

*St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool*  
*Parent Handbook*

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## WELCOME!

The faculty and staff of St. Paul's Preschool welcome you and your family. We will do our best to offer your child the best possible Christian learning environment and we will strive to make your child's education positive, interesting, stimulating and spiritual. We ask for your support, and ask that you be an active participant in your child's preschool experience. This handbook has been carefully prepared so that parents know and understand the policies and practices of St. Paul's Preschool. The teacher is your first source of information regarding your child's social and academic adjustment.

### *St. Paul's Students Are Growing in Faith, Mind and Character*

It is the mission of St. Paul's Preschool to create an environment that gives all children the opportunity to learn in a Christ-centered, safe and caring environment. St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool is a Christian non-profit weekday ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. At St. Paul's we believe that each child is a unique creation of God. In a caring and positive atmosphere, we create a warm and happy place for preschoolers to learn. We believe in educating the whole child, encouraging not only intellectual and social growth, but spiritual growth as well. As we bridge the gap from home to school, we guide children to a continued positive self image and seek to minister to both children and families.

Sensory, motor, perceptual and language skills are introduced through materials and activities, which are both child-centered and teacher-directed. Work is planned with emphasis on the **process rather than the product**, fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Based on the theory that children learn through play, classroom routines encourage active involvement, meaningful experimentation and reinforcement through repetition. Schedules are designed to balance structure and free choice, as well as active and quiet time.

Recognizing that **children grow in predictable stages**, we treat each child as an individual, working from the level each child has attained and moving forward a step at a time. We teach a **love of learning** by allowing

children to experience their own stage of development and helping them to feel success without pressure.

### *Relationship of the Preschool to the Church*

St. Paul's Preschool is an integral part of the ministry of St. Paul's Church. The purpose of St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool is to provide a well-rounded curriculum in a Christ-centered environment. Here at St. Paul's, a Preschool Committee is in place to provide the preschool efficient management, develop school policies and procedures, prepare job descriptions and hire preschool staff.

### *STAFF QUALIFICATIONS*

The teachers at St. Paul's are Christians and are experienced in working with children. In addition they are kind, caring, nurturing and loving. They guide the children in developing spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively. St. Paul's staff celebrates and teaches Christian truths at all times. Teachers lead the children in saying blessings, singing Christian songs and learning Bible stories, as well as leading them in secular songs and stories.

The teachers are required to attend a minimum of ten hours of training in early childhood education each year. All teachers are required each year to furnish proof of a negative TB test and a signed statement from their doctor stating that they "do not have any type of disability that would prohibit them from taking care of children."

A criminal background check is done on each teacher through the Virginia State Police. In addition, a Child Abuse/Neglect check is done on teachers hired after July 1, 1998 through the Department of Social Services.

Many of our teachers hold bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, or a related field. The Director holds a degree in Elementary Education. All of the teachers, including the Director, are CPR certified and have first aid training.

Family and school represent the primary environments in which young children grow and develop. Here at St. Paul's, we realize that you are the most important person in your child's life. We also know that you are your child's first and most important teacher. We feel that the foundation for a good parent-teacher relationship is frequent and respectful open communication and a clear understanding of what is best for each individual child.

### *LICENSURE*

St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool has state religious exempt licensing. The school is inspected by the Fire and Health Departments annually and meets or exceeds all county and state regulations.

### *INSURANCE*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is covered by Public Liability Insurance.

### *GOALS AND OBJECTIVES*

Spiritual Objectives:

1. Lead your child to appreciate the wonders of God's creation.
2. Lead your child to trust and believe in Jesus Christ.
3. Teach your child to speak to God in prayer.



Social Development Objectives:

1. Help your child make a smooth transition from home to school.
2. Encourage your child to develop desirable social habits such as self-control, fair play and courtesy towards others.

Intellectual Development Objectives:

1. Help extend your child's world by exploring a variety of concepts in the areas of math, literature, science, social studies, music, movement and our environment.
2. Help firmly establish foundational concepts that your child will build on as they grow.
3. Help provide opportunities for your child to question and reason.
4. Help your child grow in language development.

Emotional Development Objectives:

-  Set an example of fairness, honesty and integrity for your child to emulate.
-  Help your child create a positive self-concept.

📖👉 Provide opportunities for your child to succeed.

Physical Development Objectives:

📁👉 Help develop your child's fine and gross motor skills.

📖👉 Encourage correct habits for healthful living.

### *THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY*

Sometimes parents of preschoolers question why all children seem to do is play. Play is a child's work, and learning how to play is essential. Through play, children learn important social skills while reducing tension and pressure. Children play for play's sake and focus on discovery. Adults can guide play, but must allow children to become involved in their play. Frequent interruptions and suggestions by adults are frustrating and discouraging to children, and they inhibit a child's creativity. Using open-ended questions is one technique to guide a child's play without interrupting him or her. **Play is a process, not a product.**

Through play children can master skills, learn to use symbols, increase their language ability and learn flexible problem solving. When children play, they discover things that do not make sense to them. Play helps them to make adjustments, question and curiously explore what they do not understand. This moves children to a higher level of thinking, helping them to master many skills.

**Learning is a process.** Parents and teachers who understand the importance of the steps involved in learning are better able to encourage children to enjoy learning. Learning should meet the needs of an individual, as opposed to creating an environment where all children follow an adult's lead. Research shows that through exploration and choice, children will be more independent, better decision-makers, have higher self-esteem, and develop a desire for learning without being forced to learn.

