

FIRST LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Toddler, Preschool, School Age Care and Day Camp Programs

A Ministry of First Lutheran Church

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Dear Parents:

This handbook is designed specifically to give our parents a resource for understanding our program policies and procedures.

It is very important that you take time to read the handbook. We are trying to make our policies well known and comprehensive so that everyone involved in our program is informed.

Throughout the year there will be newsletters, notices and other forms of communication sent home which will update you on our programs. Please take time to read these, as they are a vital source of communication between staff, parents, children and youth.

Once you have read through this handbook, please sign the attached sheet indicating that you have read and understand the policies and procedures of the program.

We look forward to serving your child/youth and family in the next year.

Sincerely,

Jackie Nelson
Director
First Lutheran Children's Programs

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME:

Welcome to the First Lutheran Children's Programs. The following information is intended to help you answer questions pertinent to our programs.

HISTORY OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:

The First Lutheran Church has a history of serving the needs of the community around us. The church's mission statement states that "we are called to respond to God's love by freely and actively serving the needs around us, in our families, our congregation, our community and our world."

- 1970 The congregation made a major commitment to community outreach by establishing the First Lutheran Preschool. Gloria DePalma was named the first preschool director.
- 1982 The church started to discuss the idea of expanding its ministry to children and youth through an after school program.
- 1983 Under the leadership of Rev. Gregory Pagh, plans were made to build a community playground on church property. This was a community endeavor with support (financial and labor) coming from the church, area businesses and residents.
- 1988 The congregation developed a 5-year plan for ministry. The third goal of this plan was community outreach. Part of this goal called for the creation of a Before and After School Care Program and a Summer Day Camp during 1989.
- 1989 After prayerful consideration, a proposal was made to raise funds for a Before and After School Care Program and a Summer Day Camp. Funds were raised from the church, areas businesses and the state government. The First Lutheran Preschool donated \$3,000 and the state of Maine awarded a \$10,000 Child Development Block Grant to the program. The program got underway with the enrollment of 18 families.
- 1989 Miriam Englund was hired on May 1, 1989 to develop the Before and After School Care Program and the Summer Day Camp.
- 1999 The First Lutheran School Age Care Program is considered one of the best in the state. It is exemplary in terms of its relationships with the children, youth and their families. The program has more than tripled since 1989 and has over 60 families enrolled at the time.
- 2001 The Kid's Club is created to provide full time child care for children ages 3 ½ to 5 years old. This child care is offered during the school year.

- 2002 The First Lutheran Children's Program was created by consolidating the Preschool, Kid's Club and School Age Care Programs into one program with a single director and Advisory Board. Cindy Greenlie was the first director for the combined programs.
- 2004 The Kid's Club's calendar is expanded to provide year-round child care. The calendar does include a one week vacation at Christmas and in April and a two-week program shutdown at the end of the summer.
- 2007 The Toddler Class is created to provide full time child care for children ages 1½ to 3 ½ years old. This child care is offered on a year-round basis.

MISSION STATEMENT:

As Christian ministries of First Lutheran Church, The First Lutheran Children's Programs (including the Toddlers, Full & Part Time Preschool and the School Age Care programs) promote a safe, secure, and enriching experience for both children and staff.

Our programs provide an environment in which children can explore, experience, and enrich their lives. Children will be heard, listened to, valued and appreciated as unique individuals.

The programs will strive to meet the community, family, staff and children's needs.

PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

First Lutheran Children's Programs provides a safe, creative environment for children and youth, ages 12 months to 12 years. Through a diverse program and provided by trained staff, First Lutheran Children's Programs seeks to help each child achieve his/her potential in terms of emotional development, physical well-being, social and spiritual growth. We are serious about First Lutheran's educational ministry. But, our intent is to provide a fun-filled experience. We believe that children learn best when they are involved, experiencing and having fun. To this end, the program provides many fun, varied experiences that are developmentally appropriate for their ages.

First Lutheran seeks to provide:

