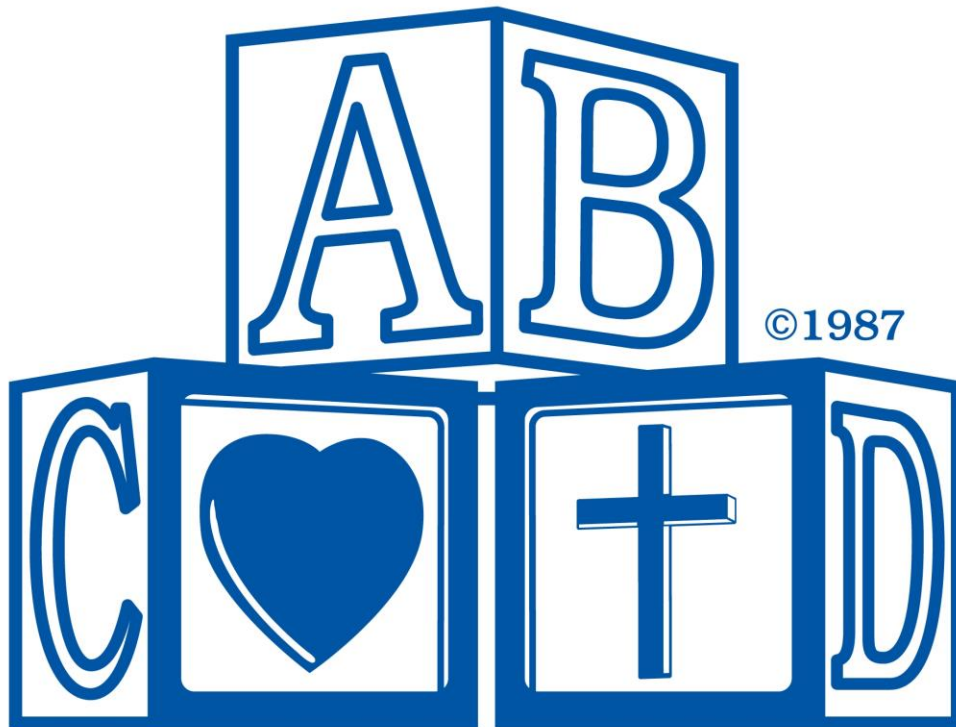


St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool

Parent Handbook

Effective 4.01.2022



The purpose of this Handbook is to acquaint parents with the program offered by St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool, and to enable them to better understand its policies, practices, and objectives. Parents are encouraged to read this handbook thoroughly. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact us – we will be happy to assist you!

Email: psdirector@smlcb.org

Website: www.smlcb.org/preschool

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/st.michaelslutheranpreschool>

Director's office phone: 952-230-2025

Classroom phone: 952-230-2021

Church Office: 952-831-5276

Kristi Lueth, Director

952-393-3996 (cell)

Kim Link, Head Teacher

klink@smlcb.org

Contents

Contents	3
Program Information.....	4
Philosophy.....	4
Statement of Faith.....	4
Curriculum	4
Enrollment Policy	7
Program Options	7
Daily Schedule	8
General Information.....	9
Registration Fee and Tuition.....	9
Home/School Cooperation.....	9
Round-Up.....	10
School Hours.....	10
Late Policy	10
Emergency School Cancellation	10
Forced Closure	11
Clothing/School Bag.....	11
Star of the Week.....	11
School Supplies/Fees	11
Transportation	11
Fieldtrips	12
Photographs/Videos/Social Media.....	12
Grievance Policy	12
Lifetime Referral Incentive.....	12
Health and Safety	13
Health Services	13
Sick Policy	13
Communicable Diseases	14
Food Allergies/Sensitivities	14
Birthday and Star Day Snacks	14
Behavior Guidance.....	14
Touch Policy	14
Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting	15
Administrative.....	16
Telephone.....	16
Administration and Staff.....	16

Program Information

St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool provides a Christian educational facility under the supervision of trained teachers where young children participate in experiences away from home before entering kindergarten.

Philosophy

It is our aim to provide a safe, loving, positive, Christian environment in which children can grow in body, mind and spirit, and where faith is naturally integrated into the curriculum. In interacting with the children, we try to help them develop and maintain a positive self-concept; we also try to foster an understanding of the needs and feelings of others. We feel it is important for children to have clear and consistent limits with freedom to explore and express feeling within these limits. We emphasize the use of positive reinforcement and praise. The children will grow in awareness and knowledge of the world in which they live and develop a thankful and loving attitude toward God and all of His creation.

Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the basis for all true Christian teaching and living.

We believe that God is the Creator of the universe who made all things by His Word.

We believe Jesus Christ is both true God and true man, the only Savior of the world, who died for us on the cross, rose physically from the grave, and will return in glory at the end of the world. We believe that eternal salvation is obtained only by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

We believe the Holy Spirit calls us to faith by the means of grace: the Gospel, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

We believe God desires all Christians to grow and mature in their faith and life, and that our God-given mission is to make disciples of all nations.

Curriculum

Through a well-planned curriculum and appropriate equipment and supplies, we provide for the total development of the child, individually and in a group setting. We offer a stimulating environment where children are encouraged to discover, explore, learn, and understand their world. In doing so, we consider the spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, and physical needs of each child.

The curriculum is planned around units or themes. These units include, among others, seasons, family life, community helpers, self-awareness, health and safety, colors, shapes, animals (farm/zoo), and readiness activities. The units promote enjoyable learning experiences for the children by exposing them to the environment and all it has to offer. In presenting the units, the developmental needs and abilities of the children are taken into consideration.

The classroom has a variety of learning centers. They include the Science Center, Art, Reading Center, Dramatic Play (housekeeping, hospital, office, etc.), Table Activities (cognitive and manipulative toys), Blocks, Math Center, Fine Motor Center, Large Muscle, Music, and Sensory Activities (play dough, sand, water, etc.). The materials and activities in the learning centers may change according to the curriculum unit or theme.

Spiritual

Since children of many faiths attend our preschool, it is only natural that some parents will be concerned about the religious instruction their children receive. The Christian truths, stories, and songs have been welcomed by parents as an aid in the training they provide to their children at home. Our teachers, as well as our Pastors, are ready to discuss these matters with you.

Goals and activities for spiritual development - to develop the relationship the child has with his/her Savior. This is accomplished through daily Bible stories, monthly chapel with the Pastors, songs and prayers.

Emotional

In search of independence, the preschool child wants to be recognized as an individual. We provide a loving atmosphere which gives each child the opportunity to learn to take responsibility for his/her own behavior as well as to accept and be considerate of others. Our preschool environment allows the child to express his/her many changing emotions and to strengthen control of inner emotions. We also seek to reinforce the positive self-image of each child, which is important in the child's healthy development.

Goals and activities for emotional development - to provide a loving atmosphere which gives each child the opportunity to take responsibility for his/her own behavior and develop a positive self-image. This is accomplished by allowing the child to express his/her many changing emotions, allowing him/her to succeed and feel good about his/her work, by praising him/her, encouraging positive behavior, and assuring him/her that he/she is always loved by his/her teachers and, most importantly, by God. Activities include learning self-help skills and responsibilities such as dressing oneself, using the bathroom independently, picking up, being the "Star of the Week", and by reinforcing love through stories, songs, actions and verbalization.

Social

The preschool child is ready to meet new people. At school these include their classmates, teachers, and other adults. Learning to work, play and share with these new children is a primary purpose of preschool. We provide an atmosphere where each child will find unique experiences, new friends, and the freedom to grow socially while respecting the rights of others. This is developed by encouraging respect for self and others through kindness, fairness, cooperation, and sharing.

Goals and activities for social development - to learn to work, play and share with other children and adults and to be able to accept and tolerate their differences. This is accomplished through an open atmosphere allowing the children to experiment and learn how to deal with people, giving them enough freedom to grow socially while respecting the rights of others. Activities include Free Play, Star of the Week, Dramatic Play, and Snack Time.

Intellectual

Preschool children are reaching out to understand the world. They want to touch, listen, look, taste, and smell. They work through many problems as they learn by doing and redoing. We desire to answer each child's questions as well as encourage new ideas through a wide variety of materials, games, stories, discussions, experiments, and field trips.

Goals and activities for intellectual development - to stimulate interest in the world around us. This is accomplished through allowing and encouraging the child to touch, listen, look, taste, and smell for themselves. Through a wide variety of materials, games, stories, discussions, experiments, guest speakers, and field trips; we seek to answer some of the child's questions about the world and to stimulate new questions and thoughts. Kindergarten reading and math readiness activities are part of this discovery.

