

**Star of Bethlehem
Lutheran Preschool
and
Early Learning Center**



**2021-2022
Handbook**

**STAR OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL
and Early Learning Center
3700 S. Casper Drive
New Berlin, WI 53151
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Website: www.starofbethlehem.org

OUR CHRISTIAN PURPOSE:

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" Matthew 19:14. Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool is an arm of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church and strives to lead little children to Jesus. Preschoolers need to see and feel Jesus as their dearest friend.

Love is the key. Jesus' love is great and constant. In the Star of Bethlehem Preschool, that love of Jesus is expressed and felt daily in the classroom through Bible stories, singing, and social interaction.

The Star of Bethlehem Preschool also provides activities that develop large and small muscles, communication, number skills, and artistic talents. As a child experiences this preschool, he or she becomes better prepared to meet the demands of any progressive five year old kindergarten program and becomes confident in his or her ability to do so.

Preschool has become an important part of the educational experience. Star of Bethlehem Preschool exists to help parents meet the challenges of providing a Christ based education for their child in a changing and demanding world.

AT STAR OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL WE BELIEVE:

That our school is not a substitute for family life, but an enrichment of Christian family life. That we cannot over estimate the value of play in the development of the young child. That the child should have an opportunity to develop the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual capabilities with a feeling of success, and to develop these strengths at his own pace.

GOALS OF STAR OF BETHLEHEM:

To help your child develop:

- Spiritually:
Provide a Christian atmosphere in which he can grow in faith. Instill in the child a love for God's Word through the telling of Bible stories and singing simple Gospel songs. To trust God as a loving Father. To recognize his/her sin and the Lord's forgiveness. To know Jesus is his/her Savior and his/her very best friend. To learn to pray.
- Physically:
To encourage good health habits. To develop fine and gross motor skills. To teach each child to take proper care of his/her body. To have many hands on learning experiences.
- Intellectually:
To encourage the child to explore his/her environment through the use of his/her senses. To provide learning experiences which will help him in problem solving. To grow increasingly skillful in using language skills and understanding concepts.

- Socially:
To help children feel at ease about being away from home, and to be able to accept involvement with other children and adults. To strengthen family ties, and through participation, help the parents to understand their children better. To teach respect of other people and materials. To teach the child to be responsible, self-directed, and self-disciplined. To teach good manners. To teach that Christ's love should motivate him/her to live as the Lord expects (recognizing right from wrong). To help them realize that the good news of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection, is a message to be shared with all people.
- Emotionally:
To give the child attention, acceptance, and affection. To provide opportunities to experience success. To instill a sense of competence and self-esteem. To help each child to understand his/her feelings. To obtain security through gentle discipline using God's Word. To instill the truth that Jesus always loves them.
- Creatively:
To give expression in music through song, movement, and instruments. To give many varied art experiences, using many media, allowing the child to use his imagination.

WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A PARENT:

- ◆ Let the Word of God be the guide in all phases of daily living.
- ◆ Have regular family devotions and table prayers.
- ◆ Pray for your school and staff.
- ◆ Attend church regularly with your child.

- ◆ Talk about school, enjoy things together, and use a positive approach when developing self-expression, self-confidence, self worth and security in your child.
- ◆ Develop a happy attitude about school and that the teacher will be a very special friend. We want our school to be a happy place he/she wants to go to, not a place where he/she has to go to.
- ◆ Teach the child to dress himself/herself.
- ◆ Have the child wear simple easy to manage washable clothes. Since children like to play on the floor, take this into consideration.
- ◆ Put tags or labels on outer clothing
- ◆ Provide some type of school or tote bag for your child to put his/her special things in to take home. Please put his/her name on the bag.

CURRICULUM:

Much learning takes place in the first 5 years of a child's life. It is perhaps some of the most significant training he/she receives. An early childhood experience permeated with Christian emphasis gives even more richness. Star of Bethlehem recognizes that young children learn best through play and concrete hands-on experiences. Through the use of learning centers, our students will explore and discover developmentally appropriate concepts considering each child's physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual growth.

- ◆ There will be indoor experiences: blocks, trucks, housekeeping, building and construction materials, puzzles, peg boards, and other manipulative toys.

- ◆ Social studies of meeting new friends and community helpers, holidays, good manners, and concern for each others safety and well being.
- ◆ Math experiences with numbers, patterns, colors, ordering, classifying shapes and solving problems.
- ◆ Creativity in cutting, pasting, tearing, drawing, and painting.
- ◆ Musical experiences: singing, rhythm band, marching, singing games, movement. Children will learn to use their gift of voice to sing praises to their Creator as well as to learn fun songs.
- ◆ Science experiences with plants, nature, magnifying glass, magnets, rocks, shells, senses, measuring. The children will learn the wonders of God's creation through scientific observation and exploration geared to the interest and experience of young children.
- ◆ Use of books, reading and creative story telling, using puppets, finger plays.
- ◆ Religious activities, story time with objects, pictures, and flannel graphs.
- ◆ Field trips are also a part of our curriculum.
- ◆ Gross motor skills will be concentrated on and reinforced by games in the classroom and outdoors, such as running, jumping and climbing.