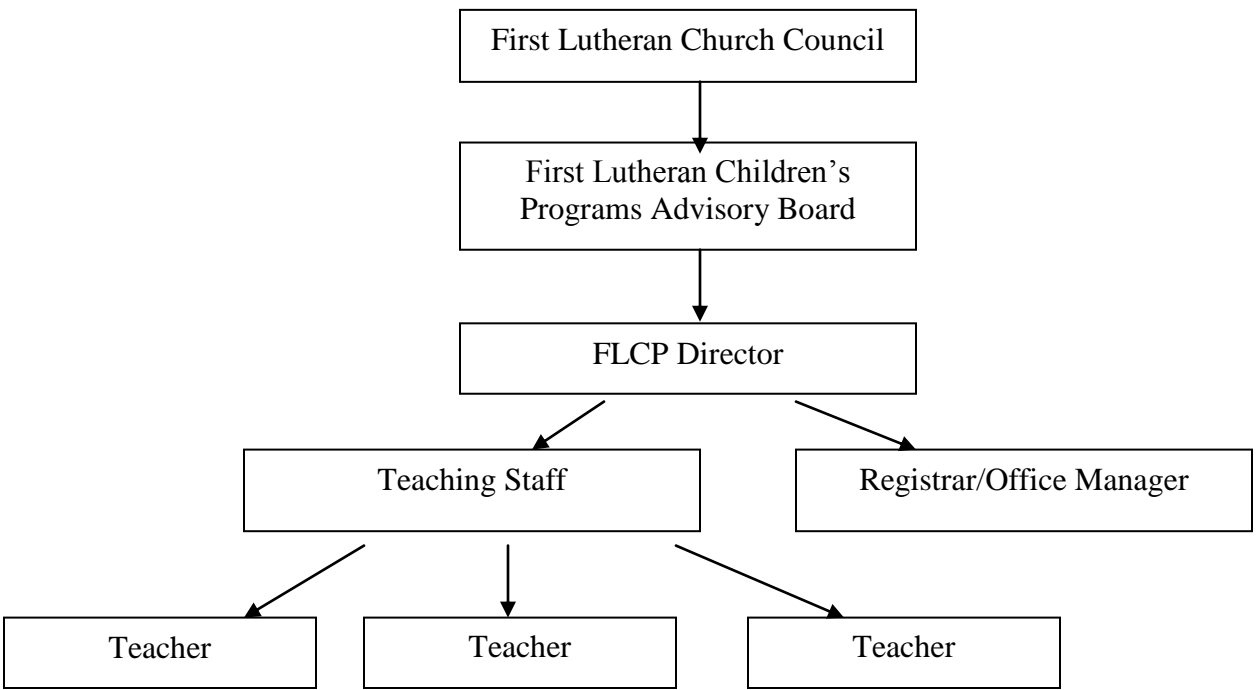
1. An environment for each child/youth that is safe and secure.
2. An opportunity for each child/youth to develop a sense of responsibility as a member of his/her family, the community and the world.
3. The opportunities for each child/youth to explore and experience new activities.
4. The opportunities for each child/youth to develop a respect for the natural environment.
5. A fun and caring atmosphere that allows for individual self-expression and personal growth.
6. An opportunity for each child/youth to develop his/her capacities for leadership.

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE:

The First Lutheran Children’s Programs consist of **four different programs**.

- 1. **Partial Day Preschool Programs**
 - ✓ Tuesday/Thursday: Morning for children ages 3 years old
 - ✓ Monday/Wednesday/Friday: Morning for children ages 4 years old
- 2. **Full Day Programs**
 - ✓ Full Day Toddler Classes (Ages 1 – 3 yrs): Monday – Friday: 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
 - ✓ Full Day Preschool Class (Ages 3 – 5 yrs): Monday – Friday: 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
- 3. **School Age Care Programs** (for children in kindergarten – 5th grade)
 - ✓ Before School: Monday – Friday: 7:00 am to 8:45 am
 - ✓ After School: Monday – Friday: 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm
- 4. **Summer Camp** (for children ages 4 ½ to 13)
 - ✓ Monday – Friday: 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
 - ✓ **Note: This is our only summer program for school age children**

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART:



ADVISORY BOARD:

The First Lutheran Children’s Programs’ Advisory Board consists of the following:

<u># of Members</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Director	Non-Voting
1	President	Voting
1	Vice President	Voting
1	Secretary	Varies (**)
2	Teachers’ Representatives	Non-Voting
1	Church Council Liaison	Non-Voting
1	Church Representative	Voting (&&)
1-3	Parent Representatives	Voting (##)

(**) – If the incumbent is a staff member then the position is non-voting.

(&&) – A church member.

(##) – The number of these representatives will vary based upon the parents in officer positions. In addition, there will be a balance between parent reps. from each program.

The board meets monthly during the program year. Meetings are moved to a monthly basis during the program enrollment and budgeting “seasons”. Typically, meetings are the first Wednesday after the fifth day of the month. (This timing is necessary due to financial reporting constraints). The date is determined at the prior board meeting and emailed to the attendees a week in advance of the meeting.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION:

As a part of the First Lutheran Church, the First Lutheran Children’s Program is a non-profit organization.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

First Lutheran Children’s Programs does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, color, national origin, handicapping condition religion, marital status or veteran status in the employment of staff or the enrollment of children.

We welcome children and staff with disabilities into our program when they are able to function within our ratios and/or facility constraints.

Admission into our program is on a first-come, first-served basis. Participation in the program is based on initial and ongoing assessment of each child or youth in order to evaluate the appropriateness of the program in meeting the child's needs. When maximum enrollment is reached, a waiting list will be established. Children may enter the program at any time of the year, if space is available.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Program	Program Hours	Calendar	Public School Snow Days	Public School In-Service Days	Public School Vacations	Public School Holidays
Morning Preschool Classes	9 am to noon	Sept. to June	Closed	Open	Closed	Closed
Full-Day Toddler Classes	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	Year-round	Open most snow days	Open	Closed some vacations	Closed most holidays
Full-Day Preschool Class	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	Year-round (&)	Open most snow days	Open	Closed some vacations	Closed most holidays
School Age Care Grades K—5th	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	Public School Year (&)	Open most snow days	Open	Open Feb. vacation if enough demand	Closed most holidays

(*) – Portland Public Schools

School Age Care Program

Hours & Days of Operation: Our School Age Care (SAC) Program (child care for grades K – 5) is open Monday through Friday. The Before School portion of the program is open 7:00 – 8:45 am and the After School portion of the program is open 3:00 – 5:30 pm.

SAC Program Calendar: The SAC program follows the Portland Public Schools calendar. Our SAC program year begins with the first teacher in-service day prior to the start of school. Our SAC program ends on the last teacher in-service day after the last day of school.

Partial-Day and Full-Day Coverage: We offer care on Early Release Days (for both Teacher In-Service Days and Parent Conferences), Full Release Days, Delayed Snow Days and Snow Days (except in severe weather situations).

Holidays: Our program is closed on all legal school holidays, Winter Vacation (Christmas), Good Friday, and April Vacation. We are open during the February Vacation if a minimum

number of children register for care. Our program is also closed for one FLCP professional staff days per program year.

