



# Handbook for Parents

2024 - 2025

1821 North 90<sup>th</sup> St.  
Omaha, Nebraska 68114  
Childcare line (402) 913-2255  
Church line (402) 391-6148

## St. Mark Lutheran Childcare and Preschool Philosophy

St. Mark Lutheran Church believes that each child is a marvelously created gift from God. As a church, we are committed to growing up in God's Word and reaching out to all people in Christian love. We believe that children learn through play and hands-on experiences. In order to develop and nurture the whole child, a caring and loving environment will be provided. Opportunities for creative play, learning activities, Bible stories, music, art, snacks, and worship will be implemented into the curriculum which is designed to be child-focused, age-appropriate, and most importantly, Christ-centered. We believe in providing a safe, nurturing Christian learning environment where children feel safe to explore and learn.

## Goals

To lead children to know Jesus as their Savior.

To teach children to speak to God in prayer.

To help children develop love for all people.

To stimulate and provide opportunities for the child's spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and creative development.

To develop basic social skills such as patience, sharing, taking turns, following directions, waiting, and communicating with peers and adults.

To encourage expression of his/her faith to others at home, church and school through chapel, daily Bible stories and Scripture.

To provide a nurturing environment for growth in creative expression through music, art, literature, and dramatic play.

To develop fine motor and reading skills through the use of play, paper, crayons, paint pencils, scissors, play dough, and developmental learning centers.

To provide opportunities to develop the child's large motor skills, such as hopping, skipping, etc.

To develop reading and math skills suitable for a preschooler.

To teach preschool-appropriate material in the areas of science, social studies, and health.

That our staff would exemplify Christian love, provide for individual needs, and view each child as a unique and special child of God.

## Administration and License

St. Mark Lutheran Childcare is operated under the auspices of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Omaha, and licensed by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for childcare and preschool classes for children 3 to 12 years of age. To contact the Nebraska State Department of Health and Human Services with licensing or other questions, please call 402-471-3121 or the Omaha DHHS office at 402-595-3343. A brochure from the DHHS is given to each family before the child's first day. Parents need to read the information, sign and date the receipt and return it to St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare before the first day of school.

## Hours of Operation

7:00 am – 5:30pm      Monday – Friday

## Center Closures

**The childcare center is closed** on Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Monday after Easter, May 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> -(teacher work day), Memorial Day, May 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> VBS, July 3<sup>rd</sup> (teacher workday), 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and whenever St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare cancels school due to bad weather.

When a holiday falls on the weekend, families will be notified of the date childcare will be closed in observance of that holiday. See our Preschool and Childcare Center calendar for complete list of days the Center is closed for teacher workdays and holidays.

## Admission

St. Mark Lutheran Church believes that childcare opportunities and programs should be open to boys and girls on an equal basis. Therefore, St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the Childcare Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or other school-administered programs. It is unable to meet the special needs of children with certain physical, mental, emotional or behavior disabilities. Children enrolling in a preschool class must be at least 3 years of age by October 31<sup>st</sup> and must be toilet trained.

## Change of Policies

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare reserves the right to change or amend these policies at any time for any reason. Changes will be provided to the parents, who will be asked to acknowledge these by signing for them.

## Tuition

All tuition is paid in advance of attendance. All tuition is non-refundable. Tuition is the same each week/month regardless of holidays or absences. Children will not be able to attend until payment is received in full. We encourage families to use our online payment method. A \$25.00 charge will be assessed for insufficient funds and a \$5 per day late fee will be enforced beginning the 2<sup>nd</sup> of every month.

**Registration fees** are due at the time of enrollment and will hold the child's spot in the class. Stand-alone Preschool enrollments require an \$80 registration fee. All Preschool Supplement and Complete enrollments require a \$150 registration fee. If a child requires more care and moves from stand-alone Preschool to a Childcare Supplement or Childcare Compete package, they will be charged the additional \$70 registration fee.

**Preschool Tuition Fees** are calculated using a nine-month program from September through May. All tuition is paid in advance of attendance with the first payment due by August 1<sup>st</sup> and the following payments due in advance on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. We do not pro-rate tuition for partial months except in the case of a new student enrolling after the school year starts. For mid-month starts, your child's first month's tuition will be adjusted according to their start date.

**Childcare Tuition Fees** are packaged with preschool tuition fees and will be paid monthly, and payments will be prepaid and due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month with preschool tuition.

