

Little Saints Early Childhood Center

“Honoring Christ through Excellence”



Parent – Student Handbook Little Saints ECC

**14180 Commerce Ave. NE
Prior Lake, MN 55372
952-226-2525**

A ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School

*“Commit to the Lord, whatever you do, and you will succeed”
Acts 16:3*

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Welcomell

Thank you so much for honoring us by allowing us to be a part of your family and entrusting us with your most precious gift. At Little Saints we believe God has blessed us with children to teach and learn from. Through a highly academic program based on E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge Sequence for preschoolers, and sharing stories from the Bible to learn of God's great love and the love He wants us to share with others, children learn to be inquisitive in their learning and kind in dealing with others. If you ever have questions or concerns please stop by the office and share with me.

*Jessie Bohnsack
Director*

By enrolling in Little Saints Early Childhood programs, the parent or legal guardian (hereafter referred to as parent) agrees to abide by all policies and procedures of Little Saints Early Childhood Center.

Contact Information

Little Saints Early Childhood Center
14180 Commerce Ave. NE
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Phone: 952-226-2525
Fax: 952-447-2119
Website: www.splspriorlake.org

Ages Served

Infants 6 weeks - 18 months
Toddlers 18 months - 33 months
Preschool 33 months - 48 months
Prekindergarten 48 months to the month preceding kindergarten

Class Size

The total capacity of our Early Childhood Center is 81.
Our half day classrooms have a 1:10 staff:child ratio. Each class has a max of 20 students.
Our preschool classrooms are licensed for 20 children with a 1:10 staff:child ratio.
The toddler classroom has a licensed capacity of 14 children with a 1:7 staff:child ratio.
The infant room has a licensed capacity of 8 children with a 1:4 staff:child ratio.

Hours of Operation

Classic Preschool	Mornings	Tuesday/Thursday	8:45 - 11:30
Classic Prekindergarten	Mornings	Mon/Wed/Fri	8:45 - 11:30
Classic Step Up	Afternoons	Monday - Friday	12:15 - 3:00
Infants		Monday - Friday	6:30 - 6:00
Toddlers		Monday - Friday	6:30 - 6:00
Preschool		Monday - Friday	6:30 - 6:00
Prekindergarten		Monday - Friday	6:30 - 6:00

Ownership

Little Saints Early Childhood Center is a non-profit, Christian center operated by St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School of Prior Lake, Minnesota. A Board established by the congregation oversees Little Saints.

Minnesota State License

Little Saints Early Childhood Center is licensed by the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing (651-296-3971)

Staff

The Director and the staff of Little Saints have educational backgrounds and experience that meet and exceed the Minnesota Department of Human Services licensing requirements. Each child's room is staffed with qualified caregivers and certified teachers.

Program Summary

Our Christian Education Center is child-centered, inviting, and stimulating. The atmosphere is lovingly supportive and accepting. We encourage independence, self-control and skill development. Each day is viewed as an opportunity for ongoing learning and discovery with activities to enhance individual development of the whole child...physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally, creatively, and spiritually.

The Childcare Program Plan is available to parents for review upon request.

Educational Methods

Our teachers carry out a developmentally appropriate curriculum that includes teacher and child directed activities. Interest areas are provided to encourage hands-on learning and include music, reading, science, math, dramatic play, sensory stimulation, building, and art.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Little Saints admits students of any race, color, creed or national 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, creed or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, scholarship program, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Insurance Coverage

The parent is responsible for complete health insurance coverage of the child. Little Saints Early Childhood Center carries liability insurance.

Enrollment

Enrollment is considered complete when all required enrollment forms (Registration, Health Care Summary, and Immunization Form) are completed and returned to Little Saints with paid registration fee. Parents are encouraged to tour the center with their child and meet the classroom teacher(s).

Part-Time Enrollment/Hourly Enrollment

Full-time enrollment is given priority. Part-time enrollment is defined as two to four days per week. **Anything less than two days per week will be charged at the hourly rate.** Hourly childcare is available if space and staffing permit.

Attendance

The parent is to notify the teacher or director when the child will be absent, arrive late, or be picked up early from the center. In the case of illness or an unforeseen event, the parent is to contact the center so that the staff may be informed.

Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held twice yearly (fall and spring). Parents will receive a written assessment of their child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.

School Pictures

School pictures of all students are taken each fall. Parents have the option to purchase them.