St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool does not teach formal reading, writing and math skills. We do, however, provide an environment which stimulates the child in these areas as well as in science, social studies, and language arts. We seek to inspire a child's natural curiosity and desire to learn. Our goal is to enhance their skills of critical thinking and communication. At Preschool, the child can observe, investigate, and experience new activities and ideas. This leads to a positive outlook on school in the years to come.

Physical

To promote physical competence, we provide equipment which fosters both the large and small muscle development of the child. This includes, but is not limited to balance beams, indoor and outdoor gym sets, tricycles, scooters, music and movement, blocks, scissors, and modeling materials. The students participate in gym time on average once a week, and when the weather is nice, we use the preschool playground for outdoor play and physical activity.

Goals and activities for physical development - to promote physical development and competence. This is accomplished with a wide assortment of equipment which fosters both the large and small muscle development of the child. This includes, but is not limited to balance beams, indoor and outdoor gym sets, tricycles, scooters, music and movement, blocks, scissors, paints, and modeling materials.

Enrollment Policy

Children entering St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool must be three years of age on or before August 31st. This is in keeping with the Bloomington Public Schools date requirement for entering kindergarten. **All students are required to have a health care summary and immunization record completed before the first day of school.** The State requires these records for all licensed preschools. The preschool application, health care summary, immunization form, and a questionnaire must be completed and returned before classes begin. Children should be toilet trained before beginning preschool.

St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national, or 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, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs and other school-administered programs.

Program Options

We provide one staff person per 10 students with a maximum enrollment of 20 students per class. Children are supervised at all times.

St. Michael's provides the following program options:

3-year-olds - Tues/Thurs, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

4-year-olds - Mon/Wed/Fri, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

The 4-year-old student has the option of adding an afternoon enrichment class on Mondays, Wednesdays, and/or Fridays that includes Lunch Bunch (11:30 to 12:15) and Enrichment (12:15 to 2:45), with the following focuses:

Monday – Science, Wednesday – Literacy, Friday - Art

The Preschool year begins after Labor Day and continues to the Friday before Memorial Day.

Daily Schedule

The following schedule is a sample of a typical day. The schedule may vary according to the children's needs or interests.

Morning Class

9:00 **Circle Time**

Welcome song	Prayer
Calendar	Weather
Story	Intro to Day

9:20 **Investigation**

Project/Craft/Activity

9:40 **Learning Centers**

Science/Discovery	Math
Literacy	Fine Motor
Dramatic Play	Sensory
Art	Blocks

10:30 **Clean-up/Bathroom Break/Snack**

10:45 **Jesus Time**

11:00 **Music & Movement**

Large Motor Activities
Outdoor Play/Gym

11:30 **Dismissal**

Enrichment (4-year-old only)

11:30 **Lunch Bunch/Clean-up/Reading/Free Play**

12:15 **Circle Time**

Book and Intro to Topic

12:35 **Investigation**

Project/Craft/Activity

1:15 **Learning Centers**

Science/Discovery	Math
Literacy	Fine Motor
Dramatic Play	Sensory
Art	Blocks

2:00 **Clean-up/Bathroom Break/Snack**

2:15 **Circle Time** - Review and Close Topic

2:30 **Music & Movement**

Large Motor Activities
Outdoor Play/Gym

2:45 **Dismissal**

General Information

Registration Fee and Tuition

See the St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool website (www.smlcb.org/preschool) for the current registration fee and tuition amounts.

The registration fee is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable. A child is guaranteed enrollment upon payment of the registration fee *and* confirmation from the Director.

September tuition is to be paid by July 1. If after July 1 you need to withdraw your child, a refund will be made as follows:

- if withdrawal is after July 1 but on or before August 15, one-half of your September tuition will be refunded.
- if withdrawal is on or after August 16, no tuition will be refunded.
- requests for departure from this policy may be submitted to St. Michael's Preschool Committee.

The tuition for any remaining months is payable on the first of the preceding month (i.e., October tuition is due September 1).

Statements will be sent through the Brightwheel app about one week ahead of the due date. If you sign up for Brightwheel billpay or autopay, you can pay with a bank account transfer or your credit card via your phone or computer. We will also accept checks. Please make checks payable to St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool and turn in to the Director or the church office.

