



Pre-three's Program
Parent Handbook
2009-2010

Dear Parents and Students,

Greetings and welcome to St. Matthew Lutheran Preschool's Pre-three's program! We are very excited to partner with your family to provide the opportunity for your child to experience quality Christian education. We hope this year will be a blessing to both you and your child.

This handbook will provide you with a blueprint as to how the year will proceed. Please take the time to read it carefully and share the information with your child. Occasionally, additions or changes to our handbook policies may occur; you will be notified in writing should anything change from the handbook. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at St. Matthew Church (503) 644-9148 ext. 122 or at toniaa@smlcfamily.org. I always appreciate feedback from my parents and students! I know that we will have a great year, and my staff and I are excited to get to know your precious children! God Bless!

Tonia Andersen
Director, St. Matthew Lutheran Preschool

MISSION STATEMENT:

SML Preschool strives to provide quality, Christian, early childhood education to the children and families of St. Matthew Lutheran Church and the community.

PHILOSOPHY:

Early childhood is a crucial stage of development in which to provide children with an enriched learning environment. Children should be encouraged to flourish as individuals, while understanding the importance of cooperating with peers. Above all, children should be nurtured in God's love.

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL RACIAL NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

St. Matthew Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin. All programs, privileges, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of the school will be available to all who apply regardless of race, color, nationality or ethnic background. We do not discriminate in administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school related programs.

PARENT PARTICIPATION:

A program for children under the age of three requires parent involvement. This means that all parents need to participate in some function of the program. Parents will be required to volunteer to help in the classroom on a rotating basis. If it is impossible for you to be in the class there are other roles that you can engage in. Other rolls include: volunteer schedule coordinator/reminder, purchasing snack items, craft/prep, toy cleaning, etc. Additional volunteers are always welcome!

PROGRAM DAY and TIMES:

This class meets every Thursday from 9:15 am to 11:30 am in the back room of the St. Matthew Church nursery. Parking is available by the outside door to the nursery.

Daily Schedule:

9:15 Greeting/free play
9:40 Story time
9:50 Snack
10:00 First activity time
10:40 Gross motor play
11:00 Second activity time
11:20 Music
11:30 Dismissal

Monthly Themes:

September - Colors & shapes
October - Fall Fun!
November - God Gave Me a Family
December - Christmas
January - Winter fun!
February - Community Helpers
March - Nursery Rhymes
April - Spring/Easter
May - Animals

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2009-2010

Thursday, September 3rd ~ 9:00-10:00 ~ Preschool Preview Day
Thursday, September 3rd ~ 9:30-10:00 ~ Parent Orientation
Thursday, September 10th ~ First day of school
September (TBA) ~ Back-to-school Ice Cream Social
Thursday, October 29th ~ Halloween Party
November (TBA) ~ Fall Family Night
Thursday, November 26th ~ No School ~ Thanksgiving
Friday, December 18th ~ 7:00 pm ~ Christmas Program
December 19th - January 3rd ~ Winter Break ~ No School
Thursday, January 7th ~ First day back after break
January 19th ~ Pre-registration begins for the 2010-2011 school year
Sunday, January 31st ~ Winter Wonderland Carnival, 12:00-2:00
February 1st ~ Open registration begins for the 2010-2011 school year
Thursday, February 11th ~ Valentines Party
March 22nd - 26th ~ No School ~ Spring Vacation
Sunday, April ~ 12:00 pm ~ Easter Brunch
Thursday, May 27th ~ Last day of school

COMMITTEES

As a part of the St. Matthew Preschool "family" we ask that each family participate in at least one committee for the school year. We like to provide special events to help enhance the students learning experience. To make these experiences possible, we need parent's to help plan and run these events. There will be sign-up sheets for each committee at the Parent Orientation meeting on Wednesday, September 2nd. Start thinking now about what committee you might want to be a part of. The following are some of the committees you may participate in:

- Back-to-school Ice Cream Social (September) - two families
- Halloween Party (October) - two to four parents
- Winter Wonderland Carnival (including Food Coordinator, Auction Team & Games Coordinator) - about eight committee members total
- Valentine Party (February) - two to four parents
- Donuts With Dudes (March) - four moms
- Mother's Day Tea (May) - four dads
- Toy Washing - four parents per classroom on a rotating schedule
- Reminder Phone Calls - one parent

GREETING

School starts at 9:15 am and the doors to the preschool will open at 9:10. Parents must walk their student into their classroom. Please do not just drop your child off at the door and leave. Children need to be transitioned into their day. A teacher will greet your child and show the child an activity that they may do while waiting for the rest of the students to arrive. Please note that the first few times you drop your child off may be difficult and your child may even cry, but be assured that the staff is well experienced in how to handle the situation. It is often better that you do not "hang-out" too long, but show confidence that your child will be fine and have a good morning. If your child does not settle into their day, be assured that the director will notify you.