### *WHAT DO WE DO IN PRESCHOOL?*

- Circle Time is a group gathering during which we share our ideas, plans and observations. Circle activities are designed to stimulate children's thinking, enrich their social skills and expand their attention spans.
- Gross-motor activities give the children the opportunity to use their muscles - as well as their imaginations - as they engage in fun, healthy exercises, such as running, jumping and climbing.

- Fine-motor activities help improve small-muscle development and eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in the fine-motor/manipulative areas include puzzles, beads and laces, pegboards, crayons and scissors.
- Art activities help children creatively express their thoughts and feelings. They help reinforce fine-motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes and size relationships.
- Dramatic play activities help children express themselves, practice life skills, improve social skills, increase self-esteem, build vocabulary and solve problems. And, well, dramatic play is just plain fun!
- Music activities promote preschoolers' listening skills, creative expression and social skills. In music, children can explore sound, volume, tempo and rhythm.
- Science activities offer children many hands-on opportunities for observation, exploration, investigation, making predictions, and experimentation.
- Sand and water activities allow children to experiment with textures and the properties of different substances. These activities also promote the development of other skills, such as math, science and language.
- Block play gives children experience with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect, and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem solving and creativity are also promoted in block play.
- Story time is designed to help preschoolers develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading activities enhance children's vocabulary and comprehension skills, and also expand their knowledge base.
- Lunch and snack time is an educational opportunity that is an important part of the preschool experience. Lunch and snack time give children the opportunity to learn social skills as they chat with their friends. Children help by serving and feeding themselves and cleaning up which reinforces their sense of competence and independence. Lunch and snack time is also an opportunity for children to associate mealtime with pleasant feelings.

### *CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS*

If a child with special needs can be accommodated at St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool, the child will be considered for enrollment. As with any enrollment there is a 30 day probationary period. Parents of any special

needs child will be informed that our staff is not trained in Special Education and will not be making special provisions within the classroom to accommodate the child. Any changes that might be made must be done with the consideration of every child in the classroom.

If a large portion of any staff member's time is spent dealing only with the special needs child, the Director will be notified. It is the policy of the Preschool that all children shall receive equal amounts of time from the teachers. If the special needs child is preventing this balance of staff and child interaction, the parents of the special needs child may be asked to look for another program that better meets the needs of the child.

### **Child Find and other Specialists**

The Preschool works closely with Child Find resource teachers and other specialists who may consult with them in helping individual children increase their success in present and future school activities. Our teachers are experienced with working with children all along the developmental continuum and can recognize warning signs or "red flags". If a teacher has any reason to believe that your child's success in school is affected by any factors, they will ask you to call Child Find at 703-876-5244. **(this needs to take place within 2 weeks)** Parents will then be sent questionnaires to complete and then schedule an appointment for developmental screening to be completed. After the parent has met with Child Find, they will schedule a meeting to discuss with the child's teacher. Students will then be assessed for 30 days to make sure our preschool is the best place for the student. Early intervention is the best as it provides tools and strategies for the child and the family.

### *HOURS OF OPERATION*

Monday - Friday (Preschool Office Open 9 AM - 2 PM)

9:30 AM - 12:30 PM (2 ½ year class)

All other classes: 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

### *TUITION*

Monthly tuition is handled by Vanco Services. At the time of registration you will receive the appropriate documents to complete in order for the monthly tuition to be deducted from a checking or savings account.

You may also go online to our website [www.splpreschool.org](http://www.splpreschool.org) to pay by credit card. (there is a fee charged to the parent for this service) Before a child enters the school, parents must pay a deposit of one month's tuition to be applied to the May tuition upon completion of the school year. (This deposit is NON-REFUNDABLE) Tuition is calculated on a yearly basis and equally divided into nine monthly payments; therefore there *is no change in tuition due to shorter or longer months.*

Please note that there will be a \$10.00 late fee for payments that are received after the tenth of the month. If Vanco Services reports two months of insufficient funds, from that point on all tuition payments must be made in cash. Tuition payments delayed for more than two months will be cause for dismissal. Families who travel overseas for extended periods of time **MUST** continue to pay monthly tuition to hold their child's spot in the program.

#### *Monthly Tuition*

2 days per week	\$205 per month
3 days per week	\$305 per month ending @ 12:30
3 days per week	\$375 per month ending @ 1:30
4 days per week	\$475 per month
5 days per week	\$540 per month

A registration fee is charged each year in the amount of \$75.00. The registration fee is paid at the time of enrollment. There is a one-time events fee of \$50. All fees are due at the time of registration.

**Registration FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.**

There are a limited number of scholarships available in case a family finds itself in need. Please see the Financial Manager for an application or email her @ [splfinances@aol.com](mailto:splfinances@aol.com)

#### *WHO CAN APPLY*

We accept applications for children ages 2 1/2 - PreK for the Monday - Friday classes. Children in the 2 ½ year old classes do not have to be potty trained. Children **MUST** be toilet trained on their first day of school to attend the 3 year old classes.



