

Ascension Lutheran Extended Day Preschool Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Ascension Lutheran Extended Day Preschool! We are so glad you have chosen our Extended Day Preschool program for your child where he or she can learn, explore and make new friends. In choosing us, you are giving us the opportunity to care for your child. All of us at Ascension want to provide an enriching Christian environment for your child and to help them flourish in a loving atmosphere. We are all eager to work with your child and will strive to give each individual child the very best care.

It will be a privilege to work with your child In teaching them about God and all the ways He cares for us. We will do our best to encourage and love your children while challenging and motivating them to do their best. We will nurture and protect your child while they are away from you.

Our prayer is that your children will love coming to EDP and have a special relationship with their teacher and fellow classmates. We encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teacher and keep us posted on any changes that may affect your child throughout the year.

As always, if you have any questions regarding EDP, please ask your child's teacher or stop by the office. We look forward to a great year!

Chandra Cornell
Director

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide an environment that nurtures, cares for, and challenges the children, at the same time teaching them the love of God. Our staff is highly qualified and the atmosphere is safe and encouraging.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy statement is that Extended Day Preschool exists to further enrich your child's life in a safe, loving, Christian environment and to assist the parents in further developing the child's love and understanding of what an awesome God we serve. We also want to provide a preschool environment to further develop your child academically and socially. We will provide hands-on activities which are age appropriate to stimulate interest in interacting with others or self exploration. The program will provide a sound educational experience, which considers the developmental needs of the child and emphasizes growth in all areas, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, creative, language, and academic, as a continuous, interrelated process. Each child will be helped to grow in independence, social development and the development of his or her own unique talents and abilities in an atmosphere of tender loving care. This is a Christian learning environment with a balanced program of Bible stories and academic development.

We promote growth in each of the following areas of development

- **Physical well being:** Our staff helps each child to adapt to routines, to develop both large and small muscle skills and to best utilize all of their sensory experiences.
- **Emotional health:** Warm and professional teachers use consistent policies to develop and encourage an atmosphere of trust while helping each child establish self discipline, increase self-control and develop a positive self image.
- **Social development:** We encourage each child to share, communicate, and develop empathy for each other. We want them to recognize that everyone has rights that are to be respected by everyone else.
- **Spiritual guidance:** We weave this throughout the day teaching children about a loving God, His only son, Jesus with Bible stories, songs and the use of prayer before eating.
- **Creativity:** We encourage originality and the use of a variety of self expressive art materials while using curriculum content designed to be relevant and interesting to each age level.
- **Language skills and academics:** In our curriculum we join cognitive learning with the development of listening, following direction, math, science exploration and language skills.

A typical preschool schedule

9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Arrival group time and snack

Children arrive and are greeted by their teacher and aide. The first part of the day is exploration time and/or table top activities. During this time we try to foster individual and group learning and to create a safe and happy environment where children are encouraged to work and play together, while being guided by the teacher and/or aide. Also, children participate in "group time" where academics such as calendar, weather and Bible stories are discussed. This also is a great time to share personal experiences and stories. The teacher also introduces the lesson and learning activities for the day. After group time, children wash their hands, and a nutritious snack is served. Grace is said before eating.

Music/Art/Literature/Science/Centers/Outdoors

Under the direction of the teacher, the children participate in songs, creative movement, musical games, rhythm instruments and listening activities. During art, children are encouraged to make crafts and use art materials to develop self expression and creativity. Children's literature will be read to the children exposing them to classic tales and learning how to tell a story in sequence. During science exploration, children are encouraged to ask questions to foster curiosity and respect for the world around them. A variety of centers will be used in our classes where they will be encouraged to participate and explore their environment through hands-on activities. Outdoor time is designed to promote muscle development and social dramatic play.

