

Little Praisers Preschool and Child Care Parent Handbook

Welcome to Little Praisers Preschool and Child Care. We are glad you have chosen Praise for your childcare needs. Please take the time to read through this handbook carefully. If you have any questions, please address them with the Office. Again, thank you for choosing Little Praisers!

History

Praise Lutheran Church was founded in 1994 as a mission church within the English District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. In 1998, we opened our worship facility on Dupont Road. Our goal is to reach out to the community through relevant contemporary worship and community services such as childcare. Our childcare opened its doors for before and after school care in August of 1998. We began offering full time care for ages 6 weeks through 12 years in January of 1999.

Statement of Faith

We believe:

- The Bible is God's Word and is the complete authority for our faith and life.
- There is one true God in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Each of us has sinned and is in need of forgiveness. (Romans 3:23)
- God sent His son, Jesus Christ, into our world to suffer and die for our sins so that we can be united once again with Him. (John 3:16)
- We cannot earn our way to heaven- but God, through His grace, has restored us. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- God hears and answers the prayers of His children when asked in Jesus' name. (John 14:13)
- God ministers to us through His Word and Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.

Mission Statement

The mission of Little Praisers Preschool and Child Care is to make disciples of children by fostering Christian fellowship and love through a quality Christ-centered childcare program. We will do this by telling Bible stories, singing, praying and sharing God's love through daily interactions with the children.

Family Assistance

Praise Lutheran Church is willing to assist families with their spiritual growth and with personal counseling by its pastors, if the need arises. We will periodically offer special programs which are open to you and your family. We also accept CANI payments to help with financial needs.

Arrival and Departure

Children need to be signed in and out daily on the computer. Please **do not** drop your child off at the door. Each family is assigned a 4 letter/number code that only you will know. We also take pictures of the adults who pick up your child on a regular basis. This picture and/or a photo ID will be used for identification purposes when the staff member does not recognize or know you. Children will be released only to the parents or an adult the parent has authorized. Any other person picking up your child must have written or phone authorization from a parent. They must have a picture I.D. to leave with the child.

Attendance Procedure

Drop off and pick up times are as arranged when you register your child. In no instances shall children be dropped off prior to 6:00a.m. or picked up later than 6:00p.m. Please notify us if your child is absent for any reason. Every family is expected to pay the regular fees even if your child does not attend, unless you choose to use vacation days.

Emergency Information

Please inform Little Praisers immediately when emergency information changes.

This includes:

1. New phone numbers (work and home)
2. Changing the list of people who can or cannot pick up and/or who we can call when an emergency occurs
3. Any temporary changes that may be in effect

Illness

If your child becomes ill while at Praise, you will be notified immediately and expected to have an authorized adult coming to get your child within a half hour. Please do not bring your child to Praise if they:

- a. Have a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- b. Have communicable diseases (pink eye, impetigo, chicken pox, etc.)
- c. Are vomiting
- d. Have diarrhea
- e. Have a severe cold/and or cough
- f. Have a severe sore throat
- g. Have an unidentified rash
- h. Are not well enough to attend public school (for school age children)

Children cannot return to Praise until they have been fever-free without the aid of medication for 24 hours or have a doctor's release to return. Please notify us if your child comes down with a communicable disease, so we can take necessary cleaning precautions and notify other parents of the exposure and symptoms to look for. The final decision about allowing ill or recovering children to attend L.P. belongs to the Director.

If your child needs to be on medication while at the center, it must be in its original container. The parent needs to fill out a medication form authorizing staff to administer the medicine.

Discipline

Discipline is a chance for children to learn how to deal with, and peacefully solve, conflict. It is also an opportunity to learn about grace and forgiveness. The staff will discuss the situation with the children and try to help them solve the conflict themselves. With younger children, redirection to other activities will be encouraged. In some situations (such as when children are biting or seriously hurting others) immediate removal from the situation is required. If a child repeatedly refuses to listen to a teacher they will be put in time out, after which the teacher will discuss the situation with the child. If this is ineffective, they will be brought to the office and the Head Teacher, Director, and/or Pastor will try to resolve the situation. In all instances, if a child is put in time out or taken to the office the parents will also be notified so we can work together with your child. Because we have responsibility to all of the people at this childcare, children whose behavior is repeatedly disruptive, dangerous for other children, staff, or themselves, and can not be resolved after 2 or 3 incidents, will not be permitted to stay in the program.

Nutrition

Your child will be served breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack throughout the day. Our menus are planned with nutritional needs, as well as child friendliness, in mind. Most of the food we serve is food you would serve in your own household. Children with food allergies will need a list from the doctor of foods to which they are allergic, as well as any special instructions necessary. Children are encouraged to try all foods but are not forced to eat. You are also welcome to send a packed lunch or snacks with your child any time. If there is something on the menu your child does not like, or to which they are allergic, you can send something different. If your child is allergic to any specific foods we will not serve that food to your child.