## TOILETING REQUIREMENTS

On the first day of school, children ages 3 - 5 must be **completely** toilet trained. Following is a checklist of skills a child should exhibit when they are completely toilet trained:

- Manipulating clothing closures (zippers/buttons/snaps)
- Pulling their pants and/or underwear down
- Sitting on the toilet
- The ability to wipe themselves
- Using an appropriate amount of toilet tissue
- Pulling up their pants/underwear
- Flushing the toilet
- Washing and drying their hands

If your child is using a potty chair at home, it is **now necessary** for you to help them use the toilet in your bathroom. Using a full-size toilet can be a huge transition for some children but young children are better able to make this transition at home with the help of their parent(s). Another area that young children have difficulty with is wiping their bottoms. This is also a skill that with encouragement and practice they will master. We encourage parents to take their child to use the bathroom after dropping off their backpack in the classroom. Some children do not like using "strange" toilets and having a parent take them in the morning helps with this transition as well. St. Paul's staff is in partnership with you in this area of your child's development. We only want great success for **all** children who are in our care.

## REGISTRATION

Registration is available first to members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, then to currently enrolled students, their siblings, and then to the community. Registration takes place in February.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL AND ETHNIC ORIGIN, RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION, SPECIAL NEEDS, ETC., WHEN ADMITTING CHILDREN TO THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM. **All families must submit a completed Virginia School Entrance Health Form prior to the first day of school. It is the policy of the Preschool to only**

accept those children who have up-to-date immunizations. We do not accept children of families who request a Religious Exemption from immunizations.

#### APPLICATION

Application for admission shall be made by submitting the registration form provided by the Preschool. The non-refundable registration fee of \$75.00 must accompany all registration forms. For all new students enrolling a deposit is due by March 15<sup>th</sup>. (1 month's tuition to be applied to May of the next year) Each child must apply every year. Classes are filled in the order that the registration forms are received and at the discretion of the Director. The Director is authorized to place children in classes that best serve their social and developmental needs. With that in mind, we feel that children learn best when they are with children who are close in age. *The school is unable to accept requests for specific teachers or class.*

#### CLASS CANCELLATION

The Preschool reserves the right to cancel any class and/or registrations if there is not sufficient enrollment to justify its continuance.

#### REFUND POLICY

**Tuition is NOT REFUNDABLE OR PRO-RATED** due to vacations, illness, snow or ice days, withdrawal from the program or any other closing beyond the control of the Director. Weather related closings ARE NOT MADE UP unless there are extenuating circumstances. The decision is made at the discretion of the Director and Preschool Committee.

If the school is closed temporarily due to health precautions, weather conditions, or any other reason beyond the control of the Director, normal tuition fees will continue to accrue.

If a child is absent from school for an extended period for any reason, but expects to return to school, tuition will be charged to reserve the child's place in the program. Otherwise the vacancy will be filled.

#### TERMINATION

The Preschool reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a child either on a temporary or permanent basis if:

- The child's behavior endangers the physical or mental health of the other children.
- If the child has special needs or developmental delays.
- Tuition and/or other fees are late.
- The parents fail to abide by school policies and procedures.
- **Parents and/or caregiver do not abide by carpool procedures.**
- The child is repeatedly late.
- The child fails to adjust to the school, as determined as observed by the Director.

### *ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL*

The classrooms are not opened until 9:30 AM. Teachers are very busy in the morning preparing for class and are not available to be with your child until that time. Please do not enter the Preschool classroom before the door is opened by the teacher or the assistant. Upon arrival an adult must accompany children to their classrooms. Adults are responsible for their children until the child is delivered and left in the care of a teacher or teacher's assistant.

### *CARPOOL LINE PROCEDURES*

**All cars will enter the property at the top driveway and exit at the lower driveway.** Once cars begin to line up a double line will be formed. The first car is to pull up all the way to the safety cones. During the first few weeks of school we ask that you be patient as everyone gets adjusted to the schedule and procedures. The pick-up procedure is strictly enforced and has been devised to ensure the safety of your child. You will be given a carpool tag that will be distributed to your family by the first day of school. This tag must be displayed in the front passenger window of your vehicle and clearly visible. The carpool line begins forming at 1:15 each afternoon. We will begin taking children to cars promptly at 1:30 with a goal of being finished at 1:45 daily. A teacher will walk your child to the car. You will be asked to properly secure your child into his/her car seat. Virginia law **REREQUIRES THAT ALL CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 7 (and until their 8<sup>th</sup> birthday) MUST BE RESTRAINED IN A CHILD SAFETY SEAT THAT MEETS FEDERAL LAW. CHILDREN WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO YOU IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A CAR SEAT.** If you need to leave to return home to get one, you will incur a late fee as described in our ***Handbook for Families***. Once your child is in your vehicle, please patiently wait until the line begins

to move before you drive. Once your child is in your vehicle, please patiently wait until the line begins to move before you drive. **We load children on both sides of the vehicles, so please do not pass another car while in the carpool line.**

Should you need to pick up your child early (before 1:15 PM), please come to the Preschool Office. The Preschool Director or Financial Director will get your child for you. Children tend to get upset when they see a Mom or Dad picking up another child and wonder where their own Mom or Dad is, or why they are not going home. Our goal is to keep your child as safe as possible while in our care. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Not complying with this procedure could be cause for termination from the program.

### *WALKERS*

Many of our families live in a community close to the Preschool and walk to and from school. Please be mindful of this as you enter the premises of the church. DRIVERS...please drive slowly and cautiously through the lot. WALKERS...please stay on the sidewalk or the edge of the driveway. All walkers will be picked-up outside the double doors where you enter in the mornings. For the first few weeks of school, please have your child's name card with you to help facilitate pick-up.