Lunch/Literature/Quiet time

Children will wash their hands before lunch. They will then say grace and eat their lunch. After lunch, children will clean up and lay their rest mats down on the floor. A Bible story or children's literature may be read to the children before their quiet time. Quiet children's music will be played to help sooth the children to sleep or relax them during quiet time.

Conclusion and dismissal

The teacher may use children's literature, sharing time, finger plays, songs, puzzles, coloring or other activities for closure to the session.

Preschool program

The staff promotes learning to function in a classroom by getting along with their peers and following the teacher's directions. The children are exposed to concepts such as calendar, weather, day, night, seasons, holidays, animals, matching, alike and opposite, math manipulative, creative exploration through art and science projects, health and foods. The children work on colors, shapes, numbers, letters and name recognition. Praise and encouragement are used to promote a good self-image.

Pre Kindergarten program

The four and five year old pre kindergarten program includes academic preparation for kindergarten. The classes concentrate on a review of colors and shapes, left to right, rhyming words, sequencing, recognition of upper and lower case letters, beginning consonant sounds, math manipulative, science and art exploration, and printing their name correctly. Classic children's literature will be read weekly and extended into social studies, math concepts, science, art, literacy and geography. All concepts are taught through thematic units. Praise and encouragement are used to motivate students and develop a positive attitude toward school.

Enrollment

Children must be 2 ½ and no older than 6 to be enrolled in the program. At the time of enrollment you must bring registration forms, information forms, immunization card, health forms, materials, and a **non-refundable** registration fee.

Tuition

The cost is based on a monthly billing cycle. For billing purposes, the costs have been divided equally by nine (9) months, with the first installment starting Sept. 1st. Installment payments are due on the 1st day of the month. Accounts must be settled by the 10th of each month or they will be deemed delinquent. All delinquent accounts will be assessed a fee of \$10.00. Delinquent accounts must be settled by the 25th day of the month. Participants in the program having unsettled accounts by the 25th day of the month will not be allowed to participate in the program until the total amount due plus the next month's payment has been received. Checks should be payable to: Ascension Lutheran, with the name of the child and room assignment referenced on the check. There is a one-time change allowed for each child after acceptance into the program. Subsequent changes will require a new registration fee.

Class sizes

Preschool class will have one teacher and one aide for a maximum of 14 children; therefore, the ratio is 1 to 7 children.

Pre Kindergarten class will have one teacher and one aide for a maximum of 20 children making the ratio 1 to 10 children.

Children are always accompanied by a staff member at all times throughout the day.

Arrival and Departure

Each teacher has a Notebook with a sheet for signing your child in and out. Upon enrollment you will fill out an Authorization Pick up card for your child, the names that are listed on this card will be the only adults the child will be released to. Since children are not released to unauthorized persons, we must have written or verbal notice of any changes in authorization. If there is an emergency and you are unable to pick up your child, we may release a child to an adult only with verbal permission. Identification will be checked if the teacher does not know the person to whom the child is being released.

Classes will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. doors will be opened by 9:25 a.m. There is a 5 minute grace period after 2:30 p.m. After 2:35 p.m., a late pick-up fee is based in a five (5) minute period at \$3.00 per period/per child in care to be paid directly to the staff watching your child.

At the end of the day, the director or designated staff member will ensure all children have been picked up before closing the center. If a child is not picked up at the end of the day 15 minutes after the center is closed, a parent will be called. If there is no answer, we will contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency card. If no contact is made, appropriate action will be taken. Late pick-up charges will also apply.