Summer: Please note that First Lutheran Children's Programs also offers a Summer Camp during the summer (late June/early July through mid August). Camp offers full time care Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 5:30pm. A separate enrollment is required.

STAFF-TO-CHILD RATIOS AND GROUP SIZE:

The staff-to-child ratios and group sizes are in compliance with our license with the state of Maine. In addition, children are supervised at all times. We have a system in place to know where children are at all times. The guidelines are as follows:

Staff-to-Child Ratios

1-to-10 for kindergarten – 5th grade

Group Size Our group sizes will be governed by the type and complexity of the activity. For example, more complex activities such as wood working will have a smaller group size due to safety constraints. Outdoor games, such as kickball, will have a larger group size to facilitate teams.

ENROLLMENT OF CHILDREN:

The director or office manager/registrar typically enrolls new children into the program. All inquiries should be directed toward them. Our program brochure and registration form provide initial overall information for the parent. Our admission policy and procedures (listed below) outline our enrollment process.

Admission Policy: First Lutheran Children's Program admits children of any race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin. Admission is on a first-come, first-served basis. Participation in the program is based on initial and ongoing assessment of each child or youth in order to evaluate the appropriateness of the program in meeting the child's needs. When maximum enrollment is reached, a waiting list will be established. Children ages 1 - 5 and in grades K - 5 may enter the program at any time of the year, if space is available.

Admission Procedure:

1. A registration form is completed and returned with the \$35 registration fee (per family).
2. The child (children) and parent(s) visit the facility and meet the staff.
3. The Admissions Information Sheet, Tuition Agreement Form and Health Form are completed and returned. **THESE FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED ANNUALLY. A CURRENT HEALTH FORM (INCLUDING A RECORD OF IMMUNIZATIONS) MUST ALSO BE ON FILE.**
4. Payments are received for:
 - SAC & Full Time Preschool (Toddlers & Preschool) – the deposit for the last week of attendance & total due for the first week of attendance.
 - Part Time Preschool – the deposit for the last month of attendance & total due for the first month of attendance.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES:

The First Lutheran Children's Programs accepts payment from the ASPIRE and Voucher programs through the Dept. of Health & Human Services, State of Maine. In addition, we have limited self-funded scholarships available.

The ASPIRE and Voucher programs provide either partial or full tuition coverage. We accept the terms of these agency contracts regarding parent tuition rates. These programs target families that need child care while the parents are employed or in school and meet income guidelines.

The First Lutheran Children's Programs' scholarships provide child care at reduced rates to qualified families. The scholarships typically target families that fall outside the state programs, but still need assistance. Financial aid applications must be submitted to the director or office manager on an annual basis for review, determination and re-determination. The amount of funding may vary based upon availability of funding.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Open Door Policy: The First Lutheran Children's Programs operates an "open door policy" where parents/guardians are encouraged to stop by at any time during our program day.

Volunteering: There are many opportunities for parents/guardians to volunteer in the program. When we hold whole program gatherings, such as the talent show and art show, there is always a need for help. In addition there are opportunities to assist in fundraising events such as the church yard sale. Interested parents are encouraged to speak with the Director or Assistant Director.

Program Orientation/Open House: An orientation for parents/guardians is held prior to the start of the program year. The date is published in the cover letter of the child's enrollment packet. The orientation is led by the director and staff members and enables families to get an understanding of how the program works and activities/schedules of a typical day. During the admission process, facility tours are available upon request.

PARENT COMMUNICATION:

Parent communication at First Lutheran Children's Programs consists of many vehicles.

Parent Handbook: A parent handbook has been supplied in an effort to answer many of the questions that parents may have. Parents are encouraged to speak with the staff if they have further questions.

Newsletters and Notices: Parents are informed of the activities of the program through monthly newsletters and other notices.

Parent Mailboxes: Each family has a parent mailbox. Tuition statements, newsletters and notices are distributed to these mailboxes. Note that children in our Preschool and Kid's Club programs have child-specific bins in their "cubbies" that are used for notices, statements, etc.

Parent Bulletin Boards: Parent Bulletin Board in the Assembly Hall and Ministry Center highlight monthly activities and other important notices.

Daily Communication: Staff members play a vital role in the daily communication with parents. Through this informal method at drop-off and pick-up times we can "touch base" with the parents regarding their children. It is this vital role which enables parents to know about their children's experiences at the program.

Family/Staff Conferences: Staff and families conference on an "as needed basis". These conferences can be requested by the families or the staff.

PRESCHOOL PURPOSE AND GOALS:

First Lutheran Preschool presents the preschool child with a program conducive to creative exploration and play. This initial experience away from home is an important step in life's journey. A loving atmosphere of acceptance enhanced by dedicated teachers provides the best possible means for a smooth transition from home to school for the preschool child. Our program is concerned with each child's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and spiritual growth and development.

Our goals emphasize the development of:

1. **Social Skills:** By assisting the children in learning techniques of interaction that will bring them positive responses from others. In a warm and nurturing atmosphere, children will grow in their ability to interact with one another in a kind manner..
2. **Cognitive Skills:** By stimulating the children's intellectual capacity by encouraging curiosity, thinking, reasoning, and the desire to learn. An open-ended program of learning experiences on each child's level is provided through books, equipment and materials, experiences and conversations, and through living, playing and working with others.
3. **Physical Skills:** By helping children begin to understand the body and how it works by learning large and small motor skills.
4. **Language Skills:** By developing the child's use of language and listening skills.
5. **Self Confidence:** By helping the children develop a positive self-concept, a good feeling about themselves and their world. These first group experiences away from home should be positive, happy, exciting, and meaningful additions to the child's desire to learn, and should foster a positive opinion of school, teachers, friends, books and learning.
6. **Independence – Interdependence:** By helping the children learn to make decisions and choices on their own, while at the same time learning to consider the effect their decisions and choices have on others.
7. **Self-Control and Direction:** By helping the children develop self-direction in confronting new problems and working towards beneficial solutions.

