

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool

“A great place to play and learn and grow with Jesus”



1135 Oliver St.
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
(716) 693-3715

Family Handbook

Mission Statement

*Reach All People with the Good News of God's Love
and Salvation through Christ*

School Philosophy

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool is a ministry of St. Mark Lutheran Congregation which strives to treat its students as individuals, to educate and work with the whole child. Our school values the family, who provides the fundamental experience for growth and development. It sees the parents as the primary educators of their children. In working closely with parents, it builds on this foundation by helping each child reach his/her maximum ability intellectually, spiritually, socially and physically.

About Our Program

We are a play-based program. We believe that children learn best by “doing”. Knowledge and skills are developed through “hands-on” experiences that are engaging and meaningful. In class we explore all content areas through activities that are designed to engage the child both physically and mentally. The materials and toys we use encourage curiosity and creativity.

In addition to growing academically we also help the children to grow spiritually. We create a safe, loving environment where children learn about Jesus love and forgiveness. Each day we spend time exploring a Bible story and talking about how it relates to the daily lives of the children. We teach the children that Jesus loves and cares for us and that He came to teach us how to live; how to be good, and kind, and honest; and that when we make wrong choices, if we go to Him and are sorry for what we’ve done, He forgives us. It’s through that forgiveness that we are saved. We teach the children the importance of prayer and studying God’s Word.

Age Requirements

Children enrolling must be three or four years old by Dec. 1. It is expected that children be toilet trained prior to beginning school. We realize that not all children achieve this developmental milestone completely by the age of three and that occasional accidents may occur.

Registration Checklist

The following must be submitted by the child's first day of school:

- Completed Enrollment form with the enrollment fee
- Birth certificate
- Completed medical form from child's physician, including proof of immunizations (must be within the last 12 months)
- Completed Emergency Contact/Alternate Pick-up form
- Court Custody Papers (most recent, if applicable)

Learner Outcomes/Areas of Study

To have a positive initial preschool experience.

To develop a desire to learn.

To become familiar with Bible stories and themes as they apply to our daily living.

To engage in opportunities through play, instruction, music and art that is based on individual needs, interests, and abilities.

To develop a positive attitude toward self and others.

To work towards kindergarten readiness by developing the following skills:

- Listening
- Following directions
- Safety habits
- Using words in discussion and interaction with others

- Participating in songs, fingerplays and rhythms
- Cutting, pasting, coloring, painting
- Reading and math readiness

Each week has a different faith theme, school theme and Bible passage.

Communicable Diseases / Transferable Infections

If a child has any of the following illnesses or suspicion of a communicable disease, he/she should be kept home from school.

If these symptoms are observed at school, the parent or guardian will be called to pick up the child as soon as possible. (Meanwhile the child will be isolated from the rest of the class with supervision.)

- skin rash that includes but not limited to poison ivy, impetigo, etc.
- difficult or rapid breathing
- oozing, open sores
- diarrhea
- severe coughing not evaluated by a doctor
- vomiting
- evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestations
- yellowish skin or eyes
- eyes that are red and have thick drainage
- temperature of 100° or higher
- untreated infected skin patch(es)

- unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
- undiagnosed stiff neck.

Illness

Any fever

Vomiting or diarrhea

Strep throat/scarlet fever

Pinkeye

Any undiagnosed rash

Head lice

When to return to school

When fever is gone for one full calendar day without medication (i.e. Tylenol)

When symptoms are gone for one full calendar day

24 hours after start of treatment, with a medical note

When eyes are clear or have been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours, with medical note

When symptoms are gone for one full calendar day, or when cleared by child's physician, with medical note

When head is treated and free of lice and nits

Medication will not be administered at the Preschool without prior written agreement between parent and school, plus a written prescription from the doctor. If a child is taking medication that must be given during preschool hours, we request that the child is kept at home until the medication is completed.

Absences/Attendance

If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please call the office (716-693-3715). If it is before class time, leave a message giving the reason for the absence. Please inform us if your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease so that the school population can be notified of possible exposure. Your privacy will be respected.

Arrival/Departure

For the safety of all in our building, we have a security system. All who enter the building during the school day need to press a buzzer to be admitted by the staff.

Parents are responsible for escorting their child to and from the Preschool room each day. The teacher or aide must be aware that your child is present. If your child is going to be picked up by someone other than you, that person must be listed on the Authorized Pick Up Form and must be prepared to show a picture identification card.