STORY TIME

In circle time we will read stories that explore our leaning theme and do group learning activities. We will introduce letter and number concepts and have other large group experiences. After circle time we will transition to our learning centers.

GROSS MOTOR PLAY

We will take the children outside as much as possible, so please dress your child for the weather and bring jackets when appropriate. If the weather is not cooperating, we will use the lower fellowship hall (the "gym") to play in. We will have balls, hoppity hops, hopscotch, large trucks, and other toys. We will also play large group games.

LEARNING CENTERS

We have six centers and may add others as the learning opportunity arises. These centers will contain learning activities that will help you child flourish to be a well-rounded learner. Children learn through play, so what looks like "child's play" to adults is really critical cognitive, emotional and social learning. Each child will get to choose where he/she would like to go, however certain learning activities may be encouraged. Children are free to change centers and anytime.

Block Center - cardboard blocks, duplos, legos, wooden blocks

Dramatic Play/Housekeeping center - doll houses, dolls, kitchen, dress-up clothes, play food, etc.

Library Center - books to read in a cozy environment

Art Center - paint, crayons, colored pencils, chalk, chalkboards, paper, etc.

Science Center - sand table or other sensory items, measuring items, manipulatives appropriate for the theme

Math/Fine Motor Center - math counters, geo boards, lacing cards, attribute blocks, puzzles, etc.

BATHROOM

We understand that many of these children will be un-toilet trained or in the process of toilet training. If they are not 100% toilet trained, please let us know. We will be glad to work with you. If your child is in pull-ups or diapers please provide diapers and wipes in your child's bag. Accidents do happen, so please provide us with an extra set of clothing and a plastic bag for such an event. A child-sized toilet is located in the nursery and children may use it at anytime. If your child requires assistance from a teacher/volunteer, the restroom door is to remain open at all times. All children will be required to wash their hands after using the restroom.

SNACKS & BIRTHDAYS

Snack is served to all the children at once. The school will provide all snacks. When it is your child's birthday you may provide a special treat to celebrate, if you would like. Donut holes, ice cream cups or simple cookies work well with this age. We are peanut free school, so please do not bring any snacks that contain peanuts including snacks that say, "May be processed in a plant that contains peanuts". Thank you. Please speak with the director if you have any questions regarding snacks.

MUSIC TIME

We will have music almost every day. We believe that music is an important part of intellectual development. We will sing childhood favorites as well as experience some music from around the world, classical music, flannel board stories, and finger plays.

CHAPEL

Children will attend chapel on the second Thursday of the month. We go to the Sanctuary for a Bible story and songs with a pastor or church children's minister. Parents are invited to worship with their children and siblings are welcome as well!

PICK-UP

The program is over at 11:30 am each day. We ask that you arrive to pick-up your child promptly. Please be sure to send your child with a backpack or bag so that their papers and projects may be put in their bags to go home. The teacher will open the nursery door when the program is over and you may come in to pick-up your child. If you do not pick-up your child by 11:40 am, you will be charged a fee of \$1 per minute you are late. We understand that emergencies do arise, so please be sure to call and get a message to the director and/or teacher to avoid this fee. There can sometimes be traffic in the area, so please plan accordingly.

DISCIPLINE

Young children are learning to explore and test their environment and should be allowed to do so within boundaries. As this is most little one's first experience with a structure program, we will not have too many "rules", but we do ask that the children treat each other and the teachers/volunteers with respect. This means listening to each other and the teachers/volunteers. When conflicts arise, we work on problems solving skills with the children. At this age, sharing is a hard thing to learn, so that is something we work on very hard. There will be behavior appropriate for certain times of our day, i.e. sitting quietly and listening to the story in circle time, following safety rules, etc. We do not expect the children to know these behaviors immediately and we will lovingly teach them what is expected.

