

Early Childhood Parent Handbook Peace Lutheran School 2023-2024



Phone: (586) 731-4120

www.peaceshelby.org

Mrs. Suzette Quail – Director

Mr. Michael Nelson – Principal

Rev. David Klemm – Pastor

Dear Early Childhood Parents,

Welcome to Peace Lutheran Early Childhood Program!

Our mission, with Christ as our center, is to partner with parents to nurture the total child in a safe, loving, environment and to share the love of Jesus with every child and every family, helping them create and develop a lasting relationship with Jesus. Our Early Childhood program believes in the wisdom found in Proverbs 22:6 – “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it

The early childhood years are an exciting time of growth and development. Here, at Peace Lutheran Preschool, we offer a well-planned program with a variety of academic and social experiences to develop young minds and bodies.

This handbook has been compiled to acquaint you with the objectives, goals, and practices of Peace Lutheran Early Childhood programs. Second, we encourage the parents of our students to refer to this handbook when a question arises concerning school practices and policies.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Peace Lutheran Preschool, please do not hesitate to email, call or make an appointment to meet in person.

God’s Blessings,

Suzette Quail
Early Childhood Director

SUPPORT

Peace Lutheran Early Childhood Department is supported by Peace Lutheran Church. Preschool classes are held in Peace Lutheran Church and School which is located at 6580 24 Mile Road, Shelby Township, MI 48316.

STANDARDS

Our school meets the standards of the National Lutheran School Association (NLSA), and the State of Michigan. We are fully licensed by the State of Michigan. Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and under the jurisdiction of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is our mission to provide a Christian educational program appropriate to the developmental needs of Early Childhood students. Through Christian teaching, we proclaim Jesus Christ as our Savior.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Peace Lutheran admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.

CLASS HOURS

Peace Lutheran Early Childhood offers morning and afternoon sessions for most classes.

Our Young 5s attend Monday through Friday from 9:00 am - 3:20 pm

Our three-day 4s attend M/W/F from 9:15 am – 12:15 pm for half day or M/W/F full day from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm or 9:15 am- 3:15 pm

Our four-day 4s attend Tuesday through Friday from 12:30 p.m.– 3:15 p.m.

Our 3s attend M/W 9:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. or T/TH from 9:00 a.m. -11:15 a.m. or 12:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Panther Cubs attend Tuesday or Thursday from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. (one session)

ENROLLMENT

Those entering the three-year-old and four-year-old program must be three or four years old by September 1 of that school year. Those children entering the Young 5s program must be 5 years old by December 1 of that school year. All children must be toilet trained (no pull-ups allowed). Acceptance of enrollment will depend on receipt of a completed registration form and a nonrefundable registration fee of \$150.00.

Panther Cub students must be two years old by September 1 of that school year. The Panther Cubs program is for two-year-olds with parents/caregivers, and children do not need to be toilet-trained. Registration fee is \$75.00.

WITHDRAWAL OR DISMISSAL

We assume your child's enrollment will be for the full school year, unless an emergency should arise. We require a two-week written notice in any case of withdrawal. The registration fee is not refundable. No tuition refunds will be made because of illness or vacation, weather conditions, or building issues. Withdrawal or dismissal of a child may be initiated after consultation between Early Childhood Director, Principal, Finance Department, and parents, when the welfare of a child or group warrants it.

BROAD OBJECTIVES OF OUR CHRISTIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

We are dedicated to the growth of the whole child. Our program provides a balance between free play and teacher-directed learning activities. Learning takes place in a warm, friendly, relaxed setting. Learning materials are easily accessible to the children. These experiences provide a pleasant and enjoyable approach to discovery and creativity.

Spiritually - During Jesus time, the love of God is shared through stories, songs, and prayers. Preschool 4s may attend chapel on occasion.

Intellectually - We provide academic experiences that are developmentally appropriate for each age level.

Socially - We encourage development of communication and listening skills through oral language experience, literature, finger-plays, dramatization, puppetry, free play, and other activities.

Physically - We help increase developmentally appropriate large motor skills, among which are running, skipping, jumping, hopping, and galloping. Rhythm activities are used in our classroom as well as during our regular gym time. PE gym units are implemented throughout the year. Fine motor skills are also developed. Activities include printing name, cutting, coloring, assembling puzzles, and painting, manipulating playdough, creating with pegboards, sorting, matching, and doing arts and crafts activities.