If you anticipate being late, please call us as soon as possible and if necessary, make other arrangements to have your child picked up on time. Continued inability to arrive on time may result in termination from the program.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent and you know in advance, please let the teachers know. If your child is sick or absent due to unforeseen situations, please call the office at (303) 794-4636 each day your child is absent. If the child is absent for more than one day, the program should be notified as to the extended length of absence. **There is no deduction in tuition payment for absences due to illness, vacations, etc.**

Accident or Injury of Child

If a child gets a minor bump or scrape, we will wash the injury and apply ice and a bandage, if necessary. We will notify you when you pick up your child. If the injury is more than a minor bump, we may contact you by phone. An accident report will be filled out for any injury and you will be asked to sign it when you pick your child up. You will be given a copy at your request and the original will be placed in your child's file. In the case of a more serious accident, you will be notified at once. If you cannot be reached, and it is determined that immediate medical attention is necessary, we will call 911. If the EMT determines the child needs to be transported to a hospital and the parents have not been reached, the director will go with the child, taking his/her file, containing the medical release form. A staff member will be assigned to locate the parents and/or the emergency contact. It is vital that you notify the office immediately of any changes in your home phone numbers, work numbers, emergency contact numbers and physician, dentist or hospital. You will be responsible for any charges or fees incurred by the center for such care.

Admission Policies and Procedures

Our EDP program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin. Children will be placed on a waiting list if the requested program is unavailable (no money is required to be on a wait list). Since each child's health is important to us, all parents **must** provide us with a health and immunization card signed by your child's physician, which is required by Colorado law to be on file prior to the child's first day of school. These forms must be updated annually.

All students are enrolled for the full program year (August through May). A calendar is provided at the end of this handbook for your convenience. This may change due to unforeseen reasons, including, but not limited to, weather and/or the inability to use the facility. **There is no deduction in tuition for snow days. Christmas break, spring break, holidays, conferences, in-services are already deducted from your monthly tuition.**

Special needs children are accepted at our EDP program. At the discretion of the director, classes attended by special needs children may require additional adult supervision to facilitate the child's orientation to school routines. This expense will be borne by the parents in addition to the monthly tuition. (Each special needs child will be assessed on an individual basis). Parents of children requiring special care or attention due to allergies or special needs must write out a care plan and submit it to the office. It will be distributed to all teachers that will have contact with your child. If more information is necessary, we will contact you.

Discipline and Guidance

At Ascension Lutherans Extended Day Preschool, the term guidance is used for several reasons. It is a positive term, and implies working WITH the child to develop internal control or his/her behavior. Our goal is to encourage the child to become creative, independent, responsible, and socially mature human beings. This involves learning to make responsible choices, and accepting the consciences or such choices.

Guidance takes several forms:

1. Environment - A place designed for children. The furniture is child sized, with lots of hands on experiences.

2. Logical Rules - Such as keeping our hands to our selves, and taking care of the learning environment. These are discussed with the children, as well as why such rules are needed.

3. Curriculum - Is developmentally appropriate, based on the child's level of readiness.

4. Positive Behavior - We reinforce the behavior we encourage. Catch them being "good!"

5. Redirection - Often interesting a child in another activity can eliminate a potential difficulty. We might ask a child to help, or send them to a different area to play.

6. Positive Reminder - Telling the child what we want them to do rather than using the words "no" or "don't."

7. Renewal Time - Occasionally a child needs to be removed from the situation for a brief time allowing them to consider alternative behavior.

Any on-going situations are discussed with the parent(s) to ensure a cooperative approach. Feel free to discuss any questions or concerns.

Note: No Corporal punishment is allowed by the staff or other children, Spanking, slapping, pinching, est. No unusual punishment is allowed, such as humiliation, ridicule, threat, or coercion.

Birthdays

We love to celebrate your child's birthday! We encourage you to bring treats to share with the class. It will be served at snack time. The teacher will try to arrange the day you bring snacks for that month to be on or close to your child's birthday. Please notify your child's teacher if you intend to bring a treat so she can add special activities to celebrate your child's special day!

