



# **Lampstand Preschool Parent Handbook**

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### **Mission Statement**

To prepare children in a caring, nurturing environment for kindergarten and beyond, while rooting their identity in the Truth that they are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God. (Psalm 139:13-14)

### **Purpose**

Lampstand Preschool seeks to create an educational atmosphere for children to learn while gaining confidence in themselves and their ability to navigate the world around them. The Preschool grew out of a desire by the church to develop a place where children will learn the fundamentals that prepare them for kindergarten as well as their value as one of God's children. We accomplish this goal in the following ways:

- Spiritually: Instill in each child a biblical belief in God, recognizing Jesus as a friend, helper, and Savior.
- Socially: Refine the skills of sharing and responsibility, focusing on consideration of others while encouraging parents to be actively involved in their child's preschool experience.
- Physically: Provide safe opportunities for gross and fine motor development
- Creatively: Provide multimodal opportunities for each child to explore God's creation.
- Academically: Introduce kindergarten readiness standards in an encouraging environment using positive reinforcements.

### **Licensing Statement**

Lampstand Preschool has been granted "exempt" status from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) of the state of Illinois. This exemption was granted based on the following criteria: we are a church-affiliated school that operates within the limits set by DCFS on student/teacher ratios and individual hours spent in the classroom per child. We maintain all DCFS rules and regulations regarding the health and safety of our students. A copy of the exemption letter is available should you wish to view it.

### **Insurance Coverage**

Lampstand Preschool carries liability insurance. This coverage extends from the classrooms to the remainder of the church property, including the parking lot, outside play areas, and sidewalks. All visitors are covered when on church property. The preschool teacher, volunteers, students, and guests are covered on field trips off the church property. The Preschool also carries accidental medical insurance coverage for its students and volunteers which further covers them on and off church property.

### **Release of Information**

All personal information pertaining to enrolled children and their families is confidential. The one exception is evidence of child abuse that by law we are required to report. Release of any other personal information will be considered only if requested in writing and then approved by written consent of the child's parent. Occasionally, we may release pictures and articles pertaining to our preschool to the newspaper for publication. Only first names of children will be used. No advance notice will be given to parents concerning news articles.

## Age Requirements of Our Students

3's *Class* - Children must be three years of age by September 1 of the school year.

4's *Class*- Children must be four or five years of age by September 1 of the school year.

## Registration

Policies and Procedures:

- Admittance is open to those who have completed applications and paid a non-refundable fee of \$75.
- Early registration is open to members of the Lampstand Presbyterian Church & their families as well as current or previous members of the preschool beginning in February year prior to the new school year. Registration is open to the public in March of the current school year.
- Openings are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Although we are exempt, we take DCFS standards into consideration in determining class size. DCFS allows 20 children to every 2 adults per room. We prefer to keep the size for all classes to 15 students for the benefit of all involved. Once the classes are filled, names will be accepted for the waiting list. There will be no charge for being placed on the waiting list.
- All parent volunteers must submit to a background check prior to volunteering in the classroom. One background check is included in the registration fee. Additional background checks may be obtained for an additional \$9 each.

Prior to October 1, new students must have on file:

- Record of a physical examination completed no earlier than one year (365 days) prior to the start of attendance.
- Record of having received all state-required immunizations or proper exemption notification.
- Copy of the child's birth certificate.

**Failure to provide all required documentation by October 1 will result in a \$25 fine and your child being unable to attend school until all documentation is received. Failure to turn in documentation within the next week will result in your child losing his place in the preschool.**

## Tuition

Tuition is due on the first of every month and no later than the fifth (5th) of the month. Payment of tuition in a consistent and timely manner is a vital part of continued enrollment. Payment can be made at the preschool or by mail. Your canceled check serves as your receipt. The Treasurer should be notified any time your tuition payment will be made after the fifth (5th) of the month. **Any tuition payments not received by the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) of the month and not prearranged with the Treasurer will be subject to a late fee of \$10 for a first-time offense. Consistent late payments will be subject to a \$20 late fee. Your child will be dropped from the preschool if payment is not forthcoming or special arrangements are not made by the 1st of the month.**