Special Needs

If there are any special needs your child has such as allergies, diabetes, or a need for medication, we are equipped to handle these situations. We do need to be informed. If there are treatments, medication, or reasonable modifications we need to make for them, we can do this with the doctor's permission. Please bring in a statement from your child(ren)'s doctor stating what the special need is.

Weather

Little Praisers Early Childhood Center will not close due to weather unless there is a state of emergency declared for Allen County. In that case all businesses are required to close. We will take children outside unless the temperature is 90 degrees or above, or 25 degrees or below, or the ground is too muddy. Please make sure to send appropriate attire with your child's name on it. If your child is too ill to go outside, he or she should not be at Little Praisers.

Admittance

Little Praisers Early Childhood Center is open to all children and is nonsectarian. No child will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, or special need. Every child deserves an equal opportunity to know God's love. The ministry will only accept children who are at a stage of growth and development that enables them to benefit from the program. Children whose needs can no longer be met or whose behavior is dangerous for other children, staff members, or themselves will not be admitted or permitted to stay in the program.

Curriculum

The curriculum used at Little Praisers is the "Voyages" program. This program gives us weekly Biblical themes with emphasis on several different learning areas. It focuses on science, numbers, dramatic play, large motor skills, small motor skills, puppets, story telling, and more. We also supplement this curriculum with a phonics program, focusing on letter and sound recognition in the Pre-K and Preschool programs. We will work with your child to develop the skills needed to enter Kindergarten.

Open Door Policy

Little Praisers has an "open door" policy. That means you are welcome and encouraged to drop in at any time. Some parents enjoy having lunch with their children on occasion. Parents may bring their own lunch or purchase one. For whatever reason, stop in and see us at any time.

Financial Policies

All of our financial policies are clearly spelled out in the financial agreement you received upon enrollment. If you have, any further questions please feel free to talk with the Director or Business Manager at any time. Rate adjustments are evaluated each year in February and if an increase in fees is necessary, we will let you know at that time. The increase will be effective in the Fall, when a new school year begins. If fee increases

become necessary at other times of the year, it would be due to an unexpected or unforeseen circumstance. A letter explaining why this was necessary will accompany the adjustment. In any case, you will always have a minimum of 2 weeks notice before any rate increase.

Field Trips

Field trips are occasionally planned to enrich the student's learning. Field trips will be scheduled 2 weeks in advance whenever possible. There will usually be a field trip fee between \$1.00 and \$5.00. You can request that your child stay at Little Praisers with another class and/or teacher if you prefer they do not go. To ride on the school bus your child must weigh 41 lbs. If your child does not weigh 41 lbs, he/she may stay at the facility or parents can provide alternate transportation arrangements.

Programs

Throughout the year there will be programs scheduled in which the children will participate. Some things we have done in the past include a Fall Festival, a Thanksgiving feast, a Christmas program, and singing in church services at Praise. Parents are encouraged to attend these programs with their children. Most of the time, the children will have made something or will be performing for you on these days. You are always more than welcome to attend any event or church service at any time.

Holiday Closings

Little Praisers will be **closed** on the following Holidays. Regular tuition is still required for these days since we provide paid holidays for our full time staff. You do have the option of choosing to use one of your vacation days on any of these Holidays as long as you have not used them previously in the year.

*New Year's Eve *New Year's Day *Good Friday *Memorial Day
*Independence Day *Labor Day *Thanksgiving Day *Day after Thanksgiving
*Christmas Eve day *Christmas Day

If a Holiday falls on a weekend, a week-day will be used for that Holiday.

Personal Belongings

Your child should bring a complete set of extra clothing including socks, underwear, pants, and shirt or dress. Every child needs appropriate outdoor clothing each season including boots, mittens or gloves, hats, snow pants or an extra pair of pants in the winter. If he/she is still of napping age, you should bring a blanket, small pillow, and/or sleep toy.

Please make sure your child's name is on everything they bring.

Staff to Student Ratios

Although we are not mandated to, we follow state recommendations for staff to student ratios. In each age range, that means:

Infants	1 teacher to 4 children
Toddlers	1 teacher to 5 children
Preschool A	1 teacher to 7 children
Preschool B	1 teacher to 10 children
PreKind	1 teacher to 12 children
School agers	1 teacher to 20 children

We do everything in our power to maintain the above ratios.

Staffing Policy

In the event a regularly scheduled teacher is absent for any reason, Little Praisers will use substitute teachers and /or other staff members to fill in for this position. We will also have children 'visit' various rooms within their age group if numbers are low, to maintain correct student to staff ratios in each room. All substitute staff undergo the same pre-hiring requirements as regular staff members.

Drug, Alcohol, Toxic Substance, and Firearms Policy

We prohibit the use of tobacco, unintended use of a toxic substance, and the use of alcohol or any illegal substance in our facility. Firearms are also prohibited from our campus, unless they are being carried by an authorized officer of the law. The childcare does not have, in its possession, any alcoholic or illegal substances.

Praise Lutheran Church does store communion wine in a location of the church not used by the childcare facility. It will remain in a locked room separate from the daily childcare operation.