### *LATE FEE POLICY*

We try hard to finish on time, and the children expect to be picked up on time. Not only do the teachers have a lot to do at the end of the day, but your child becomes worried, no matter how hard we try to comfort him or her. Unfortunately there are people who are frequently late because they apparently try to squeeze in "one more thing". The late fee rate is as follows:

After 1:45 PM      \$1.00 per minute

Please abide by our scheduled hours of 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM. Continual late pick-up will be grounds for requesting removal of your child from the program. **IF THIS OCCURS YOU WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED FOR ANY PART OF THE MONTH'S TUITION.**

Please remember that in your child's eyes, being late picking them up is very serious and scares them. Please plan to arrive on time and remember we live in a very congested area.

### *CUBBIES*

Each child has his own cubby in his classroom. This is where they will put their personal items such as coat and backpack.

### *COMMUNICATION with SCHOOL and TEACHERS*

Information regarding the Preschool can be obtained on the Preschool's website [www.splpreschool.org](http://www.splpreschool.org). Your child's teacher also have a Shutterfly Account that you will be invited to join. She will publish a classroom newsletter detailing current and upcoming events along with pictures of activities during the week. A parent resource bulletin board and additional resource material is located in the downstairs foyer. On the bulletin board you will find information that may be of interest to you.

Your child's teacher is more than willing to talk with you about your child's progress **however** the teachers DO NOT provide families with email access. The best method of communication is to set up a time before or after the Preschool day to meet directly with the teacher. Families are more than welcome to send an email request through the Preschool's email, [splpreschool@aol.com](mailto:splpreschool@aol.com), and it will be given to the teacher upon receipt.

### *CONFERENCES*

We are always willing to share our observations of your child with you. Most often, these will be informal conversations or phone calls. However in November teachers will send home a written mini report and in April another follow up report. If a teachers notices any red flags in developmental delays, she will schedule a conference with the parent immediately. Through the use of an Assessment Book provided by Portage Curriculum, we will discuss your child's ability in the preschool environment and discuss his or her growth in the main developmental areas. If at any time you wish to talk to your child's teacher, please make arrangements to meet before or after school. Drop off and pick-up times are not conducive to discussing something as important as your child.

## SNACK/FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool strives to be a nut free preschool.

We encourage nutritious snacks and require that all snacks be free of nuts and nut traces. A food that does not contain nuts in its ingredient labels may be processed in a plant that processes foods that do contain nuts, which causes cross contamination. Cross-contaminated foods are inappropriate for persons with nut allergies. For children with food allergies, strict avoidance is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.

Therefore it is the policy of the school to do our best not to have any food products with nuts. Label reading can save lives. As food allergies become more common, we must do all we can to provide our children with a safe environment. The importance of good nutrition is a challenge in our busy lifestyles. St. Paul's has always promoted good nutrition and healthy eating in our teaching. We provide a healthy snack each day and do our very best to avoid foods with additives and sugars. We provide a snack each day unless a family sends something special. Please check with your child's teacher. The children are given water to drink.

We do check on food allergies or restrictions and they are posted in the child's classroom as well as the kitchen. While we try to provide snacks that all can eat, occasionally we ask parents of children with food restrictions to provide a snack that are especially liked by their child.

### LUNCH

Children will need to bring a healthy lunch to school. Healthy food items that your child likes and can be easily managed by them (finger foods are a good choice). Please **DO NOT** send in sugar with your child's lunch. The Preschool staff will **NOT** heat up food, so be sure that your child likes the food items you send cold or at room temperature. The staff will do their best to send home uneaten food so that you can see what your child did or did not eat. **REMEMBER - we are a peanut/nut free school, so no peanut butter can be sent in lunches.** (sun butter is a substitute)

### ALLERGIES

If you have a child with a life-threatening allergy, you will need to follow our Allergy Procedures. They include:

Providing the Preschool with the child's Virginia School Health form which must have the allergy noted by the physician with Epi Pen marked as the treatment plan for the allergy.

1. Provide the Preschool with a Medication Authorization Form signed by your child's pediatrician.
2. Providing the Preschool with the signed document stating that the parent understands that the Preschool will not administer any medication except an Epi-Pen.
3. Providing the Preschool with two Epi-Pens in the prescription box by the first day of school.

### *BIRTHDAYS*

We celebrate these special days. If you would like to bring in a treat to share, please check with your child's teacher for scheduling and information concerning allergies. Due to life threatening food allergies, the Preschool now requires that all foods be *purchased* so that the teachers can read food ingredient labels for the children's safety. Several stores in our area such as Whole Foods, Trader Joes and Giant have "snack foods" that are specifically labeled *approved for children with nut allergies*. ***Following is a list of approved foods: fresh fruit, Oreos - original, Chips Ahoy - chocolate chip, Lifesavers Gummies, Turkey Hill ice cream sandwiches, Dole Fruit Bars, Luigi's Real Italian Ice, Minute Maid Juice Bars, Breyers Pure Fruit Bars, cupcakes from Giant Food (ask in the bakery department) and Betty Crocker Fruit Roll Ups.***

If you would like to invite students in the classroom for a party, you may use the email list on Shutterfly. Please do not send in invitations to the preschool.

### *SCHOOL CLOSINGS OR DELAYS*

**If Fairfax County schools are closed we are closed. If Fairfax County is delayed two hours, school will be open from 11:30 - 1:30.** If schools close early we will notify families of our closing time by posting it on our Facebook Page and by email. Announcements are made on most local radio (WTOP 1500 AM or 103.5 FM) and TV stations (Channel 21 -FCOS, NBC ABC or FOX). Additionally, families can receive email notification of FCPS closings by enrolling in FCPS's "Keep In Touch" system at: <http://www.fcps.edu>.