We offer a discounted rate for families with multiple students enrolled in our preschool within the same school year. 20% will be deducted from the tuition for the youngest student. **All students must live in the same household & be enrolled in the same school year to qualify for this discounted rate.**

No refunds will be made for illness or vacations. Refunds can be given for early withdrawal from the

school if a 30-day written notice is provided by the parent. As a note, the tuition is a yearly tuition broken down over the school year. That fee is the same each month.

### **Arrival and Departure**

- Students should arrive in a timely manner each school day for the beginning of class time at 8:30 am. Please make all necessary arrangements to ensure your child is on time.
- Should you need to have someone other than the guardian of the child pick-up/drop-off, please let the teacher know in advance. A picture ID may be required if the person picking up is not recognized by the teacher.
- Drop-off will begin in the morning at 8:15 am. Please make sure your child has arrived no later than 8:25 am so class can begin on time.
- Failure to comply with the drop-off/pick-up times will result in a three-strike rule. Repeated tardiness will be noted and taken to the board to decide on the status of your child's enrollment.

### **Times and Days**

Lampstand Preschool follows the Mt. Zion School calendar each year. **In case of inclement weather, school will be closed on all days the Mt. Zion Schools are closed, as well as any days determined by the director and board president.**

#### **Class:**

**3's Classes:** Thursday & Friday – 8:30 am -11:30 am

**4's Classes:** Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday – 8:30 am – 11:30 am

### **Participating Parent Requirements**

#### **Participating parents are expected to:**

- Read the preschool's handbook to familiarize themselves with the preschool's purpose and policies.
- Provide transportation for field trips or make adequate arrangements if unable to attend.
- Support any fundraising project that may be held during the school year.
- Provide snacks. A snack & Volunteer calendar will be sent home monthly. The designated snack helper will need to provide a nutritious snack for the children for the week. Please send the snack to school with your child the first day your child has school that week.

#### **Volunteer Program participants are expected to:**

- Submit to a background check (information will be covered at August Parent Orientation Meeting)
- Volunteer 1-2 times per month in the classroom being additional hands to assist the teacher.  
Assistance includes but may not be limited to:
  - Arriving by 8:15 to assist with student drop off
  - Assisting with student pick up; remaining in the classroom with the teacher until the last student has been picked up or you have been dismissed by the teacher

- Assisting with bathroom breaks
- Bringing, setting up & cleaning up snacks
- Lovingly encouraging students to follow classroom rules
- Ensuring the safety & privacy of each student as this is a top priority
- Contact another Volunteer Program participating parent to SWITCH their volunteer slot with that parent any time they are unable to hold a schedule spot for any reason. A Volunteer Parent Contact List will be provided in the Parent Orientation Packet. To receive the Volunteer Program discounted rate, a parent must volunteer a minimum of one (1) time per month. If a parent does not volunteer at least one (1) time in any month they will be expected to pay the Non-Volunteer rate for that month. NO person who has not received a Background Check will be allowed to volunteer in any classroom
- Cleaning up recess & putting toys away (indoor & out)
- Assist in monitoring center time- make sure they are sharing and following expectations
- Locking and unlocking the door for arrival and dismissal

### **Conferences / Evaluations**

New preschool students and their parents may request a meeting with their child's Teacher and a Board Member prior to the start of school. Your child's teacher will conduct developmental testing to evaluate your child's progress throughout the year and the results will be sent home quarterly. A meeting to discuss your child's evaluation may be requested by the child's parent or teacher as needed. Your child's teacher will conduct developmental testing to evaluate your child's progress throughout the year and the results will be sent home quarterly. A meeting to discuss your child's evaluation may be requested by the child's parent or teacher as needed.

