendar located at the end of this handbook.

CLASS SCHEDULES

Bright Beginnings (Rm 201&202): 2.5 yr olds

9:00am-11:00am (Sept-Dec), w/ adult Fridays only

9:00am-11:30am (Jan-May), drop-off, Fridays only

Little Blessings (Rm. 202): 3 Year Olds

9:00am to 12:00m, Tuesdays -Thursdays

Little Learners-AM (Rm. 201): Three and Four Year-Olds

9:00am to 12:00pm, Mondays-Thursdays

Adventure Seekers-AM (Rm. 302 & 304): Four-Year-Olds and Pre-K

9:00am to 12:00pm, Mondays-Thursdays

Rising Stars (Rm 301& 303): Four –year-olds and Pre-K

9:00am to 12:15pm Mondays-Fridays

STAFF/CHILD RATIOS AND MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool will not exceed the following state required ratios:

1:8 Older Toddlers (2.5 years-3years)

1:12 Preschoolers (3 years-4 years)

1:14 Preschoolers (4 years until eligible for Kindergarten)

1:18 Schoolage (eligible for school)

Because we desire to provide a higher level of quality care, we will strive to maintain the following ratios. Staff/child ratio signs are posted at the entrance of each classroom area.

1:7 Preschoolers (2.5years-3.5years)

1:8 Preschoolers (3.5 years-4 years)

1:10 Preschoolers (4 years until eligible for Kindergarten)

1:10 Schoolage (eligible for school)

The maximum state-required group sizes are as follows. Maximum group size is defined by the number of children in one group that may be cared for at any time.

24 Three Year Olds

28 Four-Five Year Olds

We are licensed for a total capacity of 64 children.

DAILY SCHEDULES

The children's daily schedule is flexible enough to provide adaptability when necessary, but structured enough to provide predictability for the children. We want them to view their school as a safe and comforting place, where they know what to expect and when to expect it.

A typical preschooler's day would include:

8:30-9:00 Arrival/Free play

9:00-9:15 Free Play & Clean up

9:15-9:50 Greeting/ Circle Time/Devotional/ Music

9:50-10:00 Restroom/wash hands

10:00-10:20 Snack

10:20-11:00 Centers

11:00-11:20 Large Muscle Play

11:20-11:40 Specials

11:40-12:00 Wrap up/Pack up/Dismissal

(A classroom schedule is posted in each classroom. Schedules may vary slightly from room to room.)

After Care Schedule

12:00-12:15pm Transition to after care/restroom

12:15-12:40 Eat home packed lunch

12:40-1:00pm Transition to quiet time

1:00-2:30pm Quiet/Nap Time

2:30-2:45pm Clean up/Pack Up

2:45-3:15pm Large Muscle Play

3:15pm Dismissal

PRESCHOOL +

Our after-preschool care program is “Preschool+” and is an extension of the preschool morning for parents who would like their student(s) to stay on site for the afternoon. Afternoons include lunch (provided by parents), quiet time, play, educational activities, and large motor time. Children can register for after preschool care on any morning they attend preschool, but on a declared schedule, two, three, or four afternoons a week. There is no Preschool+ on Fridays. Afternoon schedules can be altered at Christmas break. PreK students receive priority for Preschool+ openings, as a bridge between half day preschool and all-day kindergarten; although younger siblings can stay with PreK siblings if requested. Students who are not in PreK can reserve Preschool+ openings upon preschool registration, on a first come, first serve basis after PreK students have been placed. Little Blessings and Little Learners students will be notified by July 1st if they receive a spot in the Preschool+ program. Preschool+ registration can be changed up until August 1st, and at Christmas break. Preschool+ tuition will be added onto regular preschool tuition monthly. Families are charged for the number of days/week they have registered for Preschool+ regardless of how many days the student actually stays during the week. Days cannot be changed or altered once the school year begins, until Christmas break. The afternoon schedule will follow a schedule similar to the one below:

12:00pm-12:15: Transition from classroom to Preschool+, restroom break and wash hand for lunch.

12:15-12:45: lunch

12:45-1:00: restroom break, prepare for quiet time

1:00-2:00: quiet time

2:00-2:30: educational activities/ free play

2:30-2:40: clean up and pack up

2:40-3:15: large motor play

3:15 Drive thru pick up at main doors of church

TUITION/FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

One Day Class: Bright Beginnings

\$75/mo. and \$100 registration fee

Three Day Class: Little Blessings

\$240/mo. and \$100 registration fee

Four Day Session: Little Learners

\$300/mo. and \$100 registration fee

Four Day Session: Adventure Seekers

\$300/mo. and \$100 registration fee

Five Day Session: Rising Stars

\$340/mo. and \$100 registration fee

Registration fees are non-refundable.