### *PHOTOGRAPHS*

School photographs are taken annually. Please see the school calendar for dates. Individual photos as well as class photos are available for purchase.

As part of the assessment process teachers take photos of the children in their classroom, on field trips and at school special events to post on Shutterfly. (You may order prints online)

As a parent, if you should take photos of your child on the first day of school or at another Preschool event, please be aware that you do not have the authority to post photos of any child (other than your own) on social media sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler, etc.)

### *TOYS FROM HOME*

When children bring toys from home, several problems can occur. Sometimes toys get broken or lost and the child then gets upset. Some children will give their toys away without permission from their parents. The children also argue over the toys and their ownership (if another child has the same toy at home, they believe the one in the classroom is from their home). However, if your child is having trouble separating from you and the toy is a "security" item, we will allow this until the child is able to make the transition comfortably into his new setting.

### *CLOTHING*

Be sure that your child's clothing is comfortable, washable, and allows for self-dressing. Since children play outside and they often do "messy" art projects, it is advised to dress them appropriately. Although smocks are worn for certain projects they do not always do the job. Please do not send your child in their "Sunday best" or tell them "not to get anything on their clothes." They become upset if something does spill and are afraid that Mommy might get "mad".

We strongly urge you to bring a seasonal change of clothing including underwear and socks for your child. Each item should be labeled and then placed in a zip-loc bag. If your child needs to borrow a piece of clothing from the preschool, we ask that you wash it and return it the next school day.

When dressing your child for school, it is important that children be able to manage their own clothing for toileting purposes. Since we have



some very young children in the program, it is suggested that you do not dress them in overalls as they are very difficult to get unhooked.

As winter approaches you will need to send in a hat and mittens as we go outside even when it is cold. For your child's safety we do not recommend sending your child in sandals. Waterproof sunscreen is recommended on days when it is sunny and hot. You will need to apply sunscreen prior to coming to school.

### *CURRICULUM*

In order for our curriculum to have a sense of cohesiveness, we teach through themes and use Portage Project as a guide in order to cover all areas of development. We look at the "big idea" and create ways to extend that idea into every area in which we might establish a learning center - art, block play, science, cooking, music, books, dramatic play and so on. The teachers integrate the idea throughout the classroom so that children who are building with blocks, children who are exploring science, and children who are looking at books are all experiencing the same concept in different ways. Teachers plan for their whole classroom to fit together in a way that is logical and unified. The activities are planned according to children's needs, interests and maturation levels. Along with the themes we emphasize spiritual development through Bible verses and stories, listening, following directions, responsibility, cooperation and respect for teachers, peers and self.

### *CHAPEL*

Your child will attend chapel once a week on Wednesdays. This is a wonderful opportunity for your child to experience "big church". In addition your child will learn valuable Bible stories and lessons, as presented by Pastor Mark, an associate pastor, or the Preschool Director. Parents and siblings are always welcome to join us.

### *MUSIC AND MOVEMENT*

Although music is a daily part of our preschool day, a special music and movement class is taught one day each week on Monday or Thursday. Music is an opportunity for children to play, to imagine, to feel, to express, and to learn through the use of music and movement. Children participate in developmentally appropriate activities allowing them to grow naturally. Through singing, moving, listening and playing simple instruments children

begin to build an appreciation for music. We have 1 Music Program a year where parents and families are invited.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Registration is not completed and no child will be admitted until, the child's health form is returned to the Financial Director. The deadline is September 1 of the new school year. At the time of admittance, parents of new students must submit a proof of identity which can either be a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, notification of birth (hospital, physician or midwife record), birth registration card, or a passport. This state law is to establish the child's identity.

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE OR SHE IS SICK.** If a child comes to school when he or she is not feeling well, he or she will be more vulnerable to infection. It is in the best interest of your child, other children, and teachers if sick children are kept at home. ***A child needs to be well enough to participate actively in the preschool. If a child is well enough to come to school, we will expect him or her to go outdoors with his or her class, weather permitting.***

The following symptoms may mean that an illness is contagious, and that your child should stay home:

- Repeated diarrhea, vomiting, or fever (above 99 degrees orally or 100 degrees rectally). Please wait 24 hours after the fever, diarrhea or vomiting subsides before allowing him or her to return to school.
- Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye.
- Sore throat, especially if combined with a fever or swollen neck glands.
- Rashes unrelated to diapering, or other known, non-contagious causes.
- Unusual fatigue, paleness, lack of appetite, confusion, or irritability.
- Scabies, head lice, or other infestation.
- Impetigo.
- Grey or white stools.
- Headache or stiff neck.

We certainly don't expect you to keep your child home with a mild cold or an ear infection, unless the child is too uncomfortable to make it through the day or if the illness will interfere with learning. The most important thing to us is to make sure that your child's needs are met.

If the child will be out and you have the time to call or e-mail us, we would appreciate knowing why your child is not in school. We particularly

would appreciate a call if several days are missed or if there is a contagious condition of which we need to make other parents aware.

In an emergency, the school staff promptly contacts the parents of the child. If neither parent nor the emergency contact can be reached, the rescue squad will take your child to the nearest hospital.

Children are released only to their parents or other adults listed on the child's information form. If someone is picking up your child other than those listed, the parent must notify the teachers in writing. If we do not know this person, we will require a photo i.d. before we release the child.