CLASSROOM RATIOS

Star of Bethlehem Preschool offers a low teacher-student ratio. Low ratios mean more individual care and attention for your child. Classroom ratios are:

K3 1:9 We have a maximum of 18 students per classroom

K4 1:10 We have a maximum of 20 students per classroom

DISCIPLINE

Star of Bethlehem Preschool views discipline as a way of correcting improper behavior and achieving expected behaviors. We strive to provide an educational program that is well-planned, creative and stimulating in order to hold the interest of the students thus minimizing unwanted behaviors.

All of our teachers model appropriate behaviors and modify the environment to help prevent problems before they occur. Encouragement and positive reinforcement are used to reinforce acceptable behavior. All children are given opportunities to make choices regarding their behavior. Both logical and natural consequences are used with children who have made a poor choice. When behavior problems arise, our teachers use the Bible as a guide. The message of the Law shows children their sin and what they have done wrong. The message of the Gospel shows children their forgiveness in Jesus Christ, motivates them to forgive others, and make God-pleasing choices. Under no circumstance will physical contact be used, nor shall the discipline damage the child's self-image or cause embarrassment.

If inappropriate behaviors continue on a regular basis, a conference is scheduled with the parent in order to work together as a team in the best interest of the child.

PUPIL-PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

We believe in fostering positive parent/teacher relationships by providing daily opportunities for parent/teacher interaction. We want your child to develop a happy, healthy attitude toward learning and positive feelings about themselves.

Special consultation days are formally scheduled for teachers and parents to meet. In November, parents are invited to come to school and discuss their child's progress personally with the teacher. In January when student evaluations are sent home, parents are given the opportunity to sit with their child's teacher to discuss the mid-year evaluation. Parents are also encouraged to discuss matters personally with the child's teacher at any time throughout the school year.

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

The preschool year begins in early September. During the year, several days are given off for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and teachers' conferences. A school calendar will be provided on the first day of class.

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

We ask that each parent or driver accompany the child into the classroom and pick up the child from the classroom when school is over. Children are expected to leave the school grounds immediately after dismissal since there is no supervision on the grounds after school hours.

If you need to drop off your child early, you may contact the teacher to possibly arrange for them to wait with the teacher. We offer the Early Learning Center to those students in preschool. The Early Learning Center is open until 5:00pm. Additional hourly fees would apply for use of this program.

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Star of Bethlehem School's Early Learning Center (ELC) offers early learning experiences in a loving, caring, safe, Christian setting. The program is for three and four years olds who are enrolled in Star of Bethlehem Preschool and need care and/or additional learning opportunities outside of preschool hours.

At Star's ELC we believe that children learn and develop through active play and hands on learning. We exist to assist parents in nurturing the growth of their child not only socially, emotionally, and academically, but most importantly, spiritually. Each day is filled with structure, routine and fun activities that complement our preschool curriculum.

The ELC operates Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 5:00pm. Children can attend ELC any day/time preschool is not in session. ELC Follows the same calendar as the preschool.

There is a \$35 registration fee and an hourly rate of \$6.00 per hour for ELC.

Star's ELC is directed by our preschool director, Michelle Yass, and is staffed by preschool teachers and aides.

BUSING

Busing is not available for preschool. Busing begins at the Kindergarten level for children that live within the New Berlin busing boundaries.

REQUIREMENTS

Children entering 3-year-old preschool must be 3 by September 1; children entering 4-year-old preschool must be 4 by September 1. This age restriction coincides with the state requirement of being 5 by September 1 for kindergarten.

Because of this requirement, a more homogeneous class will be enrolled in each session.

All children will need to be fully potty trained by the first day of class. Should frequent accidents occur, you may be asked to keep your child home until they are not having them any longer.

ATTENDANCE

Pupil attendance is expected to be prompt and regular. In all cases of pupil absence or tardiness, parents are expected to call before school starts to let the teacher know of the absence.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

All parents with children in preschool should understand the importance of regular church attendance for them and for their children. “Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it” Luke 11:28. As you probably already know, your role model regarding these matters, becomes a tremendous influence on the spiritual lives of your children.

NON-MEMBER GUIDELINES

Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool will attempt to bring the Gospel to children of non-member parents as a mission arm of the congregation and a function of the Christian Church which has been directed by God: “Go and teach all nations.” The following guidelines in accepting children of non-members will apply:

- ◆ A parent must be present at Star of Bethlehem’s Preschool Opening Service/Open House.
- ◆ Parents will show an interest in the Christian aspect of their child’s education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool...

Preschool perhaps represents the child's first separation from home. It may be his/her first experience in learning that other adults can help him/her and love him/her. He/she has much social learning to do. We plan to help him/her grow from a self-centered world to a Christ-centered world of interaction. Play is the child's work. By taking advantage of this and the many facets of early childhood teaching techniques, a solid foundation can be built. We hope to make him/her inquisitive and an eager student.

VIEWING THE CLASSROOM

You are invited to view the preschool classroom while in session by calling our school office at (262) 786-2901. Classroom tours are also given on Registration Day in January, when the preschool teachers will be available to discuss the preschool program in detail and answer any of your questions.

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD

When you have decided that you would like Star of Bethlehem to assist you in the Christian upbringing of your child, please visit www.starofbethlehem.org/apply and complete the online application through our student information system, TADS. You will be contacted to inform you of the status of that application.

