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Welcome

Welcome to Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool. What a precious gift from God you have been given in your child! What a precious time early childhood is! Your child is learning at an amazing rate. He/she is learning to build relationships, learning to trust, to share, to use manners, to be creative, to be a problem solver – the list is endless. We want to partner with you in providing a loving atmosphere that will challenge, stimulate, and encourage your child to be what God has made him/her to be.

This *Family Handbook* was designed to let you know about the policies and procedures that Little Stars of Bethlehem has in effect. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this handbook please feel free to call or ask.

You will be notified of any changes in this handbook either by mail or by a note sent home with your child.

Our Mission and Vision

Mission

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool exists to shine the light of Christ’s love to our preschool children and their families.

Vision

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool will partner with parents in providing the highest quality care for their children, promoting quality growth and unity in their families, and developing strong godly character in each eternal soul.

Statement of Confession

Little Stars of Bethlehem operates as a service of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church; therefore, all Biblical teaching will adhere to the teachings of Star of Bethlehem.

We believe that there is one triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that we are saved from sin only by the life, death and resurrection of the Son, Jesus, and that the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts so that we may enter the kingdom of heaven.

While we recognize and accept children and families from any religious background, we reserve the right to teach in accordance with the teachings of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

For more details on the teaching at Star of Bethlehem please feel free to talk with the director or pastor.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool will a) serve the whole child in the following domains: communication, cognition, social/emotional skills, motor, creative expression skills, and the spiritual; b) serve the whole family as much as is appropriate; c) serve the gospel of Jesus Christ at every opportunity.

Objectives

Little Stars of Bethlehem provides a program that focuses on the development of the whole child. Our staff is dedicated to providing the children with a loving environment that will stimulate, challenge, and encourage them to be what God has made them to be in all domains of development. The spiritual aspect of your child's development is a very vital and essential part of his/her overall development. It is this aspect of our training program that makes Little Stars of Bethlehem special and sets us apart from many other early childhood programs.

Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, founded in 1995, has a membership of over 100 members. Sunday worship is at 10:30 am. Bible Class is at 9:30 and Sunday school is during the worship service. Star of Bethlehem also offers a free course for all adults who are interested in re-acquainting themselves with the basic teachings of the Bible or for those interested in church membership. Please speak with the pastor about these and other classes.

Preschool Curriculum

Preschool is a new beginning as it is often viewed as a child's first academic learning experience and school readiness skills become very important. Preschool children will have structured activities while still promoting child-initiated learning choices with teacher guidance and challenging activities. Children will be provided with various learning opportunities that will include group and individual time along with outdoor, manipulative and block play. One of the most important experiences will be learning centers that provide students hands-on experiences to explore concepts as they play. Through all of these learning experiences there will be a focus on the academic subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, and arts and humanities to get students ready for school.

Admission Policy

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool exists to provide spiritual growth and quality education to the children who attend. All children are welcome without reference to race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender or ability. We reserve the right to dismiss a child from our program if he/she is not able to adapt to our environment. **We require that all children be toilet trained before our program begins.**

Classes will be available to those children who are four years old by September 1, of the year in which they enroll for the 4-year-old programs, and three years old by September 1, of the year in which they enroll for the 3-year-old programs. Class size will be limited to 15 children for each class.

Sessions

We are able to offer you a choice of four sessions:

4K Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00-11:00

4K Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:30-2:30

3K Tuesday, Thursday 8:00-11:00

3K Tuesday, Thursday

11:30-2:30

Registrations are a first come first serve basis. We reserve the right to cancel or combine classes if enrollment for a particular class is not sufficient.

Fees and Billing

Fees

4K Session \$185 per month

3K Session \$165 per month

A non-refundable \$50.00 registration fee must accompany the application form.

Billing

Tuition for each month is due by the 10th of that month. A late fee of \$20 will be added to payments not made by the 15th of that month.

Checks are to be made payable to Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool. Returned checks are subject to a \$25.00 service charge.

Absences due to illness, vacations, or cancellations will not be refunded. **Payment is required for each day your child is scheduled to attend.**

Students leaving our program before the end of the school year in May will be required to pay tuition through the end of the month in which they depart.

Arrival & Departure

Children must be brought into class by an adult and checked in on the classroom sign-in sheet. Children cannot walk into the school alone nor sign in on their own. The person who picks up your child must also sign out on the sheet. Please understand that this is a safety precaution for the children at Little Stars of Bethlehem.