### *MEDICATION*

Due to regulations within the policies of the Virginia Board of Health, we are no longer permitted to administer medication, staff members are only "trained and certified" to administer an EPI-Pen.

### *HEAD LICE (Pediculosis)*

Unfortunately head lice can be part of the preschool experience. Head lice is common in children ages 3 - 10 years of age. Should we notify you that we have been informed of, or observed a child with head lice, following is important information to assist you in preventing the spread.

Getting rid of head lice requires treating the individual, the family, and the household.

#### **Treat the individual and the family:**

This requires using an over-the-counter or prescription lice- killing medicine. Treat only persons who are infested. Remember that all lice-killing products are pesticides. Follow these treatment steps:

- Remove all clothing.
- Apply lice-killing medicine, also called pediculicide [peh-DICK-you-luh-side], according to label instructions. If the affected person has extra-long hair, you may need to use a second bottle. There are several chemical treatments that can be purchased at your local pharmacy such as Tea Tree Oil or Shampoo for lice or Paul Mitchell's brand, however there are many who find using mayonnaise works just

- as well (slather the head/hair with mayonnaise and cover with a plastic cap overnight). Any of these treatments may need to be repeated.
- **WARNING:** Do not use a cream rinse or combination shampoo/conditioner before using lice-killing medicine. Do not re-wash hair for 1-2 days after treatment.
  - Have the affected person put on clean clothing after treatment.
  - If some live lice are still found but are moving more slowly than before treatment, do not re-treat. Comb dead and remaining live lice out of the hair. The medicine sometimes takes longer than the time recommended on the package to kill the lice.
  - After treatment, if no dead lice are found and lice seem as active as before, the medicine may not be working. See your health-care provider for a different medicine. Follow treatment instructions.
  - Remove nits and lice from the hair shaft using a nit comb, often found in lice-killing medicine packages. Flea combs used for cats and dogs can also be used.
  - After treatment, check, comb, and remove nits and lice from the hair every 2-3 days.
  - Re-treat in 7-10 days.
  - Check all treated persons for 2-3 weeks until you are sure all lice and nits are gone.

#### **Treat the household:**

- To kill lice and nits, machine wash all washable clothing and bed linens that the infested person touched during the 2 days before they were diagnosed. Wash clothes and linens in the HOT water cycle (130 F). Dry items on the hot cycle for at least 20 minutes.
- Dry clean clothing that is not washable (coats, hats, scarves, etc.). OR
- Seal all non-washable items (clothing, stuffed animals, comforters, etc.) in a plastic bag for 2 weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes for 1 hour in rubbing alcohol or Lysol, or wash with soap and hot water.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture. Do not use lice sprays; they can be toxic if inhaled.

## **Cautions:**

Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not use head-lice medications.

- Consult a health-care provider before using lice-killing products on a person who has allergies, asthma, or other medical conditions.
- Do not use extra amounts of lice-killing medicines.
- Do not use lice-killing medicines on the eyebrows or eyelashes.

## *PLAYGROUND RULES*

A fenced-equipped playground is provided and will be used every day as long as the weather permits. There will always be two adults on the playground with each class. The playground equipment has been designed to help young children develop their large motor skills. Climbing, running and jumping are encouraged. For the safety of the children there are some limitations as to how the equipment can be used. Mulch must stay on the ground, when using the slides we go down on our bottom, feet first and there is no climbing on the fence.

## *BITING POLICY*

Our program recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when young children are in a group care setting. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for young children to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Therefore, our program does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten.
- Help the child who bit learn other behavior.
- Work with the child who bit and examine our program to stop the biting.

Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate

behavior. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water. If children are bitten on the top of the hands and the skin is broken, we recommend that their health care provider see them.

When children bite, the parents are informed personally and privately the same day. When children are bitten, their parents are informed personally that day and given a copy of our incident form. When we experience ongoing biting in a classroom, we develop a written plan with specific strategies, techniques and timeliness to work on the problem. This written plan is shared with all parents in that classroom.

Biting is always documented on our standard incident form. It is completed and signed by a teacher and the director. The parent must also sign it. One copy is given to the parents and the other copy is kept in the incident report book.

We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting.

We have current resources on biting available for staff and parents. We encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations directly to the teachers.

### *WHY DO YOUNG CHILDREN BITE?*

Developmental issues, such as

- Teething pain or discomfort
- Sensory exploration of the surroundings
- Learning about cause and effect
- Learning through imitating others
- Developing autonomy
- Needing more attention
- Learning to hold on and let go
- Developing sensory integration

Expressions of feelings, which may include

- Frustration

- Anger
- Tension
- Anxiety
- Excitement
- A reaction to abuse or other physical aggression

An environment or program that is not working for the child, for example

- An environment that is too stimulating or not stimulating enough
- A space that is too crowded and does not allow children privacy
- Inappropriate expectations (such as expecting young children to share toys and/or equipment)
- A rigid schedule that does not meet young children's needs for food and sleep

### *POSITIVE GUIDANCE*

We believe that children learn best through experiences. We also believe that the teachers must lovingly guide and redirect the children to help them to learn to cooperate with their peers and to have positive, educational experiences to encourage and enhance their growth and development while in our care. We can best accomplish this by:

- Having a variety of activities for the children.
- Using group management techniques, limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid overcrowding and to allow for sufficient materials and the opportunity for constructive interactions.
- Using the recommended ratio of adults to students.
- Speaking with a child if their behavior is inappropriate for the area or material that they are using ("this is the way we use the paintbrush." "Blocks are for building." "Walking only please.")
- Using positive language with the children to give praise for appropriate behavior ("I like the way John is sitting", we say "only walking" instead of "don't run")

After using the above techniques, if a child is having a problem cooperating in an area of the room, he/she is asked to go to another area for a while. We may say, "Peter that is not how we play in the sand table, you may go to the block area or to the book corner". As the year progresses, the children are simply redirected to another area: they know that it means the behavior was not appropriate.