If a Birthday is to be celebrated away from the center, and the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. If the entire class is invited please feel free to bring the invitations to the center. **Please be considerate of our children's feelings and comply with the above request.**

Child Abuse

EDP makes every effort to provide a safe environment for children. We are required to contact the County Department of Human Services whenever there is a suspected case of child abuse or neglect. If our staff suspects or observes a child being abused or neglected that person is obligated to notify the director immediately who will in turn contact Social Services. It is not our responsibility, however, to investigate or prove child abuse or neglect. If you as a parent suspect child abuse or neglect on the part of our EDP program, please report it to: Arapahoe County Department of Social Services at (303) 636-1750.

Filing a Complaint

If you suspect licensing violations, direct your comment to: The Division of Childcare at the Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-1714 or call (303) 866-5958.

Possessions from Home

We suggest you encourage your child **not** to bring personal belongings to school. There is an exception in the event your child has a security item, or needs help with transition. We cannot be responsible for "treasures" (including money!) brought from home. Items of great value should not be brought to school. In the event we find a child has brought something of value to school, it will be placed in the office where the parent can pick it up.

Each class may have a designated time for show and tell. Items brought in will be placed in a special basket located in the child's classroom. We do not allow toy guns or toys of destruction to be brought to school.

Occasionally, children will be asked to bring certain types of items to show the class or they may bring whatever they choose. This activity provides an excellent opportunity to encourage each child's use of language and communication skills.

Clothing

Children should dress comfortably, simply, and suitable for the weather. We do engage in a number of “messy” activities that, despite the smocks, can get clothes dirty. We do not want to inhibit the children unnecessarily, so we ask you send them in comfortable clothes that they can play in without hesitation. Remember that the children also play outdoors as long as the weather permits, so be sure their clothing is sturdy and durable. Dress in layers on cold days! An extra set of clothing (well labeled) including underwear, socks, pants, and a shirt must be left at the center in case of accidents. An extra sweater or jacket at the center is also recommended since the temperature often changes noticeably.

Tennis shoes are a good idea, because they can easily be cleaned and dried in case they accidentally get wet. Cowboy boots and sandals should NOT be worn to the center. They are awkward for running and climbing and they can hurt another child during active play.

Label all clothing permanently with child's name

Sunscreen

We ask every parent to Apply Sunscreen to your child each day before school. Sun damage can lead to skin cancer. The damage of skin cancer begins with a child's first exposure to the sun, the damage then adds up year after year.

Cubbies

Each child is provided with a cubby, labeled with their name. Please check their cubbies each day for art work, notes from teachers or office, and general information such as the calendars and newsletters. Receipts are also placed in there. Please keep the cubbies cleaned out of things that do not necessarily need to be at the school.

Snow Closure

The center follows Littleton School policy on snowy days. If Littleton schools are closed and announced on the radio or television, we also will be closed.

Staff

The teachers at Ascension Lutherans Extended Day Preschool are all Group Leader Qualified according to the State Regulations, and are trained to provide for the developmental needs of young children.

Communications

Communications between home and the center include:

- monthly newsletters
- schedule of daily activities and special events
- fall and spring parent / teacher conferences
- daytime and evening parent meetings and workshops
- year-end program evaluations

Parent Bulletin Board

A Bulletin board is placed outside each child's class room for the parent's convenience, and in the main hall. Please take time to view what is on the board daily to keep informed of the centers happenings and/or announcements. The announcements consist of the above information and more.

Parent / Teacher Conferences

Parent / Teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring, and any other time needed. Your child's teacher observes your child and assesses their level of development prior to the conference. Conferences are your opportunity to sit down with your child's teacher(s) to discuss your child in depth.

Since it is necessary for the teacher to devote their time during the day to the children, we ask that you please set a conference appointment if you need to confer with the teacher at the length so we can make arrangements coverage.

Fire, Tornado & Lock down Procedures

For the safety of our children, we have several "practice drill" for fire, tornadoes and lock downs throughout the year. In the event of a fire drill or actual fire, the children will follow the evacuation routes posted in each room, as outlined by the Littleton Fire Department. A search will be made to make certain no one is in the building before all doors inside and out are closed. In the event of a tornado warning, children will be moved into the restrooms. If Littleton Public Schools are in a lock down situation, we will follow Littleton Public School's procedures

Photographs/Videos

Photographs and videos may be taken of children throughout the year for special projects and albums. Professional pictures will be taken in the fall and spring.