TUITION SCHEDULE

Morning (Part Time) Preschool Programs (Ages 3 to 5)

Mon./Wed./Fri.
Tue./Thur.

Monthly Tuition

\$220/month
\$200/month

Toddler & Preschool Program (Ages 1 to 5)

Toddler Class – Full Day (#)
Full Day Preschool Class – Full Day (#)

Daily Tuition

\$63.00/day
\$60.00/day

Weekly Tuition

\$235/week
\$225/week

(#) – Bring your own lunch.

SAC Programs

Before & After School Program (Grades K – 5)

Before School
After School
Before & After School
Full Day or Snow Day (%)
Half Day

Daily Tuition

\$20.00/day
\$24.00/day
\$32.00/day
\$50.00/day
\$35.00/day

Weekly Tuition

\$65/week
\$85/week
\$110/week

(%) If it is not a regular scheduled day for your child and there is room in our program that day.

MORNING PRESCHOOL TUITION POLICIES (Monthly Payments)

1. A one-month deposit will be credited towards the child's/children's last month of enrollment.
2. Payment will be due not later than the first of each month.
3. If tuition has not been paid by the 15th of the month, a late fee of \$15.00 will be added to your monthly tuition amount. After the 15th of the month, an additional fee of \$15.00 per month will be added to your outstanding tuition amount until paid.
4. When a family falls behind in tuition payments by 45 days, the child/children will not be permitted to attend the program. Any and all current and past due tuition amounts must be paid before the child/children can return to the program. The slot will be held open for 2 weeks after suspension due to non-payment.
5. The non-refundable registration fee of \$35 (per family) is an administrative fee and does not apply to weekly tuition.
6. Tuition is based on enrollment, a reserved space, and not attendance. To maintain a reserved space, tuition must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, suspension of child from the program, parent vacations, holidays and other listed days off.
7. In the event that a child/children leaves the program and tuition is still past due, the parent/guardian is responsible for paying the total tuition. First Lutheran reserves the right to pursue any and all legal remedies it may have with respect to non-payment of tuition.
8. A one-month written notice to the Director is required for withdrawal from the program or tuition will be due **in full** for that month. Your deposit will be applied to this notice period. Any unused tuition payments will be refunded.
9. Tuition is reviewed each year in February. The new tuition schedule is effective at the start of the public school year.
10. A Service Fee of \$25 will be charged for returned checks.
11. A Late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged to those parents arriving 11 minutes after session closing.

Other Tuition Related Information – Preschool

1. Family discounts are as follows:
 - First child is the child who attends the program the greatest amount of time.
 - 15% off - 2nd child from the same family
 - 20% off - 3rd child from the same family
 - 20% off - 4th child from the same family
 - 25% off - 5th child from the same family
2. Some scholarships for children enrolled in the morning Preschool are also available. Please call the Director for a Financial Aid application.

TODDLER, FULL DAY PRESCHOOL & SAC TUITION POLICIES (Weekly Payments)

1. A one week deposit will be credited towards the child's/youth's last week of enrollment.
2. Payment will be due not later than the Friday before each week of care. If tuition has not been paid by the close of business on Friday, a late fee of \$5.00 per week will be added to your weekly tuition amount until paid.
3. When a family falls behind in tuition payments by 3 or more weeks, the child/children will not be permitted to attend the program. Any and all current and past due tuition amounts must be paid before the child/children can return to the program. The slot will be held open for 2 weeks after suspension due to non-payment.
4. The non-refundable registration fee of \$35 (per family) is an administrative fee and does not apply to weekly tuition.
5. Tuition is based on enrollment, a reserved space, and not attendance. To maintain a reserved space, tuition must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, suspension of child from the program, parent vacations, holidays and other listed days off.
6. Any schedule changes (e.g. adding, dropping or changing days from your child's schedule) must be in writing and given to the director or registrar **two weeks in advance**. Adding and changing days will be based upon available spots in our program. Please do not use the parent message book for permanent schedule changes.
7. Because tuition rates are based on averaged costs over the school year, tuition must also be paid during times that the program may be closed: holidays, some storm days or program in-service days. **PLEASE NOTE THAT TUITION IS NOT DUE FOR THE WEEK AROUND CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S, FEBRUARY VACATION AND APRIL VACATION.**
8. In the event that a child/youth leaves the program and tuition is still past due, the parent/guardian is responsible for paying the total tuition. First Lutheran reserves the right to pursue any and all legal remedies it may have with respect to non-payment of tuition.
9. A two-week written notice to the Director is required for withdrawal from the program or tuition will be due **in full** for these two weeks. Your deposit will be applied to this notice period. Any unused tuition payments will be refunded.
10. An additional cost will be charged for the extension of a child/youth's schedule to additional hours or days or on Public School In-Service Days. Extension arrangements must be made, **in writing**, at least one week prior to the day of attendance. Forms will be provided.
11. Tuition is reviewed each year in December. The new tuition schedule is effective at the start of the public school year.
12. A Service Fee of \$25 will be charged for returned checks.
13. Families that still owe money from the previous school year must pay the full balance due by June 25 or establish a payment plan with final payment by July 15.
14. As of July 15, families with an outstanding tuition balance from the previous year cannot enroll their children in the upcoming school year program.