- Sometimes just a touch on the shoulder can let a child know of our presence and this will in turn put him/her back on task.
- After exhausting these methods, if a child still has a problem with appropriate behaviors, the child is asked to sit on the thinking chair, which is a time out place to think about what he/she has done and with the help of the teacher's discussions with him/her, what might be a better way to interact with the other children, materials, etc.

Please be advised that under the law any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, and harsh or humiliating or frightening treatment, is illegal and is against our philosophy. **NONE** of these behaviors will ever take place at St. Paul's Preschool.

There are three basic rules that we use in preschool:

- You may not hurt yourself
- You may not hurt others
- You may not damage the property

Our focus will not be on punishing the child but having the child learn by natural and logical consequences. The child's age and capacity will always be considered when dealing with inappropriate behavior. Our staff is able by education and experience to identify behavior which is causing a child to be unhappy, participating at less than the usual level, or stressed. These "symptoms" ask for patience, understanding and intervention, which is not punishing. It is always imperative that home and school cooperate with mutual goals and procedures. Teachers will always model good behavior.

### *CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT*

Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child. The abuse may come from many sources including parents, siblings and caregivers outside the home. The injury or harm done to children in today's society is of great concern to all of us. Child abuse now takes the form of physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse. **The Preschool staff has a moral and legal responsibility to protect children from such abuse. Any cases of abuse, no matter what its source, will be reported to the proper authorities.**

### *PARENT PARTICIPATION*

One of the best features of our Preschool is the wonderful support and encouragement families offer the staff and each other.



When parents get involved in the child's preschool it enables the children to see their parents as important and concerned members of the preschool environment. It also provides parents with opportunities to view the child with teachers and other children.

Parents may gain valuable insights and techniques from the expertise of the staff, and at the same time, share their own talents to maintain the excellent quality here at St. Paul's. School then becomes a shared experience, which hopefully will continue throughout each child's educational process.

### *VISITING*

Parents are always welcome to visit their children. Occasionally, however, if teachers and family have agreed that we need to help the child with separation anxiety and we have agreed on a course of action, we may strongly urge parents not to linger or return early until the child has developed a sense of confidence.

We encourage you to take the time to get to know your child's teacher and the classroom environment. If parents have any questions or concerns, they should not hesitate to speak to their child's teacher or the Director. We believe that we can best meet the needs of our children by forming partnerships with our parents.

### *TRANSPORTATION*

Transportation to and from school shall be the sole responsibility of the parents. If you will be car-pooling please let the teacher know in writing. If your child is going home with a friend you must communicate this in writing to the teacher.

### *ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL*

It is best to arrive to school at the scheduled time, as it is disruptive to the class and also difficult for your child to come in late. Your child's classroom door will not be open until 9:30 AM as the teachers are invited to attend a morning prayer, as well as prepare for the day. Please accompany your child to the classroom and make sure that the teacher is present before entering the classroom and leaving the child.

Please pick-up promptly at 1:30 PM as being late is upsetting for your child. Remember there is a late fee policy. No child will be released to anyone other than the parents or authorized person. Prior arrangements

must be made and communicated to the teacher in writing. Children are not allowed to roam freely in the building or in the parking lot. For the children's safety, please hold your child's hand as you walk through the parking lot and enter the building.

FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILDREN WHO DO NOT ATTEND PRESCHOOL, WE ASK THAT YOU BRING THEM IN WITH YOU AT DROP OFF.

### *THE SEPARATION PROCESS*

The process of separation from the parents as a child enters school is one of the most important experiences of a young child's life. In doing so, a child learns to feel comfortable with others and trust his or her parents will return. Here are some suggestions for making it a successful experience for you and your child:

Reassure your child that you will be back at the end of class time. Being on time for pick-up is very important.

Place an emphasis on what the child will be doing that day in school. Read your child's classroom news for units of study, letters of the week, and other activities.

Avoid prolonged goodbyes. But don't sneak out. Be sure your child is aware that you are leaving.

Don't hesitate to ask the teacher for help- she has a lot of experience in this area. You can always call us after you leave to find out how your child is doing.

### *SPECIAL EVENTS*

St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool holds several special events throughout the school year. We invite families to join the children for a fantastic "Kodak Moment" in October when the children participate in a school-wide "Let's Pretend Parade." In December the children present the Christmas Story through narration and song. During the winter we also hold an International Night for all families. Our last special event of the year is held in May. Our annual graduation is a special celebration and recognition for those children who will be going on to kindergarten the following year. These events enable the Preschool and church membership to come together to worship, celebrate and fellowship with one another. Make sure to check the school calendar for the specific dates.

### *LENDING LIBRARY*

In the foyer outside the doors leading into the Preschool hallway is a Parent Resource Center. In addition to the posted information, there are some special books to help children deal with hard topics such as the birth of a new baby, death and divorce. Please write your name and title of the book or video you are borrowing on the clipboard that is provided. Please be considerate of the other families and return items in a timely fashion. Feel free to ask the Director for copies of any of the information that might interest you.