Tuition is due monthly by the fifth of each month. The first payment is due August 5 and the last payment is due April 5. Payments should be made electronically using the designated system. Other arrangements must be made with the Treasurer if electronic payments are not possible.

Yearly tuition is divided into 9 equal monthly payments for your convenience, even though some months have more school days and others have fewer. Payments are continuous through vacation, illness, holidays, etc. Any family needing financial assistance should contact the Preschool Director.

Tuition payment options are available for automatic withdrawal through the designated electronic payment program. Families who pay the year's tuition in full before September 5th will receive 10% off the year's total tuition. Registration information, tuition payment information, and all required preschool forms are available through the preschool website, via email upon request, or in the preschool office.

Should tuition payments and any applicable late fees not be paid by the time the next tuition payment is due, students will not be permitted to attend preschool until tuition payments are made. Any tuition alterations should be discussed with the preschool treasurer and a written statement plan may be needed.

Late Fees

Due to electronic payments, there should be no late payments. However insufficient funds may result in a payment not being received by the preschool. Payments not received will result in your child not being able to return to preschool until all payments are current. Please contact the Preschool Office if you are unable to make your payment. Any bank charges incurred by the preschool due to payment fees will be the responsibility of the parent. A family who misses two or more tuition payments without making arrangements with the director or preschool treasurer may be unenrolled from the preschool. A written statement will be issued and no refunds will be given.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

If you realize that circumstances beyond your control are going to delay pick-up, a phone call is requested. This is important so children can be reassured by staff, and do not become anxious.

- The first late occurrence is a verbal warning.
- A second late occurrence is a written warning and a fee as described below.
- The parent/caregiver has a 5 minute grace period for each occurrence.
- After the 5 minute grace period, the parent will be called and then the fee starts (whether the parent is reached or not).
- For each minute an adult arrives late a \$2.00 fee will be charged.

- The child may be brought to the Director's Office after 10 minutes enabling the teachers to complete their respective jobs.
- The pick-up adult will sign a form when the child is picked up from the director's office, acknowledging their obligation to pay the fee.

WITHDRAWING A PRESCHOOL STUDENT

Parent Initiated Withdrawal - Parents wishing to withdraw their child may do so at any time. A withdrawal request for any reason from ELP must be made in writing to the Director. Thirty days prior notice should be given or one month's advance tuition paid. Tuition must be paid in full for each month in attendance. Tuition will not be pro-rated for partial month attendance.

School Initiated Withdrawal- The "Guidance Policy" (p.10) outlines situations in which students may be suspended or expelled from the program. In addition, two or more months of not paying monthly tuition may also result in a student being withdrawn from the program. All school initiated withdrawals will be put into writing and may be immediate or with a brief warning at the discretion of the director.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When the weather becomes dangerous, we ask parents to watch WCMH Channel 4 or WTVN Channel 10 in order to know if the Pickerington Schools are in session, or if they are delayed. If Pickerington Schools are not in session, we are not in session. We will also post the notice on our Facebook page, send a message through Class DOJO, as well as send out an email.

If Pickerington Schools have a weather delay, classes will be held from 10am-12pm.

Make-up days (if needed) due to weather closures will be determined by the Director. Make-up days will be scheduled by the Director and parents will be notified if the situation occurs.

SUPERVISION POLICY

A major responsibility of the staff is to ensure the health and safety of each child entrusted in our care. Staff persons are alert to the safety needs of their children, anticipate possible hazards, and take necessary appropriate precautionary and preventative measures. Staff will supervise children at all times. During quiet time, according to state licensing laws, if all students are on a cot, ratios may be doubled. Students will never be left unsupervised, even while napping.

Arrival/Departure

No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Parents, or the designated adult, are required to walk their child to their preschool classroom from the car. The adult is expected help the child hang up their belongings and then make contact with a classroom teacher before leaving the room. Pick up will be done through a drive up procedure at the main doors of the church, at the child's designated dismissal time. Teachers will ensure students get into their cars safely but are not responsible for buckling children into the car. Classroom teachers are responsible for signing children in and out on the

designated attendance sheet for each class. When adult contact is made with the teacher, it helps us ensure we know a child has joined us. Any special messages, medications, pick-up notes, etc. are to be given to the teacher. Parents or designated adults are responsible for the supervision of their child before and after preschool. Please do not leave your child by themselves in a classroom. Upon drop-off, please make contact with your child's teacher before leaving. Please do not leave other children unattended in the car, or hallway while dropping off your preschooler.

Release of a Child

Staff will release children only to persons approved by the parent on the Child Pick-up Form. If a last minute change needs to happen, please contact the Director. All changes must be in writing and receive a confirmation from the director that the change has been received. Staff will check ID's. Please let people know about this ahead of time so they bring a picture ID and are not offended. Your child's safety is our priority! Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

Shared Parenting and Custody Agreements

If your child is affected by a shared parenting agreement or other custody situation, please notify the Director prior to enrollment. This will ensure fairness to all parenting parties as well as allow us to be sensitive to your child's particular situation.