### **Health and Emergency**

**Children and Participating Parents should not attend school if they meet any of the following criteria:**

- **A temperature over 99.4 which has been present in the preceding 24-hour period**
- **Excessive nasal drainage or persistent cough**
- **Vomiting and/or diarrhea**
- **Eye infections or any undiagnosed skin or scalp disease or rash**
- **Exposure to a communicable disease and might be contagious within a 24-hour period (i.e.: mumps, measles, chickenpox]**

In case of an extended illness, a doctor's note is required for the child to return to preschool.

Parents are notified by telephone immediately if an emergency should occur. If parents cannot be reached, emergency care will be arranged through the doctor or medical facility listed on the emergency consent form in the child's file.

### **School Supplies**

All children need to have a tote bag or backpack that is large enough to hold artwork, papers, newsletters, etc. from the teachers. These school bags should be brought to and from school each school day. Parents may also be asked to help supply other items on an "as needed" basis.

### **Supplies NEEDED in Class:**

- 1 Box of 24 Crayola Crayons
- 1 Box of Crayola **Washable** Thick Markers
- 4 glue sticks
- 2 chubby pencils (Ticonderoga preferred)
- 1 Spiral Notebook (wide ruled)
- 1 package of Lysol Wipes
- 1 Backpack (must be large enough to hold a regular size folder)
- Paint Shirt (old parent t-shirts work well, shirt will be kept at school)

**\* Please send a change of clothes (pants, shirt, socks, underwear) labeled with your child's name to be kept at school.**

### **OPTIONAL Donation to the Classroom:**

- Baby Wipes
- Box of Kleenex
- Bottle of Hand Sanitizer
- One roll of paper towels

### **Personal Belongings**

**CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO BE TOILET-TRAINED** before starting preschool. This means they will need to take care of all their bathroom needs by themselves. Please provide a change of clothes, including extra underwear, in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name. This can be left in your child's backpack.

Children should wear appropriate clothing for indoor and outdoor play. This means children may need hats, coats, and gloves/mittens. Please dress your child according to the weather. Only clothing you don't mind getting dirty or messy from art should be worn. NO slick-soled shoes, please! Tennis shoes are a safer choice and much preferred. During the winter, please remember to send a change of shoes if your child is arriving in snow boots.

### **Snacks**

Parents are asked to bring a snack for the class when scheduled to do so. In compliance with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services' guidelines, the preschool requires that all snacks be store-bought, nutritious foods.

**Some approved snack suggestions include: raw vegetables with dip, yogurt tubes, cheese, crackers, applesauce, fruits, popcorn, pretzels, wholesome breads or muffins, cereal mixes, dried fruit and raisins, and granola bars.**

**Exceptions are made for party days and birthdays**, but these foods must still be prepackaged or bought from a bakery or grocery store. *We do ask that if you choose to send in cupcakes that you purchase the mini cupcakes.*

Birthdays & ½ Birthdays (for students with summer Birthdays) are recognized at school. We will make

every effort to have your child bring snack on or as close to the date as possible. If you would like to bring a special snack for the class in recognition of your child's special day, you may ask to arrange for you to be the Snack Parent on that day or a day close to it. Please inform the teacher of any food allergies your child may have.

### **Special Events**

There are several special events held throughout the school year that parents, relatives, and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend.

- Christmas – a combined 3's & 4's program scheduled for an evening prior to the holiday.
- Graduation Ceremony- a program to celebrate the 4's class accomplishments and moving to kindergarten.
- Chapel Time – The children have chapel time each week. We hold a special family chapel time each month in which parents are invited to join.
- Other events may be planned at the Teacher/Board discretion.

### **Class Parties**

Our students will celebrate four holidays with special parties during the school year. The holidays we will celebrate are Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter.

### **Visitation**

Parents with completed Background Checks are welcome to visit the classroom outside of their volunteer day or a special event. Arrangements MUST be made in advance by communication with the Teacher.