Dress Code

At Little Saints Early Childhood Center children will play and get dirty! Remember, play is a child's work. Children will go outside daily, weather permitting. Parents are asked to dress their child in appropriate seasonal wear. The following guidelines are intended to help the parent determine appropriate dress. The final decision as to what is or is not acceptable is left to the Early Childhood Director. Clothing should be:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Neat | All clothing should be clean and properly mended |
| Conservative | Apparel should be non-offensive. Extreme styles and clothing with objectionable advertising or illustration will not be allowed. |
| Other guidelines | Shoes are to be worn with socks at all times. Socks with sandals are optional. For the safety of your child, we strongly discourage open toed or backless shoes, crocs, or flip flops. |

Holidays/In-service

Little Saints is closed on New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and two in-service days per year. You will be notified 3 weeks prior to the in-service days.

Closings

In the interest of your family's safety and the safety of Little Saints faculty and staff, Little Saints ECC and St. Paul's Lutheran School may close due to inclement weather. School closings will be announced on **WCCO-TV (4), KSTP-TV (5), FOX-TV (9), and KARE-TV (11), and Radio - WCCO (AM830) and KTIS (FM98.5).** **In the event that Prior Lake Schools are closed, Little Saints will be closed also.** If our facility closes, the announcement will also be made on our web-site: splspriorlake.org

Fire/Tornado Safety

In the event of fire or the sounding of sirens for a severe weather warning, the procedures posted in each classroom will be followed. Little Saints is required to hold monthly fire/tornado/and lockdown drills throughout the year.

Entry to Little Saints

Access to Little Saints is controlled by a keyless entry system. Parents are given the code at the time of enrollment. Parents are asked to only share the code with adults that are regularly picking up or dropping off their children. **PLEASE DO NOT TEACH YOUR CHILD THE CODE!!!** It is a security system to keep everyone safe not a toy.

Arrival

The parent is to **accompany** the child to the classroom. Infants or young children **may not** be left unattended in any vehicle. Parents are asked to remove soiled or wet shoes before entering the infant room. **Temporarily parking along the fence or in front of the entrance is illegal.**

Upon arrival: sign in (this is required)

- half day program sign in at the classroom
- childcare sign in at the front desk

Store belongings

Students are encouraged to use restroom and wash hands

Brief farewell

Departure

Upon entering the school: sign-out child,
gather child's belongings
pick up child at the classroom's designated pick up spot.

All children are to remain under the supervision of Little Saints staff until dismissed individually. (A picture ID is required before releasing the child to authorized pick up people who are unfamiliar to the staff.) Once children are signed out by the classroom staff, the child is to stay in the company of the parent **AT ALL TIMES!!!** **Children may not be unattended in the ECC for any reason.**

Termination of Care

A written notice from the director will be given to the parent if Little Saints Early Childhood Center will discontinue care of a child.

Withdrawal

If you desire to withdraw your child from Little Saints, please follow these procedures:

- Notify the office in writing of your decision at least two weeks prior to withdrawal.
- You will be charged one-half month's tuition if you give the school at least two (2) week's notice and the child has attended less than two weeks of the month. The full month's tuition will be charged I f the student attends more than two (2) weeks of the month, or less than two (2) week's notice is given.
- All tuition and fees must be current.

- The parent is requested to provide a forwarding address to the school office.

Items from Home

The following items are to be **brought daily and labeled with the child's name:**

- Backpack or tote bag
- Appropriate dress and shoes for active/messy indoor and outdoor activities
- Snow pants, hat, and waterproof mittens when needed
- Boots **AND** shoes on snowy days

The classroom teacher will provide a list of needed supplies for their classroom. In addition to that list, All children should have a change of clothing to be kept at school. Any child (toddler age and older) enrolled in the all-day program may also bring a furry friend and a small, lightweight blanket for naptime. **All other toys should remain at home.** Little Saints is not responsible for items brought to school. "Lost and Found" items are kept in a designated area near the school office.

Registration/Tuition

A non-refundable fee of \$100 per student is due at the time of registration. All childcare families are billed on a weekly basis for the current week of care with payments due on Monday. **Weekly payments remain the same despite scheduled closings, holidays, or absences due to illness.** Credits are not given for illness or closings and you may not trade a day of missed attendance for another day. Half day payments are due by the 15th of each month (August to May). A billing statement will be sent the beginning of each month.