In shared parenting situations (where child spends equal time with each parent), please provide the Director with the addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of both parents. This will allow the Director to establish and maintain communication with both parenting parties equally.

If your child is involved in another type of custody situation, please advise the Director of any restrictions involving parent/child contact, and provide copies of pertinent court documents.

According to state law, we cannot deny a parent (regardless of custody) access to their child or their child's educational records without a court order.

Child Abuse Reporting

All Epiphany Lutheran Preschool Staff are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff has suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they MUST make a report to the local children's services agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

Additional Safety Measures

All entry doors into the building are always locked when children are present. To be admitted when the doors are locked, please use doorbell located on the brick wall outside the door. The Director or a teacher will respond ASAP. If the Director or teacher are busy with children and cannot respond, please go to the church's main entrance for entry. Classroom doors are also locked when children are present.

Telephones are located in the church and preschool office. Each teacher has a cell phone to communicate with the other classrooms and the preschool office.

If you know your child will be absent from preschool, please call the office (614-328-6900) or email the preschool (elp@epiphany-lutheran.com) and let us know that your child will be absent. We look forward to seeing your child each day and worry about them when they are absent. If your child typically gets dropped off by someone besides a parent, (for example if they get dropped off by a sitter, or another program/activity), and we have not received a phone call/email by 9:30am that your child will be absent, the primary contact number will be called to determine why your child is not at preschool. We care about the health and safety of your child. Thank you for understanding.

Use of spray aerosols are prohibited when children are in attendance at the preschool.

First Aid kits are located in a designated cabinet in each classroom, the large motor room, and in the preschool office.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool Staff will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, the parent and the emergency squad will be contacted. No child will be enrolled in ELP if the parent denies emergency transportation of the child.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Enrichment opportunities will be offered throughout the year in the preschool classrooms to enhance the daily curriculum. Visits from the fire department, the dentist's office, department of natural resources, and the police department are just a few of the on-site enrichment opportunities that have come to us. Parents are encouraged to share their vocations or lead special activities in their child's classroom. Please let the Director or your child's teacher know if you have an enrichment opportunity to share.

Routine Field Trips

Parents must give written permission according to ODJFS for routine trips, such as nature walks within school vicinity. This permission form is good for the entire year and will be included in the registration packet. On such trips, a first aid kit, cell phone, attendance roster, emergency medications and emergency forms will accompany the class. Children will walk between both teachers, enabling teachers to see the children at all times.

Special Field Trips

Field trips off-site will be taken several times a year. A parent/care-giver must accompany each child on these trips. Permission slips will be sent home with each child prior to the trip with the details. No child will be permitted to go on the trip unless this permission form is signed. Children will ride in their own

vehicles accompanied by their chaperone. All children must be labeled with the name, address and phone number of our preschool during the entirety of the field trip. All emergency medical forms and medication will travel with the teachers and attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of the trip. Teachers will each have a cell phone to communicate with other staff during the trip. Any fees for the field trips will be the responsibility of the family. Please see the director if you have a financial concerns with paying for a trip.

GUIDANCE POLICY

Discipline Policy

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool Staff believe that helping a child learn self-control is very important. Our hope is that each child will learn self-discipline through careful guidance. Your child will be treated with love and respect. When children are treated with respect, they in turn learn to respect their teachers and their friends. Our expectations will be kept within the child's capabilities and the child will be made aware of these expectations. Positive reinforcement (commenting on children making good choices) and positive redirection (removing the child from an activity and giving them an appropriate activity, providing some quiet time to calm down, holding the child on the teacher's lap, talking to the child quietly) will be used. A child may be asked to sit for a short period of time to give the child a chance to regain control if they are having a difficult time. Time outs will be age appropriate in length and done within the classroom. If a child continues to have difficulty in the classroom, the child may also be taken to the Director's office for a brief duration. If the child's behavior cannot be redirected or changed the Director may choose to contact the child's parent and send the child home early. Staff will not impose punishments for failure to eat or for toileting accidents. Staff will never strike, slap, or shake a child. This discipline policy applies to all staff and parents while they are at the center.

Should a child's behavior cause harm to another child or teacher, the teacher will use the developmentally appropriate techniques described above. In the event the above procedures are unsuccessful in curbing the behavior of a child, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) The teacher will talk to the parents face to face or by phone to set up a conference where goals are set by staff and parents.
- 3) Interventions will be sought involving staff and parents.
- 4) Permission will be requested from the parents for professional observations and consultation. Behavior will be documented and resources will be identified.
- 5) A second conference will be scheduled, previous goals evaluated and new goals may be set.

