

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool
Policy Handbook
2023-2024



Nurturing a love of learning that will last a lifetime!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool

1609 Kurtz Avenue

Lutherville, MD 21093-5314

director@stpaulsluthschool.org

School Office: 410-252-3867

www.stpaulsluthschool.org

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We at St. Paul's are eager to work with your children and to spend many happy and productive hours together. It is our intention to provide a Christian atmosphere in which your child can explore varied activities and make new discoveries. We are interested in your child's total growth: social, mental, emotional, physical and spiritual.

There is a growing need for a quality preschool curriculum in today's society. The increased emphasis on learning basic skills and concepts at a young age point out the need for a comprehensive, well-structured preschool program. In our daily schedule, we include individual and group play; music, art and science activities; language development and phonemic awareness; math concepts and number sense; outdoor play; and cooking experiences. Additionally, we strive to develop a love of reading and learning. We also love to take many varied field trips to increase the children's awareness of the world in which we live.

A child is a precious creature — to be loved, cherished and nurtured. Through loving guidance and mutual respect, we hope to give each child a positive attitude and a rewarding school experience. We are so glad that you and your child are a part of this beloved community of learning and growth.

Blessings,

Noel Alexander, Preschool Director

The Rev. Dr. Edward N. Kay, Pastor

Kristi Kresslein, Governance Board Chairperson

Due to CDC Guidelines, we have made several changes to our policies and procedures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please look for these changes in italic bold print.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Communication Between School and Families	page 4
II. Tuition Policy	pages 5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tuition Payment Terms and Conditions• Closures Related to COVID-19• Tuition Assistance	
III. Stay and Play Policy	pages 6-7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drop-In Policy (Drop-In Rate)• Pre-Pay Packages Policy	
IV. General Health Policy	pages 8-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COVID-19• Illness Policy• Contagious Conditions• Administration of Medication• Vaccinations• Bathroom Independence• Food Policy• Appropriate Clothing and Items	
V. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy	pages 13-14
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drop-Off• Late Drop-Off• Pick-Up• Late Pick-Up and Weather Related Closings and Delays	
VI. Enrichment Instruction	pages 14-15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Instruction During the Pandemic• Chapel Time• Art• Music and Movement• Spanish• Field Trips	
VII. Classroom Behavior	page 15
VIII. Parent Code of Conduct	page 16-17
IX. Severe Weather Policy	pages 17-18
X. School Policy Handbook Acknowledgement Form	page 19

Communication Between School and Families

Monthly Preschool newsletters are sent to all Preschool families from the Preschool Director to discuss upcoming events, important announcements and things happening around the school. The Director will periodically send out emails during the month with updated or important information.

The Director will email to relay time-sensitive information, including but not limited to school delays/closings, field trip information and PTA fundraisers.

The Preschool, Stay and Play and the PTA use Sign Up Genius and Evite to let families know about upcoming events. Families are advised to make sure emails from these providers go through to their inbox and not spam folders.

We also have an active Facebook page as the face of the School and a Facebook group for reiterating communication for current families and caregivers.

If a parent or guardian has a concern or issue, please bring it to the teacher's attention. If the concern or issue is not resolved, please notify the Director via email at director@stpaulsluthschool.org or telephone at 410-252-3867. The Director will contact you to coordinate a meeting in the office.

For communications related to COVID-19 please see the General Health Policy on page 8.

II. TUITION POLICY

Tuition Payment Terms and Conditions

A non-refundable deposit (representing one month's tuition) and a signed copy of the chosen Tuition Payment Plan Schedule is due by the deadline set by the Director in the application packet.

A statement is sent out after you submit the deposit; as well as based upon the payment schedule you have selected. Payments are due according to the Tuition Payment Plan Schedule you select.

Tuition can be brought to school in an envelope marked "tuition" and left in the outside mailbox. You may also pay by ACH bank transfer or by credit card via the *Tuition Payment Form* (there is a processing fee for debit and credit card payments). You can also mail payment to:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool
1609 Kurtz Avenue
Lutherville, MD 21093-5314

There will be a bank fee charge of \$25 for any returned checks. The returned check amount plus the bank fee must be replaced immediately.

Tuition payments are considered late and subject to a 5% late fee if they are not received within five (5) days of the due date noted on the Tuition Payment Plan Schedule and statement.

After one (1) month of non-payment of tuition, payment arrangements must be made with the Director, or your child will not be permitted to attend school. Interest will be added to any amount due and appropriate steps will be taken to recover funds. Your child may return to school once tuition is current.

You are responsible for the entire year's tuition. ***EARLY WITHDRAWAL DOES NOT NEGATE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR'S TUITION.*** Please notify your child's teacher and the Director if your

child will be withdrawing from the school. Early withdrawals require thirty (30) days written notice and a conference with the Director.