### *FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS*

Fire/emergency drills are held monthly, as required by Fairfax County Fire and Safety. Please begin talking to your child about the importance of practicing this process. The teachers will also talk with the children about the importance.

### *LOCK DOWN EMERGENCY*

In the event of an emergency within the community or within the preschool, all teachers will lock classroom doors, cover the window on the door and close blinds. All students will be asked to "make like a turtle" in the floor. Everyone is to be quiet until the all clear is given from the Director.







### *SHELTER IN PLACE*

Living in the Washington, D.C. area has many wonderful benefits, but along with that comes risks. Being in the Nation's Capitol makes us aware that our world exists with some people who do not care about our personal health and safety. As a result, it is necessary for the Preschool to have procedures in place should we be faced with a national or local emergency. The main objective of this "plan" is to move the children and staff to a designated safe location that will protect them until the danger is over. Our plan has been written using the guidelines suggested by Fairfax County. The staff is trained on how to put the plan into action. Please know that a "Shelter - in - Place" plan is a short-term solution to a short-term problem.

## *SHELTER IN PLACE PLAN - CODE ORANGE*

Whenever there is a release of a chemical substance into the air, via man-made or natural disaster, any unusual odor or smells, any visible smoke, fire, or vapor clouds, any gunfire heard, or any outside safety hazard reported by the police or public officials a decision will be made by the Director and /or Pastor, to determine if it is necessary to shelter in place. This decision would be made to provide protection of the children and staff from an outdoor hazardous environment.

The main objective is to move the children and staff to a designated safe location that will protect them until the disaster is deemed over. In the event we must conduct a shelter in place, following are the general rules of how it will be handled:

1. Remain calm.
2. Get children and staff inside the Preschool on the lower level.
3. All exterior doors will be locked.
4. All windows, doors, drapes/blinds will be shut.
5. Surround windows with duct tape and place wet towels under the doors. Maintenance will shut off heating/cooling ventilation system.
6. No children or staff will be permitted to stand by windows.
7. A survival kit is available in the kitchen on the lower level. This kit will include:
  -  Battery operated radio.
  -  Towels.
  -  Duct tape.
  -  Flashlights.
  -  Toilet paper and paper towels.
  -  Gallon jug of water for medical purposed only.
8. Teachers are responsible for:
  - Shutting all windows and doors to their classroom.
  - Bringing attendance records.
  - Taking attendance in designated area.
  - Bringing their keys (schools and personal).
  - Bringing children's emergency information.
  - Bringing fanny pack with first aid supplies and children's medications.
  - Moving children directly to the designated area in a quiet and orderly fashion.

- Keeping children calm by example.
9. Everyone will remain until the all clear is given

### *SHELTER IN PLACE - FIRE/LOCAL EMERGENCY*

If in the event of a local emergency, St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool has the ability to move children to the sanctuary/undercroft building directly next door

The main objective is to move the children and staff to a designated safe location that will protect them until the emergency is over. In the event we must move children and staff to our other building on-site, following will be the procedure:

1. Remain calm.
2. By class, gather all children and staff in the classroom before exiting the building.
3. Room numbers 1, 3 and 5 will exit via their exterior doorway. Room number 2 will exit via the exterior doorway of room number 1. Room number 4 will exit via the exterior doorway of room number 5.
4. Each class will proceed to the stairwell leading down to the undercroft area and enter the undercroft.
5. Once all children and staff are safely inside, the exterior door will be shut and locked.
6. No children or staff will be permitted to stand by a window.
7. Teachers are responsible for :
  - Moving children directly to the designated area in a quiet and orderly fashion.
  - Bringing attendance records.
  - Talking attendance in the designated area.
  - Bringing keys (school and personal).
  - Bringing fanny pack with first aide supplies and children's meds.
  - Bringing student emergency information sheets.
  - Keeping children calm by example.
8. Don't bring children's coats, backpacks, etc.
9. Everyone will remain until the all clear is given from local officials.

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church extends a warm welcome to all families of St. Paul's Preschool. All members of your family are invited to join us for Sunday morning worship, Sunday school, adult Bible study and other activities that are sponsored by the church. If you would like more information, please contact the church office at 703-573-0295 or the preschool office at 703-573-0494.*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
7426 Idylwood Rd.  
Falls Church, VA 22043  
[www.splpreschool.org](http://www.splpreschool.org)  
703-573-0295 (Office)  
703-573-3273 (FAX)

The Rev. Mark Shaltanis - Pastor  
The Rev. Wayne Lehrer - Pastoral Assistant  
The Rev. Tich Luu - Chinese Mission Pastor  
Tawni Harrell - Director of Youth  
Laurel Benson Brown - Director of Music  
Linda Fekete - Parish Secretary

*Weekly Schedule at St. Paul's- Worship Services*

8:00 AM - Service in English

9:15 AM - Service in Chinese (Mandarin)

11:00 AM - Service in English

Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes (English) - 9:30 AM

Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes (Chinese) - 11:00 AM

For more information about opportunities at St. Paul's, please go to the church web site at [www.stpaulsfallchurch.org](http://www.stpaulsfallchurch.org)

Preschool Office (703)573-0494  
Jill Cha - Director - [splpreschool@aol.com](mailto:splpreschool@aol.com)  
Marian Robinson - Financial Manager - [splfinances@aol.com](mailto:splfinances@aol.com)