Emotionally - We use positive methods of encouraging self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation. We emphasize that each child is "someone special", loved by God, parents, and teachers. We encourage individual independence and a healthy self-image.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF OUR CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL PROGRAM...

- 1) To help children become aware of how wonderfully God has created them and the world,
- 2) To lead children to the knowledge and love of the Savior, Jesus Christ, as our friend and helper in every situation,
- 3) To help each child with basic early childhood academic and social skills,
- 4) To lead each child, because of this knowledge, to begin to react in everyday living as follows:
 - to talk to Jesus, Friend of all children, in prayer;
 - to cooperate with classmates; to learn to share with each other in the spirit of love;
 - to explore with classmates the world about them;
 - to learn a degree of sportsmanship in play;
 - to develop individuality, self-control, and self-confidence;
 - to learn basic health habits, good manners, and safety rules;
 - to develop basic large and small motor and muscle skills;
 - to develop security and a feeling of belonging to the group;
 - to learn the basics of colors, shapes, numbers, and alphabet;
 - to begin learning "same-different", matching and sorting, patterning visual discrimination, sequencing, opposites, and rhyming words;
 - to develop respect for country and flag;
 - to obtain beginning computer skills.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Good communication between teacher, child, and parent helps to make the total area of discipline a positive, beneficial experience. Our program is paced so that the activities throughout the day will capture and hold the child's interest. If discipline is necessary, it will be handled in a positive, Christian manner, and will encourage self-control, and re-direction, in a consistent positive manner. The methods that we will use include:

- Giving positive directions, explaining to the child what they should do in an appropriate way.
- Redirecting the child to an appropriate activity.
- Give an opportunity for the child to problem solve under the teacher's direction and give suggestions for solutions when needed. We encourage children to think about ways to solve problems.
- Talk to the child, and help the child express feelings he/she is having and why.
- Allow the child to take time to calm down and talk about the behavior
- Give choices to the child whenever possible.
- Give age appropriate logical consequences for continued misbehavior.

TUITION

When a child is accepted into Peace Lutheran School, parents agree to a financial support program.

- All school families will retain enrollment status on a tuition payment basis.
- All tuition payments are due the first day of each month.
- Tuition payments may be made by credit card or automatically deducted from your bank account through FastDirect.
- A late fee of \$25 per payment will be added if payment is not made by the 10th day of each month.
- The business manager shall notify the school principal and Early Childhood Director when a family is in arrears of tuition payment by two months. The parents/guardians will be advised that their child(ren) will not be admitted to school until such time as the account is brought up to date. Please contact the Early Childhood Office before your account becomes past due. We are here to work with you and find a payment plan that meets your ability to pay.
- A fee of \$50 per payment will be assessed for all checks that do not clear the bank or the savings & loan company due to insufficient funds.
- There will be no refunds due to illness, vacation, or cancellation due to weather conditions, or building issues.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The family of any child enrolling in the Peace Lutheran preschool must have a current complete physical examination performed by a physician, and all series of immunizations must be complete. If you choose not to have your child immunized, you must make an appointment with the health department and obtain a waiver. Throughout the year, immunizations may need updating. In accordance with health department regulations, a parent will have thirty days to update immunizations. Otherwise, the parent will be asked to remove the child from school until immunizations are up to date. Immunizations needed are as follows: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Mumps, Pertussis, Rubella, Polio, Haemophilus, Hepatitis B, Influenza, and Varicella.

A physical health form signed by parent and your child's doctor must be returned on or before the first day of school. A copy of the child's birth certificate is also required.

ILLNESS OR COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Please keep your child home if he/she is vomiting, has repeated diarrhea, is running a fever (100° or higher), has an unidentified rash, or is known to have a contagious condition. If a child shows signs or symptoms of any communicable illness during the school day, the parent or emergency contact will be notified immediately and asked to pick the child up from school. For the well-being of the child and their classmates, he/she will then be placed in a separate area until the parent arrives. At no time will any child be left alone or unsupervised. Do not send your child to school if he/she exhibits signs of a communicable disease. Once the symptoms of the illness have disappeared, the child will be accepted back in school. The director reserves the right to request a physician's note for re-admittance. Notification, usually in the form of an email, will be sent home to communicate if your child may have been exposed to a communicable

disease other than routine colds or flu. Please notify the school at once if your child has a communicable disease. Children must be excluded from preschool until they are no longer contagious depending on the particular illness. Children are required to be fever free without medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. If your child's doctor prescribes an antibiotic, your child may return after 24 hours of the first dose. Staff and volunteers follow this illness policy as well.