Other Tuition Related Information –Toddler, Full Day Preschool and SAC

1. There is a two-day per week minimum enrollment in any part of the First Lutheran Children's Programs.
2. Family discounts are as follows:
 - First child is the child who attends the program the greatest amount of time.
 - 15% off - 2nd child from the same family
 - 20% off - 3rd child from the same family
 - 20% off - 4th child from the same family
 - 25% off - 5th child from the same family
3. We work with families to access financial aid assistance through the Department of Health & Human Services. Please call the Director or Office Manager/Registrar for more information.
4. Tuition is pro-rated through the school year.
5. For SAC, if we ask you to sign up for a full or half-day program (e.g. teacher conference days), it is to determine staffing needs. On those days, we need staff to work full-time schedules. If you do not sign up for these days, tuition is still required.
6. For SAC, there are times during our program year when additional tuition may be necessary:
 - If your child attends on a part-time basis and would like to attend on a day that he/she is not normally scheduled to attend. We then charge a daily rate for the extra day. Please note that we cannot accommodate swapping of days without advance notice and an additional daily charge.
 - If your child attends either the "Hurray for Summer" or "End of Summer" Days programs. These programs are based on the public school calendar and can fall 1-2 days after/before the end/start of school. These days are made available as a courtesy to our working parents and may vary in length based upon the following constraints:
 - ✓ last teacher day of the school year versus the original public school calendar
 - ✓ FLCP staffing and budget constraints.
 - If you **elect** to have your child attend the "Winter Camp" during school vacation. Please note that enrollment levels must meet a break-even level to run the program.

IDENTIFICATION AT CHILD PICK UP

Our program will ask individuals to identify themselves via driver's license, passport, etc. at pick up time for your child. We realize that many parents or guardians will become familiar to us, but we still ask that you are prepared, if necessary. This procedure is in place to protect your child/youth.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP POLICY

Toddlers, Full Day Preschool and SAC:

1. Children must not be dropped off before or picked up after their scheduled arrival time.
2. The time reference standard is the clock in the Assembly Hall. This clock is set to time and temperature: 775-4321.
3. The program opens at 7:00 a.m.
4. The program closes at 5:30 p.m.
5. All children picked up after 5:30 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$1 per minute. The late fee amount due will be listed on your next Tuition Statement. Payment is due when your next tuition is due.
6. Please notify us if there will be any variation in your child's daily schedule or if another person will be picking up your child. Please write a note in the Parent Message Book located on the sign-in/sign-out table in the Assembly Hall (SAC) or outside your child's classroom. You can also call and leave a message on the program's answering machine.
7. Please notify us if you are expecting to be late in picking up your child. It is important that we work together. We are trying hard to meet our program obligations, and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure you as a parent meet your obligations to your child and their programs. If you are going to be late, please call to avoid further complications. **(Late fees are still applicable.)**
8. If a child remains in our care longer than forty five minutes after closing and we have not heard from the parent, the staff have been instructed to:
 - Do everything possible to try and contact by phone either parent or a person on the emergency list.
 - If parent and emergency persons cannot be reached, we will assume the child is abandoned. The staff must call the Police.
 - Staff will then release the child over to the Police for further care until the Police Department and the Department of Human Services can contact the parents.

Morning Preschool:

The preschool drop off policy is included on a separate page in the admissions packet.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of an emergency, we will make every attempt to notify you at home or at work or through an emergency contact. We will administer and procure treatment at a hospital or doctor if deemed necessary. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE PHONE NUMBERS FOR EMERGENCY PURPOSES. Please remember to keep us updated on changes in phone numbers.**

ACCIDENT/ILLNESS REPORTS

All accidents/illnesses will be reported on the Accident/Illness Form. A copy will be given to the parent and the original will be placed in the child's/youth's records.

HEALTH AND SICKNESS POLICY

Your child/youth's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Therefore, staff is instructed to closely observe children and youth and will call you if they are concerned.

Parents should exercise every caution and keep their child/youth home should unusual symptoms occur. For the protection of all children, youth and staff, children and youth should be kept at home if he/she shows any of the following signs:

- A temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher.
- Vomiting or diarrhea (loose and frequent stools).
- An unexplained rash.
- Discharging eyes or ears.

If a child/youth has been exposed to a contagious disease, please report this to the Director. Strep throat, impetigo, viral infections, infected ears and/or glands, measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis etc. are among those conditions categorized as "highly contagious." *Symptoms of fever, vomiting and diarrhea must be gone for 24 hours before a child/youth can return to the program.* Any child/youth who has a communicable disease or condition may return to the program only after the following procedure has been met:

STREP THROAT	May return after child has been on prescribed medication for 24 hours .
RING WORM	Note from doctor
IMPETIGO	Note from doctor
MEASLES, MUMPS & RUBELLA	Note from doctor
CHICKEN POX	Minimum of one-week absence and when all lesions are dry.
SCARLET FEVER	Note from doctor
INFECTIOUS HEPATITIS	Note from doctor. Children in families where infectious hepatitis has been diagnosed need a GAMMA Globulin shot to protect against it. It is important to call First Lutheran when anyone in the family has been diagnosed.
HEAD LICE	After using head lice shampoo and director has checked for any nits.
CONJUNCTIVITIS	If eyes are weeping pus, the child must stay home until weeping stops. The child may return after 24 hour on medication or with a note from the doctor.
FIFTHS DISEASE	Child does not have to stay home, but please notify the Director if your child has been diagnosed.