If the child's behavior results in harm again to another child (same or different as the first offense) or a teacher, suspension of the child may result for up to one week of missed classes. There will be no tuition reimbursement for this suspension.

Every attempt will be made to work together with the parents and the child to correct the behavior. However, the safety of children is our primary concern. If acceptable and appropriate behavior cannot be achieved through the above procedures, then Epiphany Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to

expel the child permanently. Expulsion/removal from the program is a last resort and will be in written notification to the parents. It may be effective immediately or there may be notice. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Preschool Board and a copy will be kept on file at the preschool for one year following dismissal. If a child demonstrates behavior that requires frequent "extra attention" from a staff member, we may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan.

Please note that while our primary focus is the safety of our students, we also value the safety of the teachers. Should parents become aggressive, threatening or abusive of students, teachers or staff, either through language or actions, this may also be a cause for expulsion/removal of the child from preschool, or removing the specific adult from eligibility of pick up and drop off duties.

SNACKS

Snack time is a very special part of the preschool day. Snacks are provided by the parent/guardian according to the schedule provided by the classroom director. Per food service licensing regulations, all snacks should be individually packaged snacks, store bought (no homemade snacks please), and shelf stable. According to ODJFS licensing laws, two food groups must be represented in any snack served. We emphasize nutritious snacks for the preschool. Good snacks would be such things as fresh fruits, raw vegetables, hull-less popcorn, cheese sticks, muffins, etc. All students should bring with them a water bottle to be used for the day, labeled with their name. Water will be provided by the preschool in the event that a student does not have a water bottle.

Please be sure all food items are fully cooked and/or cut and prepared before bringing to preschool. The teachers cannot leave their classroom to prepare a snack that may need cooked, baked, or cut. Thank You!

Teachers will send home a snack schedule at the beginning of each month listing which day it will be your child's turn to provide snack for their class. You will also receive the snack bag the class before your child is to bring snack. A snack suggestions list can be found outside the office, or by special request.. Students are asked to provide their own water bottle to be used at school and during snack time. Please ensure your child's name is on the container. Should your child not have a water bottle on occasion, a paper cup of water will be provided during snack.

PLEASE... NO PEANUTS, PEANUT BUTTER. PEANUT OIL, OR NUTS OF ANY KIND, CUPCAKES, MARSHMALLOWS, CANDY, OR FOODS CONTAINING THESE ITEMS.

Preschool Staff reserve the right to return a snack if it contains any of the above avoided items.

If you are unsure if your child has chosen an appropriate snack, please ask your child's teacher before bringing it. We thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Food Allergies/Restrictions

When planning an appropriate snack for your child's class, please be aware that some of our students are extremely allergic to nuts; therefore, we ask that no items containing peanuts, peanut butter, peanut oil, or nuts of any kind be served. This includes snack AND packed lunches.

Please identify any food allergies/restrictions on your child's enrollment form and discuss with your child's teacher. If your child has a food allergy, we ask that you approve the snack each day to be sure it is safe for your child. If the snack has not arrived before you drop your child off in the classroom, the teachers will contact you via Class Dojo to ensure the snack is safe for your child. We also ask that you bring a few safe snacks to be kept at school, in the event the provided snack is not approved. If a nut allergy is indicated on the enrollment form, a medical/physical care plan form must also be completed and any necessary emergency medication must be kept in the classroom.

All alternative snacks/medical foods, will be stored in a cabinet out of children's reach, and labeled with the name of the child who is to receive it when necessary.

The snack for the day will be posted on the board outside the classroom, with other daily activities, ASAP.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL TREATS

We will recognize each child on or near the date of his/her birthday with a song, prayer and recognition of the special day. Children may also receive a sticker, pencil or other small non-food item from the preschool. Parties, cake, ice cream and presents are to be saved for your home celebration.

Summer birthdays will be celebrated toward the end of the school year. If you would like to send a treat for students to take home and enjoy you can do so, please package them so they are easy to put into backpacks. We will not be enjoying birthday treats in the classroom. Birthday invitations may be handed directly to a parent or placed in a child's book bag. The preschool does not provide class lists of children's names. School can only be used to distribute invitations if every child in the class is invited.