If it does arise that a child will not comply or forgets to be kind, we will first redirect that student to give them another chance to behave. If the child continues to choose not to behave a "time-out" from the group or activity will be used. One minute for each year of their age is the amount of "time-out" the child will receive. After "time-out", a teacher/volunteer will speak with the child to make sure they understand what is expected of them and then the child will be invited back to the group. If a "time-out" was needed that day, the teacher will let the parent know. This is not to "tattle" on the child but to have clear communication between home and school. If a child is continually disruptive or exhibits behavior that is dangerous to him/her or others, then a parent/director meeting will be set to discuss the situation. The Preschool does maintain the right to expel any student at any time, that exhibits violent and dangerous behavior. If you have any concerns about our discipline policy, please let the director know.

DRESS/CLOTHING

We realize that it is tempting to dress your child in nice clothing for school, but please be aware that this program will be messy! We will be painting, gluing, playing on the floor, playing outside, and eating snacks. Please dress your child so that he/she may fully participate. Flip-flops, Crocs and other slide on shoes are not appropriate for school. Also, please provide us with an extra set of clothing (including socks and undergarments) for accidents of any type.

WEEKLY E-MAILS

Every week the Lead Teacher in your child's class will send home an e-mail detailing the activities of the week. Included are some conversation starters to ask your child. We will also add parent reminders, calendar items and other important information. Please read them! If you do not have access to e-mail please let us know and we will send home these reminders on paper for you.

TUITION

Tuition for the 2009-2010 Pre-three's program is \$45 per month with a \$50 non-refundable registration fee for supplies & snacks. Last month's (May 2010) tuition and the registration fees are due at the time of registration. September's tuition is due by September 1, 2009. Tuition payment is due by the 5th of each month, unless there is no school, and then it is due the first day of class. If payment is not received by the 10th, a \$25 late fee will apply. Please note that there is a \$25 fee for each check returned for insufficient funds and a late fee will then also apply. Failure to pay may lead to your child being dismissed from the preschool. Tuition is not prorated for vacation days, sick days or holidays. Tuition is non-refundable. If you need tuition assistance, please let the director know, as scholarships may be available. Please be aware that scholarship availability is based on the amount of funds in the scholarship account. Scholarship information will be kept confidential.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you need to withdraw from the Preschool, please submit a 30-day written notice on or before the last day of the month. Your child's withdrawal will be official on the first of the next month. If you withdraw after the first of the month, your child's withdrawal will not be official until the 1st of the following month and therefore your pre-paid May 2010 tuition becomes your last month's tuition and will not be refunded. There will be no exceptions. Your May 2010 tuition (that is due at the time of enrollment) is **only** refundable if a 30-day written notice is given prior to withdrawal, and **only** if the child's spot is filled by another student. There are no refunds after April 1, 2010. This policy includes registration for the fall; registration fees and tuition payments are non-refundable.

NO SCHOOL DAYS

St. Matthew Lutheran Preschool will mostly follow Beaverton Public School calendar. With the exception of teacher work days, if Beaverton does not have school then the preschool is closed. In case of inclement weather, we will be closed if Beaverton Public Schools cancels school for the day. If Beaverton has a two-hour delay, we will not have class. If the weather is questionable, please listen to the radio or television or check any of the local news website for school closing information.

WINTER WONDERLAND FUNDRAISER

Each year the preschool holds a Winter Wonderland Carnival. Parent volunteers are critical to making this a success. The carnival features food, family games, snacks, and a Silent Auction. Last year we raised \$4,200 for equipment, scholarships, teacher training and supplies for the classroom. Planning will begin in September for this event. This year the date will be January 31, 2010. Come join the fun and be part of our Winter Wonderland Planning Committee!

ILLNESS POLICY

We ask that if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms that you keep them home: any unexplained rash, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and continuous nasal discharge. If your child is not him/herself or is not able to fully participate in activities please keep him/her home. We want school to be a positive experience for your child. Please also note that we cannot dispense **any** medication of any kind, even over the counter medications. We strive to provide a healthy learning environment and rest assured that toys and surfaces are cleaned regularly.

We hope that you found this information helpful. Please keep this handbook to refer to throughout the school year. If there are any changes made to the policies, a written addendum will be sent home with your child.

In addition to tuition and our fundraiser monies, St. Matthew Preschool is supported by generous grants from the St. Matthew Lutheran Foundation, and individual contributions.