If your child/youth is sent home with a fever over 100.5 degrees or with conjunctivitis, he/she may not return to the program for 24 hours, except with permission of the Director.

MEDICINES

Please hand prescriptions for your child/youth to the head teacher for placement in the locked medicine box. **PARENTS MUST COMPLETE A MEDICINE FORM. THE MEDICATION MUST BE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER AND SHOW THE NAME OF THE CHILD/YOUTH PRESCRIPTION NUMBER, NAME OF DOCTOR, AND HOW MANY TIMES PER DAY THE MEDICINE IS TO BE GIVEN.**

We cannot dispense Tylenol or other pain relievers unless a note accompanies them from the child/youth's physician.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

It is our intent that each child/youth enjoys the activities planned by understanding that s/he is responsible for her/his actions. We also let the children and youth know we want them to succeed and that we are here to help. As in any other group activity, the inappropriate behavior of a few can spoil the experience for the entire group. Therefore, the following basic guidelines apply directly to each participant and will be used in determining her/his eligibility to continue as a participant in the Children's Programs.

Basic Guidelines

- A. Stay with your group.
- B. Use language that builds people up, doesn't break them down.
- C. Respect property.
- D. Engaging in any type of fighting or roughhousing will not be permitted. Any behavior that jeopardizes the safety or emotional well-being of others in the program will not be tolerated (i.e. pushing, kicking, biting, throwing, objects, teasing, threatening, name calling).
- E. Listen, respect and follows directions from staff.

How We Deal With Disruptive Behavior

All participants are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment. First Lutheran strives to serve all children and youth, but sometimes cannot serve a child or youth whose behavior disrupt and immobilize the whole program.

1. A disruptive child/youth will be given a time alone, in order for him/her to cool off and think about his/her actions.
2. The staff involved will talk with the child/youth to gain some insight into the child's/youth's understanding of the situation. At no time, however, will the staff person shame the child/youth or call the child/youth names.
3. When appropriate, the child/youth will apologize and/or perform an appropriate act of reconciliation.
4. If the disruptive action was significant, the appropriate staff will complete an Incident Report. The original will be placed in the child/youth's file and the copy will be given to the parent.

If behaviors of a certain child continue to be disruptive, lengthier reports and discussions with parents will be warranted.

Chronically Disruptive Behavior is defined as verbal and physical activity which may include but is not limited to such behavior that: requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on his/her peers, abuses the staff, ignores or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during the day. **Fighting, scratching, biting, chasing, breaking windows and/or any intimidating behavior or language are considered chronically disruptive.**

Chronically Disruptive Behavior will be handled according to the following procedure:

- **Initial Incident:** Child/youth will be removed from site of incident. Parent will be notified by phone. Parent will pick up child/youth immediately. Child/youth is suspended for the following day from the program. Suspension notice will be written.
- **Second Incident:** Child/youth will be removed from site of incident. Parent will be notified by phone. Parent will pick up child/youth immediately. Child/youth is suspended for the program for the remainder of the school year. Suspension notice will be written. Parent is obligated to pay all tuition due. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN.**

Should a child's/youth's behavior be determined to be extremely physically dangerous to him/herself or others, such as use of a weapon, throwing program or personal property, the child/youth will be

suspended for the remainder of the school year.

In an effort to reduce instances of occasional and/or chronic misbehavior during program time, the program utilizes a behavior management plan. By rewarding desirable behavior in a number of creative ways. We decrease the number of situations that require some type of disciplinary action. In addition, by providing sufficient choices and variety of choices, we reduce opportunities for idle time, which may lead to inappropriate actions.

No child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe or corporal punishment including: any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body; or punishments which subject the child to verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation; denial of food, rest or bathroom facilities, punishment of soiling and wetting, or punishment related to eating or not eating food.

ALCOHOL POLICY

Our primary concern is the safety and well being of the children enrolled in our program. Because of this, we require that parents not use alcohol or other intoxicating substances within a responsible period of time prior to picking up and transporting their child to and from the church.

If a staff member has reason to believe that a parent or responsible adult is under the influence, the staff member will address their concern and offer assistance in arranging for alternative transportation for the adult and child.

Reason for concern may include the odor of alcohol, slurring of speech, disturbance of gait, confusion and/or unusual behavior that may indicate impaired judgement or risk to safety.

If, in the opinion of a staff member, the responsible adult is impaired to the point of representing a clear and present danger should they attempt to operate a motor vehicle, the staff member will take any and all steps necessary to protect the safety of the child in their charge, including informing the local and/or state police.

CHILD ABUSE

If there is a strong reason to suspect that your child has been abused or neglected, staff is mandated by law to contact Child Protective Services.

RECORDS

Each child/youth's records contain enrollment information and other pertinent forms. Parents have access to their child's records and may see them. Records are not forwarded to the public schools or any other agencies without written and signed consent form the parents or guardians.

NUTRITION

Due to serious allergies First Lutheran is a peanut and tree nut free program.

Toddler & Full Day Preschool: Nutritious morning and afternoon snacks are provided on a daily basis. *Lunches should be brought from home.* We encourage healthy lunches. Please provide a beverage with your child's lunch. **WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT SEND SODA OR CANDY.**

School Age Care: Nutritious morning and afternoon snacks and breakfast are provided on a daily basis. *Lunches should be brought from home.* We encourage healthy lunches. Please provide a beverage with your child's lunch. **WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT SEND SODA OR CANDY.**

If your child/youth has a birthday on a day that the program is open and you wish to make something to share with all the children, check with staff for numbers and other ideas. In addition, we celebrate birthdays on a monthly basis. Generally we bake a cake and serve it at snack.