HEALTH CARE PLAN

A health care plan that includes the following has been implemented:

- children and staff hand-washing
- handling children's bodily fluids
- cleaning and sanitizing equipment, toys, and other surfaces
- controlling infection, including universal precautions
- health-related resources

HEALTH REGULATIONS

1. Parents are asked to keep a child at home if carrying an infectious illness. All parents will be notified of an outbreak of any communicable disease and will be reported to the Macomb County Health Department.
2. If your child has a fever, please do not send him/her to school that day. Your child must be free of fever for at least twenty-four hours, without medication, before returning to school.
3. Teachers will not administer medication.
4. The staff is required to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
5. If your child becomes ill in school, he/she will be kept isolated and comfortable until you arrive. If you cannot be reached, the emergency person listed on your emergency card will be contacted.
6. Likewise, if these symptoms present in a staff member and/or a volunteer, he/she will follow the same guidelines.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

EXCLUSION

Chicken Pox

infectious one day before eruptions,
until all eruptions are crusted (9 days)

Impetigo, Pink Eye,
Ringworm and Head Lice

until healed or non-infectious, confirmed
by a written statement from a physician,

Measles and Mumps

vaccination required

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Children are to arrive at school in the pick-up lane only 5 minutes before class time. Our K-8 students begin their day at 9:00am, with K-8 students allowed in the building at 8:50am. The entrance doors will open for preschoolers at 8:55 am in the morning and 12:25 pm in the afternoon. Please note: *if you arrive late, you will need to enter through the Main School Entrance and sign in at the school office before you walk your child to

their classroom. It is important for your child to arrive promptly to school each day. This allows your child's teacher to maintain her daily schedule and avoids distractions for the children already in class. At the end of the school day teachers will release your child directly to you or your representative. We will ask you to indicate on your Child Information Record to whom we are allowed to release your child. Children will not be released to anyone who is not on the list. Please inform us in writing if this list changes or if a one-time exception is to be made. A driver's license will be requested prior to releasing your child if our staff member is not familiar with that person. We reserve the right to not release a child if we feel they might be placed in an unsafe situation. Children must be placed in a car safety seat. Michigan car seat laws require children under the age of 8 and less than 4 feet 9 inches in height must ride in a car seat or booster seat. Preschool staff is not permitted to place your child in the car seat or buckle your child.

If you will be late, please contact the school office indicating that you will be late with drop off or pick up. If a parent or authorized person does not arrive to pick up their child, the staff will:

- Try to contact one or both parents by phone.
- Try to contact one or more of the emergency contacts listed on their Child Information Record.
- A teacher or staff member will remain with your child until someone arrives to pick them up.
- If your child is not picked up on time, a \$15.00 late fee may be charged for each 15 minute increment after the end of your scheduled class time.

INSURANCE

All students are to be covered by medical insurance. Parents/guardians are to use their personal medical insurance for any illness or injury of their child.

LIBRARY

Our four-and-five-year-old classes will be able to check out one book per week from our school library. Please find a special place at home for the book so it will not be misplaced. In case a book is forgotten or misplaced at home, the child will not be able to check out a new book until the missing book has been returned. Books not returned, or damaged beyond normal repair, must be replaced at cost.

DRESS CODE

Since the children will be involved in painting, coloring, and vigorous activities, we recommend that they wear washable play clothes.

- Clothes should be washable, clean, and comfortable for classroom activities.
- Clothing should fit appropriately and not be revealing or immodest.
- Children must be able to remove clothing by themselves when using the

bathroom. Elastic waist pants are a very good choice.

- Character apparel which promotes aggressive or non-Christian behavior is inappropriate and should not be worn to school.
- Jeans are acceptable but should be free of holes, patches, fraying or tares.
- Shorts may be worn, weather permitting.
- Shoes must be suitable for both inside and outside activities. Sandals may not offer enough support or protection during playtime. It is encouraged that if sandals are worn they have a back strap and socks are to be worn with sandals. No flip-flop style shoes are allowed. “Dressy” shoes are often slippery, especially during gym time.
- Socks must be worn with all footwear, even sandals and crocs.

On a regular schedule during the winter months, the children will go outside to play; parents will be notified when extra winter clothing should be sent in with the children. Please label all of your child's outdoor clothing with his/her name. Be sure boots slip on with ease. A loop on the child's coat for hanging will be very helpful. Try to attach the mittens in some way to your child's coat so they do not become lost. Children will be encouraged to dress themselves.