Each child will have a list of people who are allowed to pick him/her up at the end of the day. Photo ID is needed before a

child will be released to someone unknown. Special notes should be made and given to the teacher if there are irregular arrangements for the day. Teachers cannot accept verbal instructions or a verbal verification.

Insurance

Star of Bethlehem programs are covered with appropriate public liability insurance under the umbrella of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church’s policy with Church Mutual. All health or other types of insurance are the responsibility of the parents or guardian of the child.

Health Policy

Illness

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children and staff. If your child has a cold or symptoms of illness or needs to remain indoors, it would be best to keep the child home. Please contact the center if your child will not be coming to school due to illness. (306-5475)

If a child becomes ill while at the center we will make sure that he/she is comfortable and away from the rest of the children. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children, so it is important that he/she be picked up as soon as possible.

Your child will be sent home if any of the following symptoms are observed:

- A fever over 99.6 degrees with other symptoms of illness
- A skin rash not identified by a practicing physician
- Infected are of skin (impetigo, ringworm)
- Three incidents of diarrhea in one day
- Unusual or unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache
- Vomiting
- Evidence of head lice
- Persistent coughing

- Discharge or drainage from eyes, nose, ears, or open soars
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Sore Throat
- Pain the interferes with normal activities
- Chills or achiness

If you are unsure whether or not your child may attend, please contact Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool before bringing him/her to the center.

In the event that your child has a contagious disease, your child may not come to the center. We must be informed of the disease so notice of possible exposure can be given to families enrolled. A child with a communicable disease will be readmitted to the center only after allowing for the longest usual incubation of the disease or with a signed statement from your physician.

Medication

No medication of any type will be given to a child without the written consent of a parent. An Administration of Medicine form is available at the center. Please inform your child's teacher should your child be under medication, which might affect the child at the center. Simple injuries will be treated with soap and water cleansing.

A state required Health Care Summary and Immunization Record needs to be kept on file at the Center. This record must be on file from the first day of the child's attendance.

Medical Emergency

In an emergency a teacher will administer First Aid. All teachers maintain current First Aid and CPR cards. If necessary, paramedics will be called. The person in charge will accompany the child to the emergency room and stay with the child until the parents arrive. Parents are financially responsible for emergency services, including but not limited to ambulance and emergency room costs.

Child Abuse/Neglect

All child care providers are required to report all incidents of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect of children. We are obligated by law to report such instances to the proper authorities.

Snacks

Little Stars of Bethlehem provides a healthy snack for each preschool session. It is considered part of the learning experience to share, say "please" and "thank you", and to stop play for a little quiet activity. If parents wish to provide a snack for the group, they are asked to notify the center.

Please remember to indicate on the enrollment form if your child has an allergy to any foods.

Bible Time

Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool wants each child to have an understanding of the love that Jesus has from him/her. Every day the children will have an opportunity to grow in their faith by hearing God's Word via stories, finger plays, or plays. Bible time will also include Bible songs, activities, and simple memory treasures from the Bible. Students will also have a chapel time with the church's pastor.

Bible Time is based on the Christ Light curriculum, which is published by the Wisconsin Evangelical Synod (WELS). The monthly center newsletter will contain information regarding the lesson taught, memory treasures, and parent activities.

If you would like to know more about what your child is learning contact the director or pastor.

Television and Computer Policy

Children in the beginning years of life learn so much by interacting with other people. That is why it is our policy that watching television while at the center is inappropriate. On special occasions, such as parties or multiple days inside due to weather, the children may watch a short video to change the

daily routine. Television and movies will not, in themselves, be methods of child care or behavior management.

The preschool room will be equipped with computers for the children to use. Computers will be used to increase school-readiness in academic knowledge via age appropriate programs. Computer time also allows the children to work together socially; two children per computer. The computers will not, in themselves, be a method of child care or behavior management.

Children's Clothing

Children must be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. Parents should bring an extra set of clothing to keep at the Center in the event that a change of clothing is needed. Please have all clothing labeled. Clothes should be comfortable and easy for the child to manage. We require that your child wear shoes appropriate for their active play.

Special Days

Parties are learning experiences and we will celebrate many wonderful things that God has blessed us with. Since we are a Lutheran child care center, we will observe Reformation Day on October 31 and focus on the true significance of Christmas and Easter for Christians.

Children may want to bring a treat on special occasions such as birthdays. Please contact the classroom teacher before bringing a treat.

When planning birthday parties that are not located at Little Stars of Bethlehem, please consider inviting all of the children in your child's class in order to avoid hurt feelings. If you are not inviting everyone please do not hand out invitations at the center.