Tuition Assistance

If you are in need of tuition assistance, please contact the Preschool Director to obtain an application.

III. STAY AND PLAY POLICY

In following MSDE and OCC regulations, we are limited to 20 children per afternoon with two teachers, with a teacher: student ratio of 1:10. Because of our room capacity and staffing requirements, **a spot cannot be guaranteed for your child unless you sign up.**

The Stay and Play Coordinator will send a monthly e-mail from Sign Up Genius to all Preschool families. If you have any questions, please contact the Stay and Play Coordinator, Lisa Chesser, at eday@stpaulsluthschool.org.

Drop-In Policy (Drop-In Rate)

Early Birds: Sign up and cancellation deadline is 8:00 p.m. the day before the session. To reserve your child's spot, you will need to sign up by the deadline.

Lunch Bunch and Explorers Club: Sign up and cancellation deadline is 8:00 p.m. the day before the session. To reserve your child's spot, you will need to sign up by the deadline.

Billing: Payment is required on the day your child attends the Club (NO CASH). You will be billed at the end of the month if there is a balance. Payment is due within 5 business days. Late fees can be applied at the discretion of the school. After one month of non-payment of Stay and Play fees, your child will not be permitted to attend Stay and Play. Payment arrangements must be made with the Director, and your child may return to Stay and Play once payment is current.

Pre-Pay Packages Policy

Sign-Up and Payment Deadlines: Prepay packages for Early Birds, Lunch Bunch, and Explorers Club may be applied to any day. Payment is due before your child may attend (NO CASH). Semester plan application and payment are due September 1, 2023. Semester II plan application and payment are due December 15, 2023. No refunds will be given for withdrawal from the plans after these dates, even if your child is absent, or if Stay and Play is cancelled due to severe weather. To reserve your child's spot for both the semester plans and the Pre-pay packages, you will need to sign up your child each month once the sign up is posted.

Billing: Payment is required by the deadline. After one month of non-payment of Stay and Play fees, your child will not be permitted to attend Stay and Play. Payment arrangements must be made with the Director, and your child may return to Stay and Play once payment is current.

IV. GENERAL HEALTH POLICY

COVID-19

Our plan has been designed using the most up to date CDC and MSDE Guidelines. This plan is subject to change and designed to be flexible in order to address new public health concerns if and when they emerge while also working to create and maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

All Covid policies and procedure updates and changes will be shared with families as they provided to us from MDH, MSDE and the CDC.

Any child exhibiting Covid symptoms, or has been exposed to Covid, should quarantine, and the parents should contact the child's health care provider for further guidance. The child will not be able to attend school until he is cleared by the health care provider to return or has met the quarantine requirements.

If your child has an ongoing symptom such as a runny nose due to another condition such as seasonal allergies, they need a doctor's note in order to attend school.

Notification: *Parents are required to notify the school if there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in their household or if a member of their household has been in contact with someone with COVID-19.*

The school will notify the authorities (MDH and MSDE) and follow guidance with regard to closures. We may offer a "Test to Stay" option in an effort to keep classrooms open. Classroom closures will be reviewed on an individual basis, based on the level of exposure.

Staff and children returning to school after an exposure or confirmed case of COVID-19 should have a note from their healthcare provider documenting that they are released from isolation and able to return, in addition to a negative Covid test.

Staff and children are required to provide negative test results after any travel.

Hygiene: Children will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently. Children and adults will wash hands upon entry to the building when possible. Our bathrooms have automatic turn-off sink faucets and touchless soap and paper towel dispensers.

In-School Illness: If your child should become ill with symptoms during the school day, they will be quarantined and supervised by a faculty member, and you will be contacted to pick them up as soon as possible.

Cleaning: St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected following CDC Guidelines at the end of each school day. Additionally, all things that cannot be easily cleaned will be removed from classrooms, and toys will be washed and disinfected regularly.

General Illness Policy

In addition to COVID-19, the school requires that parents keep children home under the following circumstances:

1. If they have had a fever of 100.4° or higher **without medication** in the past 24 hours.
2. If they have vomited or had diarrhea or nausea in the past 24 hours.
3. If they have severe colds and/or continuous discharge from the nose.
4. If they had a contagious condition* in the past 24 hours. They may return to school once they have received clearance from their physician and/or the child is no longer contagious.

***Contagious Conditions**

In an effort to minimize exposure to contagious illnesses, classroom teachers encourage regular handwashing and sanitize shared surfaces often. Should a student be diagnosed with a contagious illness, proper cleaning and sanitization precautions will be used. If your child is diagnosed with a contagious condition, please alert your child's teacher and the director immediately.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Coxsackie Virus (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease)
- Croup
- COVID-19
- Influenza (all strains)
- Head Lice
- Mononucleosis
- Strep Throat

Some illnesses will require students to have a doctor's note to return to school. Contagious illnesses may require that all parents are notified of possible exposure. The child/family's personal information will remain confidential.