If it becomes necessary to withdraw a child during the school year, one month's written notice to the Director is required.

Home/School Cooperation

A teacher will make arrangements to visit each student and his/her parents at their home in August to discuss the needs and development of the child.

Parent-teacher conferences will be offered twice per year. The teacher will appraise the child's spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. The appraisals will be discussed with the parents and documented in the child's record.

Parents are always welcome to visit classes. They may also ask for a special conference to discuss any matter of concern at any time. Teachers may briefly communicate with parents when they bring or pick up their child each day as well as via the Brightwheel app. Monthly and weekly newsletters, Brightwheel notifications, and emails inform the parents of the school's activities.

St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to withdraw a child when the welfare of the child or the group makes this advisable. This extreme action will only take place after consulting with the parent(s) and attempting to help the child be successful in the program. Assistance will be offered in locating another program more suitable to the child's needs.

Round-Up

This unique session is set aside for the Preschool children and their parents. Teachers hold an informal mini class for the preschoolers while the Director has a brief welcome meeting with the parents. Round-Up lasts approximately one hour and takes place from 10 to 11 a.m. on the Thursday after Labor Day for the 3-year-olds and the Friday after Labor Day for the 4-year-olds.

The first day of regular class is the first Monday after Labor Day.

School Hours

Morning preschool is in session from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Lunch Bunch for 4-year-olds is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. and afternoon enrichment classes are from 12:15 to 2:45 p.m.

Children are not to arrive before 8:50 a.m. and must be picked up promptly at 11:30 a.m. or 2:45 p.m. depending on which sessions they are enrolled in. Parents indicate on the application form who is authorized to pick up your child and this information is available for parents to update in the Brightwheel app. Inform the staff via Brightwheel if someone other than the usual person is to pick up your child. Our staff may ask to see identification and confirm the person is listed in Brightwheel as an authorized pick up if we do not know them.

Please contact the Preschool via Brightwheel if your child will be absent, including the reason for the absence and any symptoms your child may be experiencing.

Late Policy

We expect that all parents will make a concentrated effort to drop off and pick up their child on time. Late drop-offs are distracting for our students and staff, who begin class promptly at 9 a.m. Late pick-ups place undue burden on our staff, as well as cause unnecessary stress for the student who is the last one waiting. However, we understand that sometimes things happen beyond your control. Therefore, we have developed the following policy:

All parents should come to the Preschool room to pick up their child at their dismissal times of 11:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m., or 2:45 p.m. A written warning will be issued via Brightwheel and/or email after the first late pick-up. Time of parent arrival will be noted by the staff. Subsequent late pick-ups will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. For example, a parent picking up at 2:45 p.m. who does not arrive until 3:15 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$30.00. If you are more than 15 minutes late, even if it is the first time, you will be assessed the per minute fee.

Emergency School Cancellation

Generally, we will close whenever Bloomington Public Schools close for weather. In the event there is a partial closure, or we close and BPS remains open, we will notify you via Brightwheel by 7:30 a.m. for morning classes and 11:00 a.m. for the enrichment class.

Forced Closure

There may be times that St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool has to close unexpectedly, examples include weather-related closings; natural disasters such as tornados; major biological events, such as epidemics or pandemics; interruption or failure of electricity or communications systems; construction or renovation; and other disruptions, such as wars or riots. Generally, tuition will not be adjusted for closures of two weeks or less. If possible, staff may attempt to offer distance learning alternatives during the time of closure. Closures of longer than two weeks may result in tuition adjustments. St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool will make every attempt to communicate any adjustment in a timely and clear fashion.

Clothing/School Bag

Children should be comfortably dressed for play. **No flip flops, sandals or crocs** are allowed for safety reasons and for comfort in the playground. We ask that all children bring a school bag or backpack (no mini backpacks) as well as a reusable water bottle. Please label children's apparel, school bags, and water bottle so they can be easily identified by the child.

Star of the Week

Each child will have the opportunity during the school year to be the designated *Star of the Week*. The Star Bag and the class "All About Me" book will be sent home prior to the child's *Star Week*. The Star Bag will contain information about our color and shape for the month, as well as the letter of the week. The student and parents are encouraged to work together to find items around the house that represent the month's color and shape and something that begins with the letter of the week.