Class time is from 9:00am-12:00. Please arrive prior to 9:00 so that your child has time to settle in before class begins. When your child arrives on time, he or she is able to participate in all class activities and feels comfortable with those who have already arrived.

Please be prompt at pick-up time so that your child will not worry that you are late. If you are going to be late please call to let us know prior to 12:00. If you are more than 15 minutes late and cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency numbers provided.

Bathroom Guidelines

The classroom is equipped with a bathroom inside the classroom to encourage your child's independence. If necessary, a teacher or aide will assist the child to the bathroom. The door to the bathroom will be left partially open for the child's safety. Please dress children in outfits they can quickly manage. If your child cannot undo their belt or overalls at home, please do not dress them in it for school.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday will be celebrated at school as close to his/her birthday as possible. A special snack may be sent in, i.e. decorated cookies, ice cream, etc. Summer birthdays can also be celebrated during the school year.

Child Abuse Concerns

St. Mark staff members are mandated child abuse reporters and must contact authorities if child abuse is suspected. All information will be documented.

Closings

St. Mark follows the North Tonawanda School District for closings. If the North Tonawanda School District is closed due to inclement weather we will be closed also.

If the occurrence of threatening weather causes us to close while school is in session, parents will be called to notify of early dismissal.

Clothing

Clothing should allow active participation in class activities.

All children should wear play clothes and sneakers.

Please send in a complete change of clothes at the beginning of the school year to be left in your child's cubby.

Please remember to change the clothing with the seasons.

Snacks

Parents are asked to provide a snack for their child each day. All snacks are to be Tree Nut and Peanut Free, nor made in a factory that processes nuts. Please check the label. If it says "May contain traces of nuts" or "Made in a factory which processes nuts", please choose a different snack to bring in. You do not need to provide a drink.

Children will be provided with water to drink.

Please send your child's snack in a lunch box or bag that is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Communication/Consultation

Monthly newsletters and a Week-at-a-Glance calendar will be sent home to provide information about units of study, classroom activities, and classroom events.

Student Assessments are provided in January and June, and parents are encouraged to attend Parent/Teacher conferences to discuss their child's progress.

Parents are always encouraged to communicate any pertinent information or problems to the teacher either verbally or in writing. Parents are encouraged to arrange a conference with the teacher to discuss any concerns, problems or needs of their children.

Discipline Policy

The purpose of discipline is to help a child regain control of his/her emotions and actions, not to stop the expression of feelings and moods.

- Respect for God, others and self will be stressed.
- Positive reinforcement and attention will be given when the child is on task.
- Children will be encouraged to use their words when having a disagreement with another child.
- Staff will facilitate children in their attempts to settle their own disputes.

- Children will be redirected to other activities when this seems appropriate.
- The child will be separated from the group if necessary, one minute per year of age.
- A Parent conference will be requested to resolve repeated unacceptable behavior in a positive way.

District Help

Your child's teacher will perform ongoing assessments of your child's knowledge and abilities. If any concerns are noted, you will be asked to come in for a conference to discuss next steps, and the possibility of special services.

If you feel your child needs special services for development or behavior, please feel free to discuss this privately with your child's teacher.

The school district you live in can evaluate your child and provide services they feel are needed. Please contact your school district administration building for more information.

Injury

If a child is injured or a medical emergency arises while he/she is at the school, parents will be notified promptly. If neither parent can be reached, the emergency numbers on file will be called. If necessary, the child may be supervised in another room until picked up. If the staff deems it necessary, 911 will be called.

Names

Your child's name must be on everything that comes to school: coats, boots, hats, extra clothes, school bag, snack, etc.

Confidentiality

All faculty respect the privacy of the children and their families. Information is kept in strict confidence except when required by law.

Safety Policy

In the case of emergency evacuation, the children will be taken to the church building. An authorized adult will be notified for immediate pick-up.

Non-Discrimination Policy

St. Mark admits students of any race, color, national and 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 and ethnic origin in administration or its education policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Tuition and Fees Policy

Parents receive a copy of the tuition policy with the enrollment packet.

If you have further questions, please contact Pastor Keith at 716-693-3715.

Volunteers

You may be asked to volunteer for the Preschool program. Volunteers are welcome. We ask that siblings do not come along on these occasions due to the ratio and licensing requirements as well as liability issues. Please keep in mind, volunteer time is not a time to discuss your child's progress with the teacher.