Late Payments

1. If the payment is one week late the parent/guardian will receive written communication.
2. If the payment is two weeks late the parent/guardian will receive a phone call by the administration.
3. A fee of \$15.00 will be assessed after three weeks and will be assessed for each week payment is not made unless there has been a payment plan discussed and agreed upon. After four weeks of no payment and a payment plan has not been discussed your child will be denied service.

A \$20 service fee will be charged for all NSF transactions.

Discounts

Little Saints offers a discount of 8% (beginning with the second child) to families with more than one child enrolled. If you are a "Member in Good Standing" with SPLC for six months there may be an additional 8% discount available.

Vacation Policy

After a student has been enrolled for 6 months, a vacation credit (equal to the number of days attended) is granted.

Requests for a Schedule Change

If a family desires to make a change (permanent or temporary) in their child's schedule, a **written** notice must be given to the Director at least two (2) weeks in advance. The schedule change must be approved by the Director. Approval is granted only if staff ratios can be met and space is available.

Summer Attendance or Extended Leave Policy

Families who wish to hold their child's spot during an extended absence (4 or more consecutive weeks) are required to pay an amount equal to two days per week during that time. The reduced tuition will continue to be withdrawn weekly through Tuition Express and will guarantee them a spot upon their return. This reduced payment plan can be used for a period of up to 12 consecutive weeks.

Holding an Infant Position

A position in the infant room may be held by paying the registration fee plus 30% of the intended scheduled hours per week. (ex: 30% of \$255 (5 day week)= \$192.50 per week until actual start date).

Late Pick-Up

Little Saints closes promptly at 6:00 pm. The late pick-up charge following 6:00 pm closing will be **\$1.00 per minute in cash** due to the closing staff person upon arrival.

Daytime ratios and staff member's evening commitments require that children be picked up on time, therefore, the parent is encouraged to have back up transportation available. In the event that your child has not been picked up by 6:10 pm, Little Saints will begin calling authorized persons to pick up your child. If the parent authorized contacts have not been reached within 30 min the local police will be notified.

Requests for Additional Care

If a family desires to utilize add-on care (i.e. an additional day or extending their school day hours) **the parent must get approval.** Forms for getting advance approval are available from and should be turned in to the office. Last minute requests should be made by phone to the Early Childhood Director. Staff ratios and licensing guidelines make it necessary for us to monitor this very closely. Approval is only granted if we have sufficient staffing and if space allows. The family will be billed directly on their account.

Required Forms & Fees

The following items are necessary for enrollment and must be on file **prior to attending**:

- Completed Registration Form
- Non-Refundable Registration Fee (does not apply toward tuition)
- Child Contact and Health Form
- Child Information Sheet (infants and toddlers)
- Immunization Record
- Health Care Summary (provided by the child's physician)
- Parental Consent Form

Parents are to inform the staff of any changes in information provided. A new copy of immunization records should be given to the office every time your child is given a vaccination as well as when they graduate to a new room.

Field Trips

Half day parents will receive a Field Trip Information and Permission Form for any scheduled field trips. The form must be signed and returned with payment, if applicable, in order for the child to attend. Children will be transported by school bus. Children are to wear appropriate "spirit wear" on field trips. Little Saints shirts are available for purchase from the office. If you choose to not have your child participate in a field trip, please notify your teacher as soon as possible. We may not have the appropriate staff available to provide care for your child. Generally, off-site trips will be taken only by the pre-kindergarten and Step Up programs. ECC children will be restricted to short walking trips.

Meals

Infants

Parents of infants will provide all milk (formula or mother's milk) and food until the child is able to eat table food and whole milk (usually around 12 months). For families choosing formula, an extra supply of formula should be kept in the classroom, and should be resupplied as necessary. Each day an adequate amount of bottles with a pre-mixed amount of water and formula should be brought in a soft-sided insulated bag. The bottles must be labeled and placed in the child's marked basket. For families choosing mother's milk, an adequate supply of labeled bottles should be brought each day in a soft-sided insulated bag. Upon arrival, bottles should be placed in the refrigerator inside the child's marked basket. All used bottles will be placed back in the child's insulated bag and should be taken home for washing. When the child is ready for solid foods, the parents will provide an adequate amount of food for each day with written instructions regarding the feeding schedule. When developmentally appropriate, the parents, in consultation with the teachers, will determine that the child is ready for table food, which is supplied by Little Saints.

Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Prekindergartners

Well balanced, nourishing noon meals are served to our full day students. Monthly menus are published in advance. Little Saints does NOT offer breakfast.

Snacks

Each child in the half day programs will be asked to provide a nutritious morning snack and juice (100% fruit) for the class as scheduled. Suggestions for snacks are included in the information that is sent home. Snacks must be commercially prepared and packaged. It is recommended that the identical snack be provided for each child. **Parents are to notify staff in writing of any known food allergies.**

Little Saints does NOT offer breakfast

Birthdays

The child's birthday or half-birthday (for children in school year programs who have a summer birthday) will be celebrated on or near the day. The parent may discuss plans for a special treat (commercially prepared) and/or donating a book or item with the teacher.

Gun Play

Guns, weapons, "shooting", and "play fighting" are not permitted. We discourage aggressive play associated with super heroes or other such action characters.

Required Parental Consent

Children may only participate in research, experimental procedure, or a public relations activity with the express written consent of the parent. Parents also have the opportunity to give Little Saints authorization to use the child's work in school related activities, displays, and publications. Permission must be granted in writing by the parent before the child's photo is published either electronically or on paper. No complete names or addresses are ever published with a child's photo.

Grievance Procedure

When a concern arises, the following steps, according to Matthew 18, are to be taken:

1. Person to person. (Example: parent to staff member)
2. Person to person with mediator. (Example: parent to staff member with director)
3. Person to the governing board. (This is the final step after repeated attempts at resolution have been unsuccessful)

Staff and parents are to abide by the above guidelines so that gossip does not cause harm. In Christian love, confidentiality assures a safe and accepting environment for all.

Accidental Ingestion

In the event of accidental ingestion, Poison Control or 911 will be contacted. Qualified staff personnel will aid the child as instructed by the authorities at Poison Control or local emergency medical services.

Administration of Medicine

Whenever possible, parents are asked to administer medication at home. If necessary, medication may be administered at school by our designated health aide. A doctor's written order and a signed permission slip by the parent is required (this includes Tylenol or Ibuprofen). Little Saints will not administer medication without the appropriate forms. All medicine must be sent in the original container.

Abuse or Neglect

Little Saints staff shall report any suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect of a child as required by Minnesota state law (9503.0130 Reporting). A complete copy of the reporting policy is included at the end of this handbook.

Animals and Pets

Animals and pets are not permitted at Little Saints without prior approval by the staff and written notification of all families enrolled.

First Aid and Emergencies

In the case of accident or injury, a staff member will administer first aid. An Injury Report will be completed, placed in the child's file, a copy in the Injury Report Log, and the parent or guardian will be notified. If immediate attention is needed the following procedure will be followed:

1. The parent or guardian will be contacted
2. Others listed on the Emergency Information Sheet will be contacted if the parent or guardian cannot be reached.
3. The child's physician/dentist may be called for advice.
4. 911 will be called and the child transported to an emergency facility as deemed necessary. A staff member will accompany the child if an adult listed above is not available (any expenses occurred is the responsibility of the parent).

In the event of a serious accident or injury, steps #1-3 above will be waived and 911 will be contacted.

The nearest medical source is St. Francis Hospital in Shakopee.

Illness

The staff will immediately notify the parent or a specified individual (if the parent cannot be reached) when a child needs to go home due to the following symptoms: fever(temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or over), diarrhea, vomiting, severe coughing, difficult or rapid breathing, yellowish skin or eyes, pink eye, or lice. The child must be picked up **within one hour** after notification.

Children must be free of the above symptoms for 24 hours in order to attend.

The staff will contact the parent for FURTHER INFORMATION AND DETERMINATION OF TREATMENT when the child is free of fever but the following symptoms have been identified: unusual sores or rashes, sore throat, infected skin patches, unusually dark, tea-colored urine, gray or white stool, headache and stiff neck, unusual behavior, loss of appetite or severe itching of body or scalp.

The parent must notify the office within 24 hours of the diagnosis of any contagious illness.

The staff will inform the parent of each exposed child the same day the office is notified that a positive diagnosis has been made for any contagious illness. Little Saints will notify the Minnesota Department of Health of any suspected case of a reportable disease. Little Saints is visited monthly by a registered nurse to discuss illness concerns and procedures with staff.