Drop-off Window

MORNING CLASSES: All children enrolled in a morning preschool class can be dropped off between 8:30am and 9am on any day they are scheduled to attend preschool. The director, or a teacher can be found at the preschool entrance to admit students and their adult during this 30 minute period. If you arrive after 9am, you will need to ring the doorbell to the right of the preschool entrance in order to gain admittance to the building, and then walk your child to their classroom. The preschool day will officially begin at 9am with our daily schedule. Children should be brought into the classroom and contact should be made with the teacher, before the child's adult leaves for the morning. During this half an hour, children will engage in free choice activities planned by the teachers, including dramatic play, sensory activities, fine motor activities and small group time with teachers. Ratios will be maintained at all times.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Epiphany Preschool has prepared several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is attending preschool. Each staff member has received training in First Aid, Communicable Diseases and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first

aid and TLC. A First Aid kit is available in each space the students use, as well as the preschool office. If the injury/ illness would be more serious, first aid would be administered and the parents would be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury/illness is life threatening, EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles; only parents or EMS may transport. Children whose parents refuse to grant consent for transportation to the source of emergency treatment may not be enrolled. An incident/injury report will be completed and given to the person picking up the child on the day the incident/injury occurs. Incident/injury reports will be filled out for the following situations: the child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; the child has to be transported by emergency squad; or any unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child. If a child requires emergency transportation, the incident/injury report will be available within 24 hours after the incident occurs. Licensing personnel from the appropriate ODJFS office will also be contacted within 24 hours when there is a "general emergency" or "serious incident, injury, or illness". The written report will be provided to licensing staff by the end of the following business day of the incident. In the event of a fire, or tornado, or other weather emergency staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the preschool conducts monthly fire, and periodic tornado and "safety" drills. If an emergency evacuation of the preschool is required, all children will be gathered at the farthest end of the church parking lot and 911 will be notified. Every attempt will be made to have a police escort to cross Hill Rd. to Amber Park Assisted Living, at 401 Hill Rd. N. (614-834-3113) to await the arrival of all parents to pick up their children. Parents will be notified of the situation by Class DOJO as well as email, in addition to signs posted on the doors indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. Parents will also be contacted as soon as possible to come to pick up your child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information. All first aid kits, emergency forms, emergency medications, and medical forms will accompany the class upon evacuation. In this situation, parents must sign their child out with the corresponding teacher before leaving the evacuation location.

Safety' drills are also practiced quarterly for the safety of your child. In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible (depending on the location of the threat), contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities, and contact the parents through text/email as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents.

A complete written emergency disaster plan for all situations is in each classroom, the preschool office, and the church office, to be implemented if needed. Preschool staff and church staff are trained to implement this plan.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first group experience, it is possible they may experience more frequent illnesses at the beginning of the year, before their immune system becomes more active. Staff observes each child's general health as they enter the classroom

each day they attend preschool. Although we look forward to your child's attendance each day, we ask that you do not bring a sick child to preschool; they will be sent home. Plan ahead and have a backup plan in place if you are not able to have time off from work/school. If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please call the preschool phone (614-328-6900) by 9:30am the day they will be absent.

Any diagnosed, communicable disease should be reported to the preschool office, so that other parents can be made aware that their child may have been exposed. If your child is exposed to any of these diseases at school, we will notify you by email as well as a sign posted outside the classroom. Children may return to preschool after 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If they are not symptom free, a doctor's note is required stating that the child is not contagious. All preschool staff is trained to observe the children for any signs or symptoms of communicable disease. Hand washing and disinfecting procedures are followed by staff. Children are also taught proper hand washing procedures. In an effort to limit the spread of communicable diseases, children will be asked to wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer) before entering the classroom for the day, and before leaving the classroom for the day at dismissal, as well as any time they enter the restroom. In accordance with licensing, children will also wash their hands after playing outside, before eating, after water play, and whenever hands are visibly soiled.

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or emergency contact:

- Temperature of at least one hundred and one degrees Fahrenheit (one hundred degrees Fahrenheit if taken axillary) when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness.
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally, unexpectedly or unexplained loose stools within a twenty-four hour period).
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- Unusually dark urine and /or gray or white stool.
- Stiff neck with elevated temperature.
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated away from other children, but always under supervision, and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified by phone call. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in preschool activities the parent will be called to pick-up the child. **A parent or emergency contact must be available to pick up an ill child within 30 minutes of being notified.**

We will follow the Ohio Dept. of Health "Child Care Communicable Disease Chart" for management of suspected illnesses. This chart is located in each preschool classroom and the Preschool Office.

A child isolated for suspected communicable disease shall be:

- Cared for in the preschool office, within sight and hearing of a teacher/director at all times.
- No child will ever be left alone.
- Made comfortable and provided with a cot. (After the cot is used, it will be washed with soap and water and disinfected.)
- Observed carefully for worsening conditions.
- Discharged to the parent as soon as possible with an incident/injury report.

The staff will sanitize the thermometer after each use.

CARE OF CHILDREN WITHOUT IMMUNIZATIONS

Parents who have declined their children's immunizations will be notified of a communicable disease using the same notification procedures already in place at the preschool for notification of communicable diseases. When the school is notified of a communicable disease, parents will receive an email that a communicable disease has occurred in their child's classroom and a sign will be posted outside the affected classroom with the disease name, definition, symptoms to watch for and incubation period.