In addition to fun classroom privileges during the week, the child will have one designated *Star Day* when these items are brought to school for sharing during a special time at the beginning of class. Parents are invited to join their child at Preschool during this sharing time on their *Star Day* and may read a story, sing a song, or just be present while their child is featured. Pets may be brought for a short visit *upon prior approval* by the teacher. If you would like to bring a healthy, special snack on this day, please let us know in advance. See the Birthday and Star Day Snacks section for snack ideas.

School Supplies/Fees

School supplies such as paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, etc., are provided by the Preschool. The teacher may occasionally ask for additional items to be brought to school for a special activity or project. Items not requested should not be sent to class. We may occasionally display a supply "wish list" of items that parents may wish to purchase for the school. This is not an obligation! In addition, money should not be brought to school unless parents have sent it in for a specific purpose.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for arranging transportation. A class list with names and addresses will be provided at the time of the home visit or Round-Up. Carpools can be arranged by parents if needed. Please inform the Director of any carpools and make sure to include in Brightwheel the other parents as a person authorized to pick up your child.

Fieldtrips

Periodically, the students participate in fieldtrips or special activities. The Preschool will notify parents and obtain written parental permission for each individual field trip, including any additional fees that may apply (such as bussing or entrance fees).

Photographs/Videos/Social Media

Permission to photograph or video your child for use with public relations or on social media (such as St. Michael's website, the Preschool Facebook page, brochures, flyers, etc.) is requested at registration. Parents are asked to use discretion when posting on the internet any photos or videos taken at preschool or at preschool events of a child other than their own.

Grievance Policy

Any problems or grievances should first be brought to the Teacher or Director's attention through a phone call, written note, email, or personal meeting. The Teacher or Director will respond within 48 hours. If this response does not satisfactorily address the grievance, the following procedures will be used until an agreement or solution is reached:

1. A conference with the Teacher and Director. Through this conference, other solutions and ideas will be formed together. A follow-up call or email will be made to confirm the discussion.
2. The parents can present the situation to St. Michael's Preschool Committee. The Committee will follow-up with a call or email from the Committee Chairperson to go over solutions.
3. The parents can present the situation to St. Michael's Pastors, who will respond with a call, email, or conference.
4. The parents can present the situation in writing to St. Michael's Parish Council. The Parish Council President will respond with a call, email, or conference.

Lifetime Referral Incentive

St. Michael's Lutheran Preschool appreciates referrals from our current and alumni families, whether via word-of-mouth or social media posts or comments! As a thank you, we offer a Lifetime Referral Incentive. If you refer a family, please request a referral form from the Director and return the completed form to the Director *before they enroll their child*. You will receive a check for \$50 after the child has attended for three months.

Health and Safety

Health Services

Emergency information is kept on file for each student and in the emergency backpack and the lockdown emergency kit. Should your child become ill, we will make them comfortable and care for them in a quiet, supervised area until the parent or authorized pick-up arrives. In case of an emergency, we will first call emergency services (911) and then the parent/caregiver. The Bloomington Health Department is available for consultation on any special health problem. Our staff has had training in First Aid and CPR.

Over-The-Counter Medication may be administered with written permission from the parent or guardian. These products must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions. Prescription Medication may be administered with written parental permission (Medication Administration Authorization) and physician or pharmacist instructions on the original container. A Medication Administration Log will be kept for any medications that are administered.

Doctor confirmed allergy information will be documented with an Individual Child Care Program Plan that must be completed by parents and read, signed, and followed by all Preschool staff.

Sick Policy

Children should be kept home if they are ill.

The Preschool has developed the following policy, based on Hennepin County Public Health general exclusion guidelines for ill children or staff. No student with these symptoms will be permitted to attend:

- Fever of 100.0+ degrees (within the past 24 hours) *
- Diarrhea (within the past 24 hours) *
- Vomiting two or more times (within the past 24 hours) *
- Mouth sores w/drooling
- Rash with a fever or behavior change, until primary care provider has determined that the illness is non-communicable.
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours, or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
- Skin sores that are weeping fluid and are on an exposed body surface that cannot be covered with a waterproof dressing.
- Sign/Symptoms of possible illness - unusually tired, uncontrolled coughing, extremely runny nose, unexplained irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child.
- Unusual Color of Skin, Eyes, Stool, or Urine – until a medical exam indicates the child does not have hepatitis A. Symptoms of hepatitis A include yellow eyes or skin (jaundice), gray or white stools, or dark (tea or cola-colored) urine.