## Before and After School Care for School-Age Children

We currently offer before and after school care for school-age (5-12) children who are enrolled in St. Mark Lutheran School. All before and after school care for school-age students is billed at a \$6 per hour rate. Childcare fees are paid one month in advance. Monthly payments reserve a time for each child. Refunds will not be given for underutilization of reserved time(s). All children enrolled in school-age after school childcare will receive a snack upon arrival.

### Before School Care

We offer one time allotment for our school-age before school care at the following levels of frequency per week:

- **7:00-8:00 am breakfast is included:**
  - o 2 days per week = \$51/month
  - o 3 days per week = \$77/month
  - o 5 days per week = \$128/month

### After School Care

We offer two dismissal time options and affiliated pricings for our school-age after school care at the following levels of frequency per week:

- **3:00pm - 4:00pm Dismissal/Pick-Up:**
  - o 2 days per week = \$51/month
  - o 3 days per week = \$77/month
  - o 5 days per week = \$128/month
- **3:00pm - 5:30pm Dismissal/Pick-Up:**
  - o 2 days per week = \$128/month
  - o 3 days per week = \$191/month
  - o 5 days per week = \$318/month

## Out of School & Early Release Care for School-Age Children

For the days and hours when St. Mark Lutheran School has an early release day or is not in session, but our Childcare is in session, our Childcare offers care for those school-age (5-12) children who are enrolled in St. Mark Lutheran School. To enroll in this specific offering of care, parents must choose from one of our three (3) standard time blocks for drop-off and pick-up.

Those time block are:

- 7:00am to 12:30pm
- 7:00am to 3:30pm
- 7:00am to 5:30pm

All hours for early release and out of school care are billed at \$6 per hour. All hours for early release and out of school care will be billed *per instance* (not one month in advance). Payment for each instance of early release or out of school care is due within 24 hours.

If you need to increase your childcare hours, you may do so at any time by picking from the preset time options that you need (7:30 am – 12:30 pm/3:30 pm/5:30 pm). When a change to childcare is made, the increase in hours provided will be billed at \$6 per hour, per day, for the rest of the month in which the change is made. Payment for these remaining increased childcare hours will be due prior to the additional childcare services being rendered. Beginning the following billing

cycle, the monthly tuition will be billed according to the childcare options and prices you have selected from our standard pricing sheet.

For example, if you would like to change from the 7:00am -12:30 pm childcare option to the 7:00 am - 3:30 pm option, you will owe the sum total of \$18 (\$6/hr. x 3 hours of added care per day) multiplied by however many remaining days of care are left in the current month. The new rate must be paid for and applies to the rest of the current month. At the next monthly billing cycle, the new rate commensurate with the new/increased childcare option you have selected from our pricing sheet will apply.

If you need to decrease your childcare option, you may only do so at the beginning of a new monthly billing cycle. When reducing care, refunds will not be given for childcare hours that are not used.

A 5% discount will be given if tuition is pre-paid for two or more months. The payment must be paid through the automatic bill e-pay in order to receive the discount. Prepaid tuition is non-refundable.

### Late pick-up policy

A late fee of \$2 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after their designated pick-up time, (11:40 for Preschool, 12:30, 3:30 or 5:30 for childcare), except in emergency situations.

### Withdrawal Notifications & Fees:

If something should occur for which you need to withdraw your child from St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare, we expect at least a 2-week notice. Tuition fees are to be paid for at least two weeks following your written and/or verbal notification.

### Attendance

All children are expected to attend regularly. When you know your child will be absent, please call the office at (402) 913-2255 or send a message through Procure and let us know. There will be no tuition adjustments for absentees.

## TUITION & PRICING

Please *select* which preschool and/or childcare offerings you would like.

### ***PRESCHOOL STAND-ALONE***

These prices are for families desiring to enroll a student in preschool only, without childcare. Preschool classes operate from 8:25 am (drop off) to 11:30 am (pick up). All classes require a \$80 non-refundable registration fee.

Select	Class	Days	Time	Cost
	3-year-old	T/TH	8:30 AM-11:30 AM	\$155/month
	4-year-old	M/W/F	8:30 AM-11:30 AM	\$210/month
	Pre-K 5	M/T/W/TH/F	8:30 AM-11:30 AM	\$290/month

### **PRESCHOOL + CHILDCARE *SUPPLEMENT***

Preschool (above) *and* childcare options for your child's *regular* preschool days only. All Preschool+ Childcare Supplements require a \$150 non-refundable registration fee.