MEDICATIONS

The teachers WILL NOT administer medications unless needed to treat an emergency (such as severe asthma, severe allergy requiring use of an epi-pen, seizure disorder, etc.). In the event that your child needs to keep emergency medication at the preschool, you will be asked to complete a Child Medical/Physical Care Plan (Health Care Plan JFS1236). This form, along with your child's medication(s), will be kept in a lockbox, in your child's classroom, readily available to ELP staff. This medication must be in its original container, contain a prescription label with your child's name, the dosage to be given and the expiration date.

Over the counter medications must also be administered in accordance to label instructions. A physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication Form. *School-age children are not permitted to carry their own medication and/or ointments. A parent or emergency contact of a child requiring a Child/Medical Physical Care Plan and an Administration of Medication Form must be available by phone to the staff the entire time the child is in attendance and be able to pick up the child within 30 minutes of being called for a health concern. Parents of children with a Child/Medical Physical Care Plan and/or Administration of Medication Form, are required to provide training to the staff prior to the child's first day of preschool.

MODIFIED DIETS

Should your child have a medical food or an entire food group eliminated from his/her diet, you must provide a written statement/instructions from a physician. If the elimination is for cultural/religious reasons, please provide written instructions, dated and signed, regarding what is eliminated, and why. In both of these situations, please provide a safe alternative snack (or medical food if appropriate) to be given to your child if necessary.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Based on this information, outdoor play will be included in our program. We will limit the amount of time outside when the temperatures are very warm or very cold. Children will not be taken outside when the temperature (wind chill and heat index factored in) drops below 25 degrees or rises above 90 degrees. If the situation requires it, we will also adjust outdoor time due to rain, threatening weather, ozone warnings, etc.

In addition to and/or days that outdoor play is not provided due to these conditions, we will include time for indoor gross motor activities. Staff may also, on good weather days, take children outside for nature walks, for nature observation, to read stories, or for certain outdoor activities such as, but not limited to, chalk drawing, game days, science experiments, etc. Children should have appropriate outdoor clothing and shoes when they come to preschool so they may be comfortable and safe whenever they are outside. A first aid kit, the attendance roster, emergency forms, emergency medication, and a cell phone are carried by the teachers whenever a class is outside.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

We encourage parent participation whenever possible at ELP. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit anytime. If desired by the parents, scheduled classroom observations can be set up with the classroom teachers beginning in November. It is helpful to have the first two months of preschool to get to know your child and help them settle into the classroom routines and expectations. Observation times may be spent watching your child or taking part in the activities. If you would like to help with special occasions, or volunteer in the classroom, please talk with your child's teachers. You will be invited to our field trips, Christmas Program, Preschool Sundays, and special parent events as well. Check the inside back cover of this Handbook for dates. If helping out in the classroom, please do not bring younger children as this disrupts the class. Cell phones can also be disruptive to the classroom and we ask that you turn the ringer off while class is in session. If you must use the phone, please step out into the hallway to complete your call.

Parent Room Helpers

If you would like to help in your child's classroom with a specific activity, or when the teacher may need extra help, please talk to your child's teacher regarding times, dates and responsibilities. Please note the policies listed above regarding siblings and phones.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Swimming/Water Activities

There will be no swimming during the preschool day. Children's only exposure to water will be with sensory tables that may contain water, no more than 18 inches in depth, on occasion. Students are never left unsupervised, and all students will disinfect their hands after playing in the sensory table if it contains water.

Calls to Teachers

ELP teachers are very busy during arrival and dismissal time. If an emergency should arise and you need to get a message through to the teachers, please phone the preschool office at 614-328-6900 and if there is no answer, please leave a message. You can also send a message via Class DOJO. Unanswered calls to the preschool office will be picked up quickly by voice mail and returned promptly. Please use the preschool number unless there is an emergency. In an emergency, if the preschool office phone is not answered, please call the church office, 614-837-2826. A staff person from the church office will contact the Director.

Chapel Time/Preschool Sunday

Children will participate regularly with a church staff member in a brief devotional time in the sanctuary. No specific doctrine or theology is taught during this time, or in the classrooms. Children are taught that God loves and cares for them and will discuss ways to show care and love for our world and the people in it. Short prayers may also be said during the children's circle time, before having snack, and during Chapel Time. Short devotions and Bible stories are read and simple religious songs may be taught in the classroom. Two Sundays a year we celebrate Preschool Sunday in worship. Families are encouraged to attend and the preschool children will sing the songs they have learned during the year, at worship. The students are then invited to attend Rise and Shine (Sunday School) for their age group, or sit in worship with their family.

