

# Trusting Hearts Preschool Handbook

## **Mission Statement**

Trusting Hearts Preschool is a Christian early childhood program maintained and operated by Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. Immanuel Lutheran School and Preschool exist to assist the families of our congregation and our community, in raising their children to know and serve the Lord Jesus, for time and eternity, through a Christ-centered and academically excellent education.

## **Philosophy**

It is the philosophy of Trusting Hearts Preschool that children be encouraged to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment that offers developmentally appropriate experiences. In a Christian atmosphere, children will experience God's love, know Jesus as their Savior, and share this love and forgiveness with others.

We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. Our program offers an inclusive setting that identifies children's varied abilities, interests, needs and learning styles.

We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. It is our goal to support parents in this role and involve them in their child's learning.

We believe that children learn best through play. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving. Our play-based program teaches the whole child by strengthening spiritual, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

## **Admissions Policy**

Trusting Hearts Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to our program.

Our preschool is open to any child who has reached his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Students enrolled must be toilet trained. All enrolling students must have up to date immunizations according to state regulations.

In the light of our mission, enrollment is offered to children in the following order provided our preschool can meet their needs:

- All Immanuel member children are eligible for enrollment in our preschool program. Registration is offered to members first so we can assure them of a classroom spot if they desire to send their child.
- Children of sister WELS congregations in the area that do not have a preschool are also eligible for enrollment.
- Families who don't have a church home or are members of a church not in fellowship with Immanuel are considered on a case by case basis. They may petition the Board of Christian Education for enrollment of their children upon consultation with the pastor(s) and principal of the school.

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- Families with three-year-old students must re-enroll their child for the following year if they are returning.

## **Immunizations**

All children enrolled in the preschool are to have up to date immunizations according to the state regulations. These immunization records must be received by the office before a student begins the school year.

## **Our Preschool Program**

We offer a morning or an afternoon session to meet families' needs. Both sessions have a three day or five day option. (Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Monday-Friday)

- Our multi-age program is designed to build a strong community of learners and provides challenges for children at each stage of their development.
- We will enroll up to a maximum of 15 students in each session.
- When enrollment is higher than 9, a teacher assistant will be hired.
- Additional interested families will be placed on a waiting list.
- Children must be 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> and completely toilet trained before they can be enrolled.

## **Purpose and Objectives**

Through our early childhood program, your child will be able to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively in a Christian environment. Our curriculum is designed to give the child a variety of experiences to enhance his/her development in these areas:

- Spiritual Growth - growing in knowledge of God, God's love for sinful man, and God's plan of salvation through Jesus; knowing that Jesus loves us through presentations of Bible lessons, music, etc.
- Social Growth - growing in social behavior and developing social skills; such as respect for others (through interaction with other children), sharing, taking turns, being responsible and independent
- Emotional Growth - developing control and understanding of feelings, how to interact and respect other's feelings, and learning the appropriate ways to show feelings

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- Physical Growth - developing fine and large motor skills and growing in knowledge about one's physical needs, senses, and changes through a variety of activities and discussion
- Cognitive Growth - developing in the areas of reading readiness, math concepts, problem solving, communication, and organization through a large variety of experiences and activities (counting, letter recognition, manipulatives, etc.)

## **Tuition**

All tuition will be paid through TADS, our online registration and tuition management program. Payments will need to be made by credit card or direct withdrawal from a bank account. Families will receive their tuition agreements via email and may schedule their payment plan (one, two, four or ten installments) through that program. Late payments will be subject to a monthly late charge. If the monthly tuition payment becomes 60 days in arrears, the child(ren) may be dismissed from school. It is the policy of Immanuel Lutheran School and Preschool to reserve the right not to release a student's school records in the event of incomplete payment of tuition and/or fees. This would include the end of the year report card and the transfer of school records to another institution.

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available to all students. Financial aid forms are available on our website or through the school office. All financial aid forms should be submitted before the first day of school. In special cases where a financial need arises during the school year, families are asked to speak to our principal or Board of Christian Education chairman. All financial aid requests will be presented to the Board of Christian Education for approval.

## **School Year**

With the exception of our start and end date, Trusting Hearts Preschool follows the school calendar of Immanuel Lutheran Grade School.

## **School Day**

Our morning session runs from 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. We ask that parents drop their children off no earlier than 7:40 a.m. For years with an afternoon session, the hours will be 12:00 - 3:00 p.m. Please be prompt in picking up your child at the end of the preschool session.

## **Discipline Policy**

Trusting Hearts Preschool is committed to providing a quality school experience for your child in a positive, nurturing atmosphere. Positive behavior will be reinforced throughout the school day. Patience, understanding, and God's Word are the three key elements in our discipline approach.