* Students need to be 24-hours post-fever/diarrhea/vomiting without fever-reducing medications before returning to school.

Communicable Diseases

Parents are required to contact the Preschool within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, if your child has been diagnosed by a child's source of medical or dental care as having a contagious, reportable disease as specified in <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4605.7040/>, or lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, chicken pox, or COVID-19. We will give notice to the parents of exposed children the same day a parent notifies the Preschool.

Food Allergies/Sensitivities

Food allergies and special dietary/medical concerns must be brought to the Director's attention at registration. Please inform the Director if any changes develop over the course of the school year. All students with allergies documented by their health care provider will have an Individual Child Care Program Plan for Allergies form completed and reviewed with Preschool staff.

Our Preschool is nut-free. Whenever possible, an alternative snack will be provided for children with allergies. Families are also welcome to send an appropriate alternative snack.

Birthday and Star Day Snacks

Children who wish to observe their Birthday or Star Day with classmates may bring a snack. All snacks must be commercially prepared and remain in their original packaging. This is required by the State. **Do not bring candy, gum, cookies, cupcakes, or anything containing nuts or processed in a facility that processes nuts.** If your child would like to bring a snack for the class, please let the teachers know ahead of time, so they can reserve that day for you. For children with summer birthdays, please inform the teacher which day you would like to celebrate (half-birthdays are a popular choice.)

Healthy Snack Ideas (please do not pre-cut any snacks, all food prep will be done by our preschool staff):

- Fruit: Bananas, apples, oranges, grapes, berries
- Veggies: Snap peas, cucumbers, baby carrots, bell peppers, cherry tomatoes
- Dairy: Cheese sticks, cubes or slices, yogurt tubes with no added sugars
- Dippers: Hummus, regular ranch, plain yogurt, guacamole
- Shelf stable foods: Applesauce (no added sugar), dried fruit (no added sugar), apple chips, pretzels
Cheerios/Chex (low sugar cereals), popcorn, pita slices, graham crackers

Behavior Guidance

Our goal is to help the children develop and maintain a positive self-image while developing an understanding of the needs and feelings of others. Classroom rules will be explained to the children at the beginning of the year and reviewed periodically. We believe in positive encouragement. Desirable behavior will be positively reinforced. Methods of discipline may include role-modeling, verbalization, and redirection. We encourage and desire parental support in this endeavor.

Touch Policy

The teachers show their love and care for the children in a tangible way. This includes comforting touch or hugs. We feel this is a necessary policy concerning the nurturing of young children.

Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting

Any person may voluntarily report child abuse and neglect. As a licensed facility we are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of children, or other violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services should be made to the Licensing Division's Central Intake Line at 651-431-6600. Incidents of suspected maltreatment of children occurring within a family, in the community, at a family child care program, or in a child foster home, should be reported to the local county social services agency at 612-348-3552 or local law enforcement at 952-563-4900.

The mandated reporting policy will be given to parents at Round-Up and is available on our website and upon request.

Administrative

Telephone

Classroom # 952-230-2021 Director # 952-230-2025 Church Office # 952-831-5276

Parents should call teachers only in cases of necessity during school hours. The desirable time to contact the teacher is between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. and between 11:45 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. Voicemails and Brightwheel messages will be checked throughout the school day when possible.

Administration and Staff

St. Michael’s Lutheran Preschool is owned, operated, and insured by St. Michael’s Lutheran Church. The Preschool is governed by the Preschool Committee, which is comprised of education-oriented church members, past or present parents of students, a Parish Council representative, a Church Pastor, and the Director of the Preschool. The Preschool Committee reports to the Parish Council. Final authority for all decisions is vested in the Voters’ Assembly.

Staff:

Preschool DirectorKristi Lueth
Head TeacherKim Link
Teacher AideSara Bryan
Teacher AideKelly Wineberg

Preschool Committee:

ChairpersonLois Martin
TreasurersLois & Myron Martin
SecretarySue Solberg
Committee MemberChristy Ostbye
Parish Council RepresentativeVanessa Kimball

Pastors:

Senior PastorPat Simmons
Associate PastorRyan Alvey

St. Michael’s Preschool is licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (651-296-3971).