Administration of Medication

If your physician decides it is necessary for your child to receive prescription medication during the school day, please ask the Director for the *Medication Administration Authorization Form* for your physician to complete. Children should not be sent to school with medication; parents should deliver medication directly to the Director to keep it out of the classroom and safely

secured.

Vaccinations

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool requires that all enrolled children have certain doctor recommended immunizations. Students are required to provide yearly updated information via their medical forms. Please refer to your child's physician or the American Academy of Pediatrics for specific immunization schedules, ***and make sure all vaccinations are up-to-date prior to the first day of school.***

While Covid-19 and influenza vaccinations are not required, they are highly encouraged.

Personal belief exemptions are not accepted. Exceptions will be considered for children with valid medical conditions from a licensed physician.

Bathroom Independence

Children in the Threes, PreK, Stay and Play, and June Bugs **must be potty trained and able to use the bathroom independently.** The regulations of the Maryland State Department of Education and Office of Child Care do not allow teachers of children ages 3 and above to wipe or be in a stall when a child is using the toilet. The teachers may stand in the bathroom and coach a child, but the child must be able to do what is needed on his/her own. Our teachers understand that young children have accidents which is why we ask parents to send in a clean set of clothes to be kept at the school. If needed, teachers will guide the children to clean themselves and change their clothes. If a child is unable to do this, the teacher may call the parent to come to school to clean and change their child. **Children in the Twos do NOT need to be potty trained.**

Food Policy

Because of the increased prevalence of severe nut allergies, St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool is a NUT-FREE school. **All nut products are**

prohibited. Parents will be notified at the beginning of the school year of specific allergens to avoid in their classroom if necessary.

At St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool we follow the guidelines the American Academy of Pediatrics has set for choking hazard foods. Foods like large cheese cubes, meat, whole grapes and chunks of raw vegetables should be cut into small bite-size pieces appropriate for a child. We ask that families provide healthy snacks for the children.

In an effort to reduce the risk of exposure to children with allergies, in addition to adherence to the COMAR regulations regarding snacks, parents are asked to send an individual snack with their child on each day of attendance.

For classroom holiday parties and birthday celebrations, students will be permitted to bring an individually prepackaged snack to share with the class. As per COMAR regulations, **homemade snacks will not be allowed.** Each classroom teacher will have more information for parents on their individual snack and holiday party policies.

Prohibited foods: ALL NUTS, popcorn, chewing gum and hard or sticky candy.

Appropriate Clothing and Items

Weather permitting, we aim to have outdoor recess on our mulched playground every day. During rainy or cold weather, please send children to school with appropriate outer wear. Please label ALL outdoor clothing (including sweaters and sweatshirts) with the child's name.

For the safety of the children, please send them to school wearing appropriate footwear for active play (non-skid, closed-toed shoes with lace-ups or Velcro).

Teachers have different policies on bringing items from home to school. However, **all toy weapons are prohibited.**

V. DROP—OFF AND PICK—UP POLICY

Drop—Off and Pick-Up

Morning Drop-Off is at 9:00 a.m. Parents/guardians may enter the building with their child. Mask requirements are currently optional. ***For the ease of transition, we ask that Drop-Off be handled as quickly as possible.*** Any change in the child’s pick-up routine must be communicated to the teacher at that time. If the person picking up the child is not on the Authorized Pick-Up list, the parent/guardian must submit a written note giving permission, and the teacher will ask for photo ID.

Late Drop—Off

After **9:15 a.m.**, parents/guardians must bring children to the Church Office door by the playground. The church secretary will notify the director to allow entrance to the main school building for the child.

Pick—Up

Parents/guardians are expected to pick up their child at dismissal time from all classes and Stay and Play programs. The parent/guardian who picks up their child must initial the sign-out sheet. If a parent/guardian needs to pick up their child before dismissal time, he/she should notify the teacher at Drop-off, or call the Director if after Drop-off. The parent will need to go to the Church Office. The Director will be contacted and your child will be brought to his exterior classroom door.

Late Pick—Up

Our concern is primarily for the children as they feel forgotten and left behind and sometimes become very upset. Please make every effort to pick your children up promptly at dismissal time.

Any child not picked up at dismissal time will be taken back to their classroom or to the director's office until the parent/guardian arrives. After a five minute grace period, the parent will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute. The fee notification will be sent home by the Director.

If you know you are going to be late for either preschool or Stay & Play dismissal, please contact the director at director@stpaulsluthschool.org, so that your child's teacher can be notified immediately.

VI. Enrichment Classes

Chapel Time

Monthly chapel time encourages Christian values that promote respect for others, self-control and a love for all of God's creation. Christian values are also incorporated throughout the school's curriculum.