Health Policy

You are the best judge of your child's health and we trust you are not going to bring a sick child to the center. However, if the opinion of the staff is that your child is sick, we will call you to come and pick-up your child. The following criteria are considered in determining if your child must go home:

- fever of 100 degrees or more
- skin rash or sores
- vomiting
- inflammation of the eyes
- diarrhea
- heavy nasal discharge (clear is Okay)
- communicable disease
- heavy productivity

-if you child is sent home due to illness, he/she cannot return to the center until free of symptoms for 24 hours. This is to allow your child ample time to recover and stop the spread of the illness to the other children.

It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a communicable disease, such as; measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, etc. When a potentially contagious illness occurs, a sign is posted on the Parent Bulletin Board. We would also like to know if your child is going to be absent due to illness.

In addition at any time there may also be a child that is not fully immunized due to personal, or religious exemptions enrolled.

Lunch and Snacks

The school provides no meals. Parents are to provide a lunch box that consists of a well-balanced meal, which the child can eat alone without extra help. Parents will be providing snacks on a rotating basis assigned by the child's teacher. Snacks must be nutritious and easy to eat. Please provide napkins, plates and prepackaged juice to share with the class, teacher and aide. Snack suggestions would be muffins, bagels, string cheese, granola bars, fruits, veggies with dip, yogurt, etc. Occasionally, we will ask parents to bring in treats for holidays or special programs.

Potty training

The teacher and aide of the 2 ½ - 3 year old class will work diligently along with the parents in facilitating the potty training efforts. The 2 ½ - 3 year old class is the only class that will accept children who are not potty trained. The 4 - 5 year old class can not accept a child into their class that is not potty trained.

Field Trips

The only field trips that EPD are permitted are "walking field trips" due to the new insurance regulations in Colorado. When we do take a walking field trip, every student will need a permission slip on file in the office, (you will have already signed one at the time of enrollment.) Children are required to wear information tags stating the school they are with and a contact number, NO PERSONAL information when outside of the EPD premises. Younger siblings are not permitted to attend field trips unless prior approval has been made with the director.

Child Count

Throughout the day we continually count and re count the children. In the even we have done a head count and a child was not accounted for we will start by covering the grounds first. Then we will notify local law enforcement, and the parent emergency numbers.

Storing and Administering Medication

All medication for children will be stored in the office at all times. Medication must be in the original container with the label intact to insure the child's safety. We are only allowed to dispense medication prescribed by a doctor. If your child has allergies and requires an over the counter drug, a written prescription from their doctor must be accompanied with it. A medication register is available in the office for the doctor to complete in order for us to administer the medication. The procedure for storing and administering children's medicines and delegation of medication administration is in compliance with the Nursing Practice Act (7.702.41R).

Telephone and Address Change

Please inform the director immediately when there is a change of telephone number or address. In case of emergency we need to have this information current. Also, please be responsible for notifying the director of a change for any of the people listed on your emergency or pick-up cards.

Visiting the School

You are **always welcome** to visit the classroom, however, please try to make prior arrangements with your teacher. Please sign the visitor's book located in the director's office and pick-up a visitor tag before going to a classroom. Please do not bring younger siblings when visiting due to the possible disruption of the classroom environment.

Withdrawal

If for any reason, you need to withdraw from the school, you must give us at least 2 weeks **written** notice to receive any applicable refund of fees. Withdrawals are preferred at the end of the month or notice given prior to the next billing installment. You will be liable for all tuition until we receive your written notice.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the policies and procedures of our EDP program, please do not hesitate to contact Chandra.

Thanks for choosing Ascension Lutheran Extended Day Preschool!