Clothing

It is recommended that the children wear comfortable and washable play clothing and comfortable shoes that stay securely on their feet so that they feel free to take part in all activities and may do so safely. Children may be unable to participate in indoor and outdoor activities if any unsecured pair of shoes is worn. Clothing should also be easily pulled up and down for independent restroom trips. Please help your child to be safe while at preschool by checking shoes and clothing before arriving at preschool! Be sure to label all removable garments with your child's name, as there may be look-alikes. During cold or rainy weather be sure to send a coat with your child. We may go outside to explore or have a fire drill on any day.

Notices

Important items of information will be posted from time to time on our main entry doors, the preschool bulletin boards and on Class DOJO. Please take time to read them and remember to share the information with other parents in your car pool.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Teachers are available to discuss a child's progress or needs at any time. However, due to staff responsibilities and schedules, parents are asked to make appointments with teachers when it is necessary to engage in any lengthy conversations. Teachers want to be able to focus on you and your child at these times. Parent teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring. During these conferences the teachers will verbally share their observations of the child. Sign-up times will be available through a virtual sign-up system that will be emailed out close to conference times. Times are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. In person conferences are preferred, however, if a phone conference is necessary, they are available.

Parking Lot Safety

Please keep in mind that we have preschool children as well as younger siblings who may be in the parking lot, and we ask that you watch your children closely while walking to your car and use extreme caution when driving. During drop off, preschoolers should be brought into the building through the preschool entrance. This door is locked at all times, but the director will be available for your admittance. If for some reason, the director does not greet you at the door, please use the video doorbell to alert the director you are waiting for entry. She will let you in as soon as possible. For safety reasons, all doors to the building are locked whenever students are present. During drive-thru pick up, we ask that you follow the direction arrows in the parking lot and drive slowly onto and off of the ramp. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter!

Sharing Days

Teachers will determine what day students will have sharing days. Items should be left in backpacks until the designated time. Please leave all toys at home, unless it is an item brought specifically for sharing days. We do not permit guns, knives, balloons, or monster type toys. Please consult with your child's teacher if there is a special item they would like to share.

Halloween

Classrooms may spend the month of October talking about pumpkins, scarecrows, spiders, scary things, etc. to prepare the children for the things they see in their environment. We do not have children wear costumes to preschool; we encourage you to participate in the Trunk-or-Treat event sponsored by the church in October. Some preschool staff will be present on that day to see children in costume and lead an activity. We will celebrate the season in the classroom by going on a field trip or hosting a special event for parents to join us in the classroom.

Scholastic Book Orders

Scholastic Book Orders will be distributed in your child's class. Our class code is M27X6, for online ordering purposes. All Scholastic orders should be placed online. Scholastic offers great materials at very reasonable prices and everything you order earns the school points to purchase classroom materials. Scholastic orders will be due every month by the 15th, except for December and May. Please be on the lookout for special due dates for these months. Thank you for your support through Scholastic.

Additional Supplies

In order to transport things back and forth from school, we ask that each child have a backpack or tote bag that they can carry independently, and that is large enough to hold regular 8.5x11 paper comfortably. Each child will have a coat hook on which they can hang their bag and coat when they are in school.

We also ask that each child have a complete change of seasonably appropriate clothing to be left at school. Accidents happen and being comfortable and dry makes learning more fun. Please place this change of clothes in a bag and label it with your child's name. This bag should include a short sleeve AND long sleeve shirt, pants AND shorts, as well as a pair of socks and undies. These extra clothes will be left at school throughout the year, and will be sent home at the end of the year. If an item is used from the bag, it will be sent home and will need to be replaced on the next school day.

A list of additional school supplies will be given out prior to school beginning. We ask families to help in supplying these items in order to make preschool the best possible experience for our students and enable the teachers to focus on the students. Any help you can give with these supplies is greatly appreciated!

Preschool for All Children

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool is a privately funded, church based preschool that is open to any appropriately aged-child for preschool, without regard to race, color, national origin, or disability. ELP will make every effort to make reasonable modifications in an effort to accommodate students with disabilities, as stated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We will work with families to access available resources and educational accommodations for our students. A student requiring disability related medications during their brief time at preschool must complete the required Medical Care Plan and/or Administration of Medication forms. Our teachers and staff will work with parents to ensure that students with disabilities are receiving the care and support they need while in our preschool setting. It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate all necessary care information to teachers and staff.

Special Concerns

If you have special needs or concerns about your child or the preschool program, please discuss this with your child's teachers. If your concerns are not resolved, you need assistance, or have a complaint, you may contact the Preschool Director. Any disputes or concerns that are not resolved satisfactorily by Director, or disputes/concerns that regard the director specifically can be brought to the President of the Preschool Board. The name and contact information of the current board president can be acquired from the preschool director, or church secretary. These concerns/complaints can regard staff and/or children. Likewise, any employee who has a complaint or concern can speak to the director to resolve the situation. If a situation is not resolved, the employee is advised to address the preschool board with

the concern. For contact information of the current preschool board president, please ask the preschool director, or church secretary.