If a problem does occur, these are the steps we will use in helping your child:

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- Redirection - help the child choose a different activity
- Rest - have the child sit in a quiet area for a short time, then discuss the problem and possible solutions
- Role Play - teacher and child work together to model positive behaviors

If the problem does continue, we will contact you to discuss how we can work together to resolve the situation.

## **Absence Due to Illness**

We ask that parents call before class to let the teacher know that their child will be missing due to illness. Please leave a message with the school office or on our preschool voicemail. (920-684-3404 ext. 117) If a child becomes ill at school, the parents will be notified as soon as possible. If a child has a fever (100 degrees F. or higher), or is vomiting, he/she will be separated from the other children and made as comfortable as possible. The parent will then need to pick the child up within one half hour.

*Sometimes children are too sick to go to school. Here are some guidelines for keeping your child home and for how long.*

- **Fever of 100.0 degrees or higher:** A child should stay home until their temperature has been normal (98.6 degrees) FOR 24 HOURS or longer without the help of medication.
- **Vomiting or diarrhea:** A child should stay home until it has been 24 hours or longer since their last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Rashes:** Always check with your doctor BEFORE sending a child with a rash to school.
- **Strep Throat:** In cases of suspected or diagnosed strep throat, a child should be kept out of school until the diagnosis is made and/or treatment has been under way for at least 24 hours.
- **Chicken Pox:** A child with chicken pox must be kept out of school for at least 5 days from the appearance of blisters. All pox MUST be crusted over and dry before returning to school.
- **Head lice:** A child with head lice must receive adequate treatment and all nits (eggs) removed from hair before returning to school.

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## **Transportation**

Parents are responsible for finding transportation for their child to and from preschool. We ask that parents come to the classroom when they bring their children as well as when they pick them up. This is an ideal opportunity to talk with the teacher as well as get to know the other preschool parents. If anyone but you, the parent, or someone noted on your release form will be picking up your child, please inform the teacher in advance.

## **Parents and School**

We believe, you, the parent are the most important person in your child's life. We want to work with you for the best possible experience for your child.

To help with communication between home and school, weekly classroom and school notes will be sent home. Please check them for special events and ways to reinforce what your child is learning in school.

We are always happy to talk with you about your child's experience. Please feel free to set up a conference when you see a need. There will also be two conferences scheduled each school year to discuss how your child is progressing in their preschool/kindergarten skills.

## **Clothing**

Please send your child in play clothes. We do messy things, spend time on the floor and time outside. Comfortable, washable play clothes are the best. We will be going outside for play unless there is snow on the ground. Please dress your child accordingly.

Your child will be running in the gym, climbing stairs and playing outside on the recess equipment. For safety, your child must wear well fitting gym shoes at all times.

Boots must be worn when the snow comes. If boots are worn, other shoes must be worn in the classroom.

## **Snacks**

At the beginning of the school year, all students are asked to bring in two boxes of storable snack food. Goldfish crackers, cereal, circle crackers, pretzels, raisins and cereal bars are good choices. We will use these for our daily snack along with milk that is provided. When our supply is gone, we will ask you to send in additional snacks.

If you wish to send in a special birthday treat, please let us know. It really helps with planning. Please avoid cake and cupcakes...fresh fruit, cookies and krispie treats fit so much better into our schedule and are just as much enjoyed! If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate their special day in May.

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## Field Trips

Our preschool class will take several field trips throughout the year. Often this will require that parents and volunteers provide transportation. If you are planning to chaperone you must have a valid driver's license and up to date insurance. You will also need to complete a **Volunteer Consent for Background Check** and **Volunteer Driver** form. The forms can be accessed on TADS, our school website or in the school office. In accordance with state laws all students under 4 years old and weighing 20-40 pounds must be in a child safety seat in the back seat. Students at least 4 years old and weighing 40 to 80 pounds and less than 4'9" must be in a booster seat.

In order to provide the safest care and best learning experiences for our preschoolers, we are not able to take younger siblings along on our field trips.

## Emergency School Closing

If school must be cancelled because of bad weather, parents should listen to WOMT 1240 AM. There will also be announcements on Channel 5 WFRV, Channel 26 WGBA, and Channel 2 WBAY. In addition, these three stations have web sites to check for closings where parents can sign up for e-mails and texts alerts when our school is closed for the day. We will be listed as Immanuel Lutheran School, Manitowoc, on these stations. We ask that parents not call the principal or the teachers to see if school is cancelled for the day. If our school is not mentioned, we will be having school.

If inclement weather comes up during the day and our school closes early, a notification will be sent to parents by email and text. Parents will be asked to pick up their child as soon as possible after receiving the notification.

## Wrap Around Care

Trusting Hearts offers before school care from 6:40 to 7:40 a.m. for our morning session students. After school care is offered from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for any of our preschoolers. Use of Wrap Around Care should be prearranged with our program director before the school year begins.

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