Morning Preschool: Preschool parents are assigned days to provide snacks for their child's (children's) classroom. We encourage healthy snacks. Your preschool teachers will notify you of your assigned days on a monthly basis.

If your child/youth has a birthday on a day that the program is open and you wish to make something to share with all the children, check with staff for numbers and other ideas.

CLOTHING

Active play, indoors and outdoors, is an important part of the program. Please provide sweaters and jackets even on sunny fall and spring days. Ski pants, boots, mittens/gloves and hats are required in the winter. Children and Youth walk to and from school or to and from the bus. It is very important that they have the appropriate foul weather gear. We suggest that a change of clothes be kept in the child/youth's bag. **PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING AND BAGS.**

TOYS FROM HOME POLICY

Toys from home are not permitted at First Lutheran Children's Programs. This includes beanies, walkmans, discmans, gameboys, vehicles and other toys. Please have your children keep all toys at home. Staff will ask children to put toys away in their bags. Any toys that are not put away will be placed in the Director's Office for parent pick up.

SAC children will be invited to bring in toys and personal items several days each month. These days will be announced in the monthly newsletter.

Toddler & Full Day Preschool children may bring a small comfort item, such as a stuffed animal or blanket for transitions and rest time.

Morning Preschool children may bring a security object to help with transition from home to school, a book to share, something that relates to the theme, etc. When in doubt, ask your child's teacher.

NO WEAPON, WAR OR VIOLENT THEME TOYS OF ANY KIND ARE ALLOWED IN THE CHURCH.

TODDLER & FULL DAY PRESCHOOL NOTES:

Snacks & Lunch:

First Lutheran Children's Program provides your child/children with a morning snack and an afternoon snack. A snack menu will be included in your monthly calendar. The morning snacks consist of a variety of crackers, fruit and milk. The afternoon snack varies from crackers and cheese to pizza or french fries. You are asked to provide your child's lunch. Due to the lack of space we are unable to refrigerate or microwave lunches. Please do not send in soda or candy.

Quiet Time/Nap Time:

The children are required to have a "quiet time" during their day at First Lutheran. Each child is assigned a 2-inch thick mat to use during this time. Your child/children may bring a small blanket or stuffed animal to sleep with. We ask that you keep it small due to storage problems. Please remember to **label** all items. Children who do not sleep are allowed to do quiet activities on their mats after resting for ½ hour. These quiet activities included puzzles, books, listening to music on headphones, etch-a-sketch etc.

For toddlers, we accommodate a morning nap/rest time based upon each child's schedule/need. For toddlers under the age of 2, parents must provide portable nap cribs (e.g. pack n plays) for their child.

Items from Home:

We realize that children need to bring a "special" something from home to make the transition to childcare easier. Please make sure this is an appropriate item. We do not allow weapons or war toys of any kind. Please limit this to just ONE item. As the year progresses we will be having a "toy day" or "sharing day".

Please pack a change of clothes for your child that can be left here at First Lutheran. Remember to **label** all items. Your child's name in his or hers coat is very helpful to the staff.

Cubbies:

The children enrolled in these programs will have their own cubby. The cubbies will be located outside their classroom, which is in the Ministry building. Children's cubby will have their name on it.

Parent's Table:

Located in the assembly hall or hallway is the parent's table. The parent's table will have the Sign In/Sign Out attendance sheets. All parents will be responsible for signing in their child/children in the a.m. and signing out their child/children in the p.m. The Parent Memo Notebook is also located on this table. This notebook is for you to leave us any messages about your child/children. Announcements about special activities are also posted at this table.

STORM POLICY

Toddler, Full Day Preschool & SAC Programs: If the Portland public schools are on one-hour delay, we will open at 8:30 a.m. When public school is delayed longer than an hour or closed due to weather conditions, we will open at 9:00 a.m. The Director, in consultation with Advisory Board members, may close the program under extreme weather conditions.

Morning (M/W/F or Tu/Th) Preschool Program: If Portland public schools are closed due to inclement weather then the preschool program will also be closed. If Portland schools are delayed preschool will open at 9am

All Programs: Please listen to announcements on **WGAN AM, WBLM FM, WMGX FM, or WPOR FM** or Channel 6 for program closings. Any delays or cancellations will be on our phone message after 5:30 am of the day in question. The Children's Programs phone number is 797-2260.

FIELD TRIPS (SAC Only)

When going on trips away from First Lutheran, we will travel by chartered bus or rented van. On occasion we will walk or take the bus to nearby locations. We will gain permission from parents to travel away from the church.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

This handbook has been supplied in an effort to answer many of your questions. Please speak with the staff, if you have any other questions. Parents are informed of the activities of the program through monthly newsletters and other notices. Please check your mailboxes for these notices. A Parent Bulletin Board will highlight monthly activities and other important notices.

Parents are encouraged to visit the program any time. If the staff is not free to talk with you, please understand that the children come first during program time. The staff is happy to set up other times to speak with you regarding your child or children.

Preschool Conferences: Phone conferences will be held with each parent in the months of October and November. Conference meetings will be held in early spring. If a conference is desired at any other time, the parent may make an appointment with the individual teacher. The teacher is always willing to discuss the child's adjustment and progress providing that it doesn't interfere with class time.