We encourage you to bring up concerns when they occur. Often they can be addressed when they are little problems, before they grow into bigger problems. We fully realize that you trust us with your little ones and we want our relationship to be a good one!

To report a complaint to ODJFS call 1-844-234-5437, or email: info@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Appendix C to rule 5101:2-12-07

Center Parent Information

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth.

This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Youth and Children. Inspections are also online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search

for a specific program and sign up to be notified when the program's latest inspection is posted online.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODCY. HHS and ODCY are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or Call:

HHS

Region V, Office of Civil Rights

233 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 240

Chicago, IL 60601

(312) 886-2359 (voice)

(312) 353-5693 (TDD)

(312) 886-1807 (fax)

Write or Call:

ODCY

Bureau of Civil Rights

30 E. Broad St., 37th Floor

Columbus, OH 43215-3414

(614) 466-2785 (voice)

1-888-278-7101 (toll free)

1-800-750-0750 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <https://childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/for-families/early-care-education/child-care-choice-program>.

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool Directory

Ms. Tiffany Armen- Adventure Seekers (M-Th) in Rm 301

Ms. Stephanie Demmler - Rising Stars (M-F) in Rm 303

Ms. Sue Johnston- Little Learners (M-Th) in Rm 201

Ms. Cara Morris- Little Learners (M-Th) in Rm 201

Ms. Sterling Potter- Floater all classrooms

Ms. Christina Sullivan- Little Blessings (T-Th) Rm 202

Ms. Amanda Westmoreland- Adventure Seekers (M-Th) in Rm 301

Ms. Barb Westall - Rising Stars -Pre-K (M-F) in Rm 303

Ms. Elaine Schroeder- ELP Director (M-F, 10am-3pm)

Ms. Patti Lyons- ELP Treasurer/Bookkeeper

Substitutes:

Mariann Menter

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL

****2026-2027 SCHOOL CALENDAR****

Monday, Aug.3- All Paperwork Due

Wednesday, Aug. 5 -First Tuition Payment Due.

Wednesday Aug. 26-Friday Aug. 28- Teacher Work Days

Thursday, Aug.27- Meet the Teacher Night @5:45pm (Little Blessings & Adventure Seekers)

@6:30pm (Little Learners & Rising Stars)

Monday, August 31- First Day of School (Little Learners, Adventure Seekers and Rising Stars)

Tuesday, Sept. 1- First Day of School (Little Blessings)

Monday, Sept. 7- No School (LABOR DAY)

Friday, Sept.4-Tuition Due & Deadline for receiving 10% of year's tuition

Friday, Sept. 11- First Day for Bright Beginnings (9am-11am)

Monday, Oct. 5- Tuition Due

Friday, Oct. 9 through Tuesday October 13- No School (Teacher Work Days)

Saturday, Oct. 31-Trunk-or-Treat 12:00-2:30pm

Monday, Nov. 2 & Tuesday, Nov. 4-No School

Thursday, Nov. 5-Tuition Due

Monday, Nov. 23 & Tuesday, Nov. 24 – Parent/Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, Nov. 25 through Friday, Nov. 27- No School-Thanksgiving Break

Friday, Dec. 4- Tuition Due

Thursday, Dec. 17 @6pm-Christmas Program

Monday, Dec. 21 through Friday, Jan 1 -No School-Christmas Break

Tuesday, January 4- No School (Teacher work day)

Tuesday, Jan. 4-Tuition Due

Friday, Jan. 8- First day of Drop-off for Bright Beginnings (pick up at 11:30am)

Monday, Jan. 18 -No School (MLK Day)

Sun. Jan. 31 @9am-Preschool Sunday

Friday, Feb. 5- Tuition Due

Wednesday, Feb. 10 & Thursday, Feb. 11- Kids Invite Someone Special Breakfast (KISS)

Monday, Feb. 15- No School (President's Day)

Tuesday Feb.16- No School (Teacher Work Day)

Friday, March 5-Tuition Due

Thursday March 11 & Friday March 12- No School- Parent/Teacher Conferences

Monday, March 22-March 26 No School- Spring Break

Monday, April 5- Tuition Due

Tuesday, April 6- Spring Art Show @6pm

Sun. April 11 @11am- Preschool Sunday

Friday, April 16- No School

Friday, April 23- No School for OAEYC Conference

Friday, May 14- Last Day for Bright Beginnings

Thursday, May 20- Last Day Little Blessings, Little Learners, Adventure Seekers & Rising Stars

Thursday, May 20- Pre-K Graduation @6pm

Calamity Days (if needed) will be determined by the Preschool