CLASS FIELD TRIPS

Many educational benefits can be gained by experiences that are not possible in the classroom setting. A variety of fun and educational trips will be planned for the children during the school year. A Field Trip Form will be sent home prior to each trip. This form, along with the required fee must be completed, signed, and returned to your teacher by the deadline for your child to accompany their classmates on the trip. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation to and from the field trip site. They will also be responsible for the care and behavior of their child/children during the excursion. If this is not possible, parents must make their own arrangements for their child's transportation and care. State Law requires that children under eight years old or under 4' 9" tall use a car seat or booster seat. Licensing requires that NO SMOKING/VAPING is allowed at any time on class field trips or on Peace Lutheran Church and School campus.

Peace Lutheran School (Preschool – Grade 8) policy states that siblings are not allowed on field trips, or in classrooms for parties/volunteer opportunities. By signing our field trip form, you acknowledge your understanding of our sibling policy. **THIS POLICY WILL BE ENFORCED.**

Our preschool classes visit our church and sanctuary weekly. This is a special time of worship and learning. Acknowledgment of this handbook releases Peace Lutheran Church, School, and Preschool from any liability.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event of inclement weather, or if school is either cancelled or dismissed early, the announcement will be given through our automated “School Messenger” phone system.

Additional announcements will follow over radio and television. Please listen to local radio or television stations for this announcement: "Peace Lutheran School, Shelby Township, is closed". Please note that Peace Lutheran School generally closes whenever Utica Community Schools is closed.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Peace Lutheran Preschool teachers and classroom assistants receive CPR and First Aid training. If an accident, injury, or allergic reaction occurs during school hours, a preschool staff member will complete an incident report. A copy of this report will be given to the parent when the child is picked up or released for the day. A copy will also be placed in the student's file in the Early Childhood Office.

A Fire Emergency Plan is posted in each classroom, which explains the actions to be taken and staff responsibilities in case of a fire emergency. This plan also has a diagram showing evacuation routes. Students and staff will take part in fire drills throughout the school year.

A Weather Alert Plan is posted in each classroom, which explains the action to be taken and staff responsibilities in case of severe weather alerts. This plan also has a diagram showing evacuation routes. Students and staff will take part in one tornado drill in the fall and one in early spring. In the case of an actual tornado or severe weather alert, no one will be allowed to leave the campus until the "All Clear" siren has sounded. Please note that for obvious safety reasons, we will not be able to release your child to you during this time. We will do our best to relay information to you as we are able.

Peace Lutheran Preschool will participate in Lockdown/Shelter-In-Place Drills. During these drills, the teachers will gather students into a designated area in the classroom and turn out the lights. They will encourage children to be still and quiet. The teachers take great effort to make this seem like a game, so the children will not become afraid. When the drill is complete, students will return to the learning environment.

SNACKS

We strive to have a "PEANUT/NUT SAFE" environment within our building. Please refrain from sending any snacks made from peanut or tree nut products. Please check food labels closely as we cannot accept items which were "made in a facility that also processes products containing peanut and tree nuts."

Parents will be responsible for providing a nutritious peanut/tree nut free snack each day for their child. Please refrain from sending any type of chips, cookies, juice, or candy. We aim to support a nutritious snack and healthy lifestyle at school. We will provide filtered water and cups for snack time. Please let us know immediately if your child has any allergies. Any treats or snacks with peanut/tree nut ingredients will not be served. Each classroom teacher has a policy for birthday treats. We love to celebrate birthdays, but wish to celebrate with respect to everyone.

FOOD ALLERGY ALERTS AND SAFETY

Parents will notify the director and the teacher if their child has any food allergy/allergies. If your child has a known allergy or may need to receive a prescribed medication during the school day, an Allergy Action Plan must be completed and signed by the child's parent and pediatrician. This form will include dosing instructions as well as indications of when to administer medication. Prescription medications must be in their original container and have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, and name and strength of medication. Over the counter medication must be in the original container with directions for the age child it is to be given to. Written permission and instructions must be provided on the Permission for Dispensing Medication form. If this prescribed medication will expire during the school year, it is the parent's responsibility to replace such medication prior to the expiration date.