UNITED WAY

Please consider designating the First Lutheran Children's Programs as a recipient of your United Way pledge. If so, you can write "First Lutheran Children's Programs" on your pledge card as a designated recipient. Designations help fund "large ticket" items for our program such as tables, bookcases, computers and our "new" playground fund.

VOLUNTEERING

There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer in the program. When we hold whole program gatherings there is always a need for help. In addition there are opportunities to assist in fundraising events such as yard sales and T-shirt sales. We also need help during the week. If you would like to volunteer, please let one of the head teachers know.

SUPERVISORY AND OFFICE STAFF

Jackie Nelson is the Program's Director. Jackie has been employed at First Lutheran since 1990. She has many years of experience in early childhood education. She has worked at USM Child Care and Wayfleete School as well as other early childhood programs in and outside of Maine.

Beth Rovnak, Registrar/Office Manager, is the person who manages the registration and tuition receipts for all of the programs. Any schedule changes or tuition questions for program participants should be directed to her. Beth's hours are: Monday through Thursday 10am – 3:00pm.

Joleen Knowles, the Church Secretary, is the person who you will probably speak with on the telephone when you call the church. She has a wealth of knowledge and information. Her usual office hours are 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Pastor David Alvord is the pastor of First Lutheran Church. He can be reached by calling the church office at 797-2525.

TEACHING STAFF

Teachers and staff members who work with children are hired for their experience, enthusiasm and ability to work with children in preschool, childcare or before and after school settings. We have been fortunate to have many staff members working with us for several years. You will be able to meet our teachers during our open houses, which are scheduled for late August and early September. In addition, our first newsletters will introduce the teaching staff.

ABOUT FIRST LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

First Lutheran Preschool was established in 1970. Gloria DePalma was named the first preschool director. The preschool began with an enrollment of 20 children ages 4 & 5 in a Mon./Wed./Fri. morning class. Today, the total preschool attendance averages 60, with children in the following classes: Toddlers, Full-Day Preschool and Morning Preschool.

ABOUT FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL AGE CARE

First Lutheran School Age Care was established in the summer of 1989 under the direction of Miriam (Mim) Englund. The Before and After School program started with an average attendance of 25 children/youth. Today, the attendance averages 55 children/youth for the before and after school program. The Kid's Club was added to our program in 2001 to provide year-round childcare for children ages 3 & 4. The program runs from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm to accommodate our working parents. Our Kid's Club maintains a child-to-teacher ratio of 14 children to 2 teachers.

ABOUT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

First Lutheran Church is made up of people who gather together to worship, study, work and play. We believe that it is through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we find peace with our God and purpose for living. We emphasize the Bible and its message of God's love for all people. Program families are invited to participate in all aspects of fellowship and worship at First Lutheran.

Our pastor is Rev. David Alvord. Summer Sunday Worship is at 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Coffee time follows each service. During the school year, the Sunday schedule is Worship at 8:00 a.m., 9:15a.m., and 10:30 a.m. and Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.

Our local ministry also includes: Senior Citizen's lunch, the Children's Programs: Toddlers, Preschool, School Age Care and Day Camp, Youth Group ministry, Bible Study Groups, Christmas Fair, Yard Sale, Soup Kitchen and other programs and activities.

Through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are involved in other outreach programs and missions. All are welcome to join in any of our ministries.

Rev. David Alvord, Pastor

Joleen Knowles, Church Secretary

Jackie Nelson, First Lutheran Children's Program Interim Director

Beth B. Rovnak, First Lutheran Children's Program Registrar/Office Manager

Jackie Ryan, Day Camp Director and Youth Group Leader (for grades 6 - 12)

CHURCH TELEPHONE NUMBER:

(207) 797-2525

CHURCH FAX:

(207) 878-9658

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS TELEPHONE NUMBER:

(207) 797-2260

E-MAIL:

jnelson@firstlutheranportland.org – Jackie Nelson

flregistrar@firstlutheranportland.org – Beth Rovnak

Parent Resources

First Lutheran Children's Program	797-2260
First Lutheran Children's Program -- Fax	878-9658
First Lutheran Children's Program Tax ID #	01-0356889

First Lutheran Children's Program email	jnelson@firstlutheranportland.org flcregistrar@firstlutheranportland.org
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Brighton First Care (walk in care)	662-8111
Child Care Connections	396-6566
Child Development Services Cumberland	781-8881
Department of Human Services	822-2325
Ingreham House	777-HELP (777-4357)
Kids First Center	761-2709
Maine Medical Center	662-0111
Mental Health Crisis	1-888-568-1112
Poison Center Toll-Free	1-877-299-4447

Peanut and Tree Nut-Free Policy

Due to life threatening allergies, the First Lutheran Children's Program is a peanut free and tree nut free program. Please avoid packing anything with nuts, peanuts, peanut butter or nut butter in your child's lunch or snack.

Please make sure to read the label of all pre-packaged/processed food and snacks to ensure it is nut-free.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Toddler, Preschool, School Age Care and Day Camp Programs

A Ministry of First Lutheran Church

132 Auburn Street, Portland, Maine 04103

Church Phone: 207-797-2525

Jackie Nelson, Director

Phone: 207-797-2260

Fax: 207-878-9658

***I have read and understand the policies and procedures
set forth in the First Lutheran Children's Program
Parent Handbook.***

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

_____ Date

No peanuts, No peanuts, No peanuts, No peanuts

No peanuts, No peanuts, No peanuts, No peanuts

No tree nuts, no tree nuts, no tree nuts

No tree nuts, no tree nuts, no tree nuts