Behavior Guidance

Little Saints Early Childhood Center maintains clearly defined boundaries and as the child matures, more responsibility is expected in regard to following classroom rules. The methods of discipline are 1) Prevention, 2) Redirection, and 3) Separation.

Each child will be provided a positive model of acceptable behavior and will be taught how to use acceptable alternatives to the problem behavior in order to reduce conflict. Children may also be redirected toward a constructive activity to ensure the safety of children and staff persons. "Separation" refers to the removal of a child within sight and/or sound of the staff from an area or activity until appropriate behavior is displayed. Immediate and directly related consequences will be used in any instance that may cause harm to another individual (hitting, kicking, biting, throwing toys, etc.).

Staff members will be asked to record any persistent unacceptable behaviors and the staff response to them. If necessary, a plan will be developed, in consultation with the child's parent, other staff persons and professionals, for addressing the documented behavior.

Toileting

Children entering a Preschool or Prekindergarten classroom must be fully toilet trained (pull-ups are discouraged). The child should be able to do the following with little or no assistance:

1. Recognize the need to use the bathroom
2. Manage own clothing (child should be dressed so this is possible)
3. Wipe self

Children are to use the bathroom as needed, and as asked by the teacher, (i.e. before napping and going outside). After going to the bathroom, the child will flush and wash their hands with soap and water. Little Saints staff members will assist toddlers with toileting needs as necessary. Children will not be punished for toileting accidents. Soiled clothing is sent home in a plastic bag "as is".

Parent Communication

Activities will be posted on a parent information board, and in the newsletter. Illness reports, school menus, and other useful information are available at the front desk. Parents of infants and toddlers will receive a daily written report describing the child's food intake, sleeping patterns, and general behavior. Special notes from the staff or Director may be included in these reports.

Naptime and Rest

Afternoon naptime begins at 12:00pm (approximately) and is held daily. The room is staffed according to licensing standards. The lengths of naps are consistent with the developmental level of the children in each room.

- **Confinement limitation:** A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes must not be required to remain on a cot or in a crib.
- **Placement of equipment:** Cribs and cots are placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping equipment. Cribs and cots are placed directly on the floor and are not stacked when in use.
- **Bedding:** A crib sheet and a HALO SleepSack are provided for each child in the Infant Room. A cot sheet and lightweight blanket are provided for young toddlers transitioning to a cot. All bedding is washed weekly or when soiled or wet. (The U.S. consumer Products Safety Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and First Candle/SIDS Alliance suggest the use of a wearable blanket, such as the HALO SleepSack.) A lightweight blanket (one ply) for each child age 18 months and older is provided by the parents. It is sent home weekly and when soiled or wet for laundering.
- **Crib Standard:** A crib is provided for each infant for whom we are licensed to provide care. The equipment conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations as well as Minnesota Statute 245A.146. The cribs are reviewed annually to ensure they are not a part of the Consumer Product Safety Commission's listing of unsafe cribs. They are also inspected monthly for compliance with Minnesota Statutes 245A.146, subdivision 4. Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskin, pillow-like stuffed toys, or other soft products will not be placed in the crib with an infant. Each crib is equipped with a firm mattress as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.1435.
- **Cots:** A cot is provided for all children in the toddler, preschool, and prekindergarten classrooms. Young toddlers transition to a cot around 16 months of age.
- **Infant sleeping position:** Each infant is placed on his/her back while sleeping in his/her assigned crib.

Open Invitation:

You are ALWAYS welcome to visit and participate in your child's day!! Research confirms that your involvement is important to the intellectual formation of your young child. Your child's growth and development is important to us. God has created your child in His image and our desire is to assist you in providing the foundation that allows for and encourages learning in all areas: physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally, creatively and spiritually. Please take time to read information sent home and posted on the parent bulletin board. Arrival and departure times are seldom conducive to in-depth discussions. Feel free to call or set up a time to meet with the teacher and take advantage of scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences. Your questions, comments, concerns and suggestions are welcomed and appreciated.

Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting Policy: Minnesota Statutes, sections 245A.145 & 245A.66

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect?

- **Any person** may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you **work with children** in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report?

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 297-4123.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to Scott County Child Protection (952) 445-7751, or the local non-emergency police number (952) 440-3555.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 296-3971.

What to Report?

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Failure to Report:

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.