Together, the parents and the staff at Peace will develop the best environment possible for the child within our school's capabilities. Actions may include:

- developing a health care plan, which will be provided by the parent on an Emergency Allergy Alert Form, indicating the potential allergen and the course of action to be taken by the school should exposure occur;
- posting the Emergency Allergy Alert Form in the child's classroom
- posting *Severe Allergy Alert Signs* in the classroom, as precautions are required;
- completing the necessary Medication Dispensation forms and maintaining EpiPen®, Benadryl, inhalers, or additional medications as needed in the school office or in locations as agreed on with the director and teacher.

OTHER INFORMATION

On occasion, your child may be asked to wear or bring in an item of special interest. This item will not be played with by the other children in the classroom. (Please do not allow your child to bring in any toys except those requested by the Peace Preschool program, from home)

No smoking/vaping is allowed at any time on class field trips or on Peace Lutheran Church and School Campus.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We always welcome and encourage parent involvement in our Preschool Program to help in the classroom on a rotating basis, to offer your talent or profession as a learning experience for the children, to help with special events, or to assist in planning various parties throughout the year. All volunteers will be screened and must complete a required Volunteer Policy, required RISK Management Authorization (MSP I-Chat), as well as be cleared through PSOR (Public Sex Offender Registry) before entering the classroom or being with children. It is the policy of our Early Childhood Department that siblings are NOT TO ACCOMPANY you at the time of your scheduled volunteer time. Please arrange to have them cared for during this time.

Written Plan of Supervision for volunteer parents (In compliance with R 400.510a) Peace Lutheran Early Childhood Program adheres to the ruling of 104a when involving

parents in a volunteer setting. A volunteer parent will not be left unattended with any children. While parents are volunteering, they will always be working with either the teacher assistant or the lead teacher, who have been cleared by the CCBC (Child Care Background Check) program as required by the State of Michigan. Substitute teachers have also been cleared through the CCBC process.

Anyone who volunteers 4 hours or more a week for more than two weeks must provide evidence to verify they are free from communicable tuberculosis (TB). Verification status is required within 1 year before employment or volunteering.

PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

Advanced notification shall be provided by Peace Lutheran School to parents or guardians, using two different methods of communication, informing them of pesticide applications. These advance notifications will be provided in Panther Tales (our school weekly newsletter), in verbal report by the lead teacher, and/or by written notification.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Michigan Public Act #238 of 1975: Any school employee who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect shall immediately make an oral report to the Protective Services Department, Macomb County. Within 72 hours the school employee shall notify the director of his finding and an oral report has been made to Protective Services. The school employee must file a written report regarding the suspected child abuse or neglect with Protective Services and provide a copy to the director. Peace Lutheran Preschool and every preschool teacher is fully committed to the health and well-being of each child and maintains its role as an advocate for every child in our care.

LICENSING INSPECTION REPORTS

We maintain a notebook of all licensing reports, special investigation reports, and related corrective actions. The notebook is available to parents for review during regular business hours. Licensing inspection reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This handbook is provided to inform parents of policies and procedures of Peace Lutheran Preschool. These policies and procedures are subject to change as necessary. The content of this handbook is for informational purposes only.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH ▪ WORSHIP

Preschool children and their families are welcome and encouraged to attend weekly church services, either at Peace or at their own church home. As a Christian school, one of our main objectives is to help both the child and the family, to grow spiritually in the love of Jesus Christ. Early childhood is a wonderful time to establish lifelong worship habits. If you do not have a church home, you are always welcome and encouraged to worship here at Peace.

CHAPEL - Once a week, the four year old preschoolers and Young 5s children will go to the Worship Center to have Jesus Time. Our Family Life Director, Pastor, Principal,

Deacon, Director, or Teacher will lead this time each week. Sometimes throughout the school year children will be asked to bring in a special “Gift for Jesus”, or help support special mission projects that the entire church and school are involved in throughout the school year. The Worship Center, Sanctuary, and Gathering Room are spaces that are considered as a “field trip” by licensing. These areas children will always be supervised by licensed child care providers. My acknowledgement of this handbook is permission for my child to visit this area as a part of their daily class.

SINGING IN WORSHIP SERVICE: The children in our preschool classes will be asked to sing during a Sunday morning worship service. It is our hope that you will encourage your child to share their love of Jesus through song, on these dates. When the children are singing in church, please keep in mind that this is not a program or show. They will sing from the front of the church and will serve as the choir for that particular service. It is a normal weekly worship service and should be respected as one. **PLEASE NO PICTURE TAKING OR VIDEO TAPING.** Our worship services are live-streamed weekly.