#### **3-Year-Old-Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	T/TH	T/TH	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$262/month
	T/TH	T/TH	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$391/month
	T/TH	T/TH	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$476/month

#### **4-Year-Old-Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	M/W/F	M/W/F	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$371/month
	M/W/F	M/W/F	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$563/month
	M/W/F	M/W/F	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$691/month

#### **Pre-K 5 Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$558/month
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$879/month
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$1093/month

### **PRESCHOOL + CHILDCARE *COMPLETE***

Preschool *and* childcare options for your child's regular preschool day **PLUS** childcare for *non-preschool* days. All Preschool+ Childcare Supplements require a \$150 non-refundable registration fee.

#### **3-Year-Old-Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	T/TH	M/W/F	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$616/month
	T/TH	M/W/F	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$937/month
	T/TH	M/W/F	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$1151/month

#### **4-Year-Old-Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	M/W/F	T/TH	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$606/month
	M/W/F	T/TH	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$928/month
	M/W/F	T/TH	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$1141/month

#### **Pre-K 5 Class**

Select	Preschool	Childcare	Time	Cost
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$558/month
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$879/month
	M/T/W/TH/F	M/T/W/TH/F	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$1093/month

## SUMMER CHILDCARE

Summer childcare programming does not include formal preschool classes, but you still get the same great childcare! Summer registration fees are as follows:

Students enrolled in the Preschool Stand-Alone classes = \$80

Students enrolled in the Preschool + Childcare Supplement classes = \$0

Students enrolled in the Preschool + Complete classes = \$0

Students enrolled in St. Mark Lutheran Elementary School = \$0

Select	Days	Time	Cost
	2	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$262/month
	2	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$391/month
	2	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$476/month
	3	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$371/month
	3	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$563/month
	3	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$691/month
	5	7:00 AM-12:30 PM	\$616/month
	5	7:00 AM-3:30 PM	\$937/month
	5	7:00 AM-5:30 PM	\$1151/month

## Per Hour Care Supplement - \$6/hr.

If your childcare needs are not met by one of the options above, you may add to or modify your enrollment using an hourly rate of \$6. This rate is NOT a “Drop Off” hourly rate. This hourly rate is offered only to augment or add to the monthly tuition amount for students already enrolled in one of the above programs. Any modifications must be made using one of the three-time allotments provided (i.e., 7:00 am – 12:30 pm/3:30 pm/5:30 pm) and must be approved by the center director on an individual basis.

## Discounts

Families must be enrolled in automatic bill e-pay in order to receive a discount.

Discounts	Monthly Discount
Preschool Multiple Enrollment	\$10 (per child) discounts for two or more children enrolled during the same school year
Childcare Multiple Enrollment	10% off total monthly bill
St. Mark Member	15% off total monthly bill
Sibling Enrolled in St Mark K5 School	10% off total monthly bill
LCMS Rostered Church Worker (Active status)	10% off total monthly bill
Clergy Discount	15% off total monthly bill
Referral Rewards Program	See below

## Discount Eligibility

**The St. Mark Member Discount:** Eligibility for any St. Mark Member educational scholarship, whether that be for our Preschool and Childcare or Elementary School will be determined by the Board of Elders of St. Mark Lutheran Church. Only *active* members who are and remain in *good standing* will be eligible to receive a member scholarship. In accordance with God's Word, an *active member in good standing*:

1. Attends no less than 50% of all corporate worship services.  
*"Do not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." – Hebrews 10:25*
2. Volunteers in church/school ministry at least twice a year.  
*"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." – 1 Corinthians 12:12*
3. Is faithful in the tithes & offerings God commands us to bring.  
*"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce."  
– Proverbs 3:9*
4. Has had no church disciplinary action within the past year.  
*"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." – Philippians 2:3*
5. Has been an active member in good standing at St. Mark for no less than three months.  
*"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold." – Proverbs 22:1*

**Clergy Discount:** Clergy discounts are afforded to pastors who meet the following criteria: LCMS ordained minister (active or emeritus status). Pastors not affiliated with the LCMS may still receive a discount, but only if approved by the Senior Pastor of St. Mark. Clergy from non-Christian faiths and clergy affiliated with, professing, or practicing doctrines not in agreement with the confessions of St. Mark Lutheran Church are not eligible for a discount.

**Restrictions:** Discounts cannot be combined. The highest discount a family is eligible for will be the discount applied.