Parental Involvement

Parents/Guardians are children's first and most important teachers; therefore, we make every effort to partner with parents in their children's education.

- Child/Parent/Teacher Conferences – Two times per year all three will meet and allow the child to explain some of the painting, writing, and projects found in his/her portfolio. Additional conferences may be arranged. Parents are free to view their child's daily observation record. A developmental checklist of observations will be recorded and kept on file.
- Classroom Participation – We strongly encourage both dads and moms to spend some time in their child's classroom. You may do this at any time your child is in the classroom. We also plan parent talents into the curriculum and would be delighted if you could share what you know (guitar playing, juggling, coming in uniform, etc...)
- Get-togethers – Each year Little Stars of Bethlehem will arrange a few times for the families and staff to get to know each other better. There will be food, games, and fun for all.

Parents choosing to participate in preschool, i.e. by helping in the classroom, being present for parties or fieldtrips, must sign the Parent Participation form. This is to protect all of our children at Little Stars of Bethlehem and to ensure that no adults in contact with our children have been previously involved in any kind of improper or immoral behavior with any child.

Fieldtrips

We plan to take several fieldtrips during the school year. A permission slip for fieldtrips must be signed and returned with enrollment packet forms.

Some fieldtrips requiring additional fees are the parent's responsibility. Many of our fieldtrips are scheduled in the morning hours and classes may sometimes be combined for special fieldtrips.

Please let the teacher know if you can drive for a field trip. We require that a signed insurance confirmation form from all parents be on file in the office. All children must be individually seat belted or seated in a child safety restraint seat.

Behavior Guidance Procedures

At Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool, training and discipline are blended with God's love and concern. Discipline needs to be firm, consistent, and constructive. A child needs to know what is expected before he/she can obey. Guidelines reassure children that they are loved and there is concern for them.

Two behavior goals will be communicated to the children. These are:

1. The love of Jesus motivates children to live as the Lord expects.
2. Children show love through words and actions.

A positive environment will be fostered in the following manner:

1. Children will be encouraged in their positive behaviors, negative and destructive behaviors will be minimized.
2. All of the staff will be knowledgeable of three and four year old developmental stages, family background, special needs, interests and medications being given (if any) in dealing with each individual child.
3. Children will be reminded of the appropriate behavior, and then helped to approach the problem situation with a new perspective or his/her attention will be diverted to a new activity.
4. Staff will avoid unsafe activities to protect staff and children.
5. When discipline is needed it will be administered immediately so that not only the child's behavior is influenced, but more important the child's attitude about himself/herself and about proper and improper behavior.

Behavior Consequences

Our staff is committed to modeling Christian attitudes. The goal of discipline is to teach. Your child will be dealt with constructively at all times. A child will never be disciplined in such a way that is frightening or demeaning. The teachers use love, encouragement, and praise. Desirable behaviors are

emphasized. Should behavior problems occur, positive guidance will be offered and behavior redirected.

Continual behavior problems will be brought to the attention of the parent. Increased staff guidance and time will need to be implemented if a child's behavior is persistently unacceptable. The staff will observe, record, and report the behavior of the child. A plan will be developed to address the behavior and a consultation will be held with the child's parents/guardians, other staff persons, and professionals when appropriate.

No child will be separated from the group unless the staff has tried less intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior which have been ineffective and the child's behavior threatens the well being of the child or other children in the center. A child who requires separation from the group will remain within an enclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person. When separation from the group is used as a behavior guidance technique, the child's return to the group will depend on the child's stopping or bringing under control the misbehavior. The child will be returned to the group as soon as the behavior lessens or stops.

All separations from the group must be noted on a daily log. The log will include the child's name, staff person's name, time, date, and information indicating what less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior and how the child's behavior continued to threaten the well being of the child or other children in the center. If a child is separated from the group three or more times in a day or more than eight times in a week because of persistent unacceptable behavior, the child's parent/guardian will be notified and asked to come for a consultation. Such notification will be indicated on the daily log.

Prohibited Staff Action

All corporal punishment and humiliating techniques to control behavior are not allowed by any staff person. Corporal punishment includes rough handling, shoving, shaking,

slapping, pinching, and spanking. Humiliating and emotional abuse includes name calling, shaming, derogatory remarks about the child, or using language that threatens or frightens the child. A child will not be mechanically restrained in a manner such as tying.

Licensure

We intend to become licensed through the North Carolina Division of Child Development in the near future.

Pastor Fred Guldberg
650-9810

Kristin Mantey
Little Stars of Bethlehem Preschool Director
306-5475