Art

Children have art class once a week. This experience encourages creativity, imagination, critical thinking, self-confidence, and allows the children to observe the world around them. Children explore colors, patterns, shapes and different materials (acrylics, water colors, oil pastels, pencil, wood, clay, recyclable materials, paper mache, etc.). Children create their own unique pieces and focus on process rather than product. Our highly qualified and talented art teacher inspires a love of art.

Music and Movement

This weekly class encourages individual expression through music and movement, promotes gross motor development (running, jumping, hopping, skipping, stretching, marching, ball play), and develops listening skills (rhythm, counting, playing instruments).

Spanish

Children in the threes, and PreK have Spanish class each week. This experience encourages speaking and understanding Spanish through basic phrases, vocabulary, and songs, helps to develop memory skills and focuses on pronunciation and vocabulary skills.

Field Trips

All children attending field trips will wear a school-specific identification tag. For the child's safety, no personal information will be on the child.

The sponsoring teacher will carry a first aid kit on each trip.

The sponsoring teacher will provide trip date, destination and duration information to the Director and the Church Office.

Parents will sign a permission slip for each field trip the child attends, whether it be on site or at an off site location.

VII. CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool recognizes that all children are learning how to exist in and interact positively with the world around them. Our teachers' primary goal is to provide a safe and motivated learning environment where all students are actively engaged and interested in classroom activities.

St Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool encourages good behavior through thoughtful classroom organization and scheduling with a mix of focused work and free play, including outdoor play. Daily routines are established with carefully managed transitions, using simple rules and directions and age appropriate expectations. Faculty build positive relationships with children by reinforcing and rewarding desired behavior. Inappropriate and challenging behavior is managed in collaboration with parents, taking into consideration the socio-emotional needs of the child. Such behavior will be documented, with this documentation to be used as a tool to further assist in meeting the specific needs of the child.

St Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool does not employ corporal or injurious punishment or withdraw snack, other food or recess as a deterrent.

VIII. Parent Code of Conduct

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool requires the parents of enrolled children, at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of our goals is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of our staff, but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters our program. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on our property thereafter.

Threatening of Staff, Children, or Other Parents and Adults:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool will not sit by idly if threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, our program will not assume the risk of a second chance. *Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.*

Violation of Health and Safety Policy:

Parents are required to follow all health and safety procedures at all

times. These procedures are not designed as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of our staff, children, and community of St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool.

Confrontational Interactions:

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with our staff or the parents of other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Confidentiality Policy:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with our program. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, staff, and Board Members associated with our program. Any parent who shares information considered to be confidential, pressures staff, other parents, or Board Members for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Misuse of Church Property:

It is the expectation that all persons on our campus will treat our property with the utmost of respect. This includes, but is not limited to the Student Directory, parent and staff phone numbers and email addresses.

IX. SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool generally follows the Baltimore County Public Schools System's severe weather policy for school closings, delays and early closings as noted on the BCPS website found at www.bcps.org.

The Preschool Director may make an alternate decision based on consultation with the Pastor and a designated person in the neighborhood who can report area conditions. For closings and delays, you will be notified **of such a decision by 6:00 a.m. through email, and WBAL TV. For early closings, you will be notified as early as possible.**

Please feel free to make your own decision should you wish to keep your child home because of conditions in your area. As always, our first priority is the safety of our students and their families.

Preschool Closed: There will be no Early Birds, Preschool Classes, Lunch Bunch or Explorers Club.

Preschool 1 hour delay: Early Birds starts at 9:00 a.m. Classes are 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch is 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. Explorers Club is 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Preschool 2 hour delay: Early Birds starts at 10:00. Classes are 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch is 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Explorers Club is 1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m.

Preschool Closed Early: Pick up is at 12:00 p.m. There will be no Lunch Bunch or Explorers Club. (You will be notified by e-mail as early as possible.)

Make-Up Day: If the Preschool is closed due to severe weather five or more days, there will be no professional day on February 16, 2024. This day will be used to make up Classes, Early Birds, Lunch Bunch, and Explorers Club. If Extended PreK misses more than three classes due to inclement weather, a make-up day will be designated in the early spring.

School Policy Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool Policy Handbook. I acknowledge that I will follow the policies outlined and comply with the additional procedures put in place due to COVID-19.

(Name, please print)

(Child's Name, please print)

(Signature)

(Date)





ST. PAUL'S

LUTHERAN CHURCH

**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1609 Kurtz Avenue
Lutherville, MD 21093-5314
The Rev. Dr. Edward N. Kay, Pastor
Church Office: 410-252-3768
Email: office@stpaulslutherville.org
www.stpaulslutherville.org**

**Sunday Schedule:
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
10:00 a.m. GIFT All Ages Learning
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service**

**The purpose of St. Paul's Lutheran Church is to
share the good news of
Jesus Christ through worship, discipleship and
service.**