## Referral Rewards Program

### Referring Party Eligibility

The St. Mark Lutheran Preschool & Childcare Center (STMLPC) *Referral Rewards Program* is an incentive program offered to currently enrolled families/students. Eligible families/students must:

- Be currently enrolled and attending STMLPC for at least one (1) month.
- Be current on tuition payments.
- Complete the referral rewards application and submit to STMLPC within 48 hours of referred family's initial enrollment application.



## Referred Party Eligibility

To receive the discount offered to students/families being referred, they must:

- Complete the referral application at the time of initial enrollment. Applications for referral rewards will not be accepted after 48 hours of receipt of initial enrollment.
- Be fully registered and been accepted as a student to STMLPC.
- Attend STMLPC for at least one (1) month with full tuition paid and current.

## E-Pay/Automatic Billing

In order to receive a referral reward (or any discount), each receiving student/family must be enrolled or agree to enroll in STMLPC's automatic and electronic payment program.

## Reward Details

### Referring Party Reward

Upon confirmation of an eligible and proper referral, STMLPC will award the referring student/family a discount applied to one (1) month worth of tuition in the amount equal to the monthly tuition being paid by the referred family/student.

### Referred Party Reward

Upon being accepted into STMLPC, and after attending/paying for one (1) month, the party referred to STMLPC by a current family/student will receive a 10% discount on one (1) month's tuition.

- Example: Mrs. Smith is paying \$670 for preschool with childcare 5 days a week. Mrs. Smith refers Mrs. Jackson, who enrolls paying \$419 for preschool with childcare 3 days a week. After one month of paid tuition, the *Referral Rewards* will be awarded as follows:
  - Mrs. Smith will receive a \$419 credit toward tuition the following month.
  - Mrs. Jackson will receive a 10% discount the following month.

## Limitations and Exceptions

### Unlimited Rewards

There is no limit to the amount of referrals and rewards that a currently enrolled student/family may receive. In the event that multiple referrals are given, received and confirmed in accordance with the above stipulations, the referring family/student will only receive one (1) reward applied to their tuition per month. No more than one (1) reward per one referral will be awarded toward any one (1) month's tuition.

### Tuition Differences

When the referred party enrolls into a STMLPC service package that is higher in monthly tuition than the referring party is paying, the referring party will receive a 100% reward on tuition for one (1) month in accordance with the stipulations above. Referring parties will never be awarded more than 100% tuition for any one referral reward.

### Combined Discounts

If a referring or referred party is currently receiving any one (1) of the regular tuition discounts offered by STMLPC, the following limitations will apply:

- The *referring* party discount will be reduced by the equivalent percentage of discount they are receiving already.
  - *Example:* Mrs. Smith (from above example) referred Mrs. Jackson who is paying \$419 a month. Mrs. Smith is already receiving a 10% membership discount on her regular monthly tuition. When the referral reward is given to Mrs. Smith, the reward will be reduced by \$41.90.

The referral reward given to the *referred* party will either be reduced by the equivalent percentage of discount they are already receiving, or the *referred* party will receive no referral reward, depending on whether or not the 10% referral reward discount is equal to or exceeds the percentage of discount already being awarded.

*Referral Rewards Program does not apply to the summer session and is not applicable to students/families on our waiting list or when our classes are full.*

## Health and Safety

### Immunizations and Records

Students must have all required immunizations or notarized form for exemption. Please provide a copy of your child's current shot record when registering your child. This must be:

1. *Proof that the child is protected by immunization against measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, and haemophilus influenzae type B, or ...*
2. *The appropriate notarized form from DHHS for exemption of immunizations due to medical or religious beliefs.*

The immunization history must contain "the name of the vaccines; the month and year of administration of MMR; the name of the health practitioner or agency where the immunizations were obtained; and the signature of the physician, parent, guardian, or of other such person maintaining the immunization history of the child, verifying that the child has received these vaccines."

### Child Abuse/Neglect

State law requires any person who suspects that a child has been physically or sexually abused or neglected to report it promptly to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. The Director is NOT required by law to notify the parents before contacting Social Services. Please be aware that children will not be released under any circumstances to impaired individuals. If we have reason to believe that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. The incident must be reported to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services by the Center Director.

### Accidents & Injury

In case of an accident or medical emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parent. Parents are asked to notify the school immediately if there is a change of address or phone number. If hospitalization is necessary, parents will be asked to arrange for transportation. If a parent cannot be reached, the Childcare Director has the authority to call a doctor or ambulance or hospitalize the child at the parent's expense. By enrolling your child in St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare, you release and hold harmless St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare, St. Mark

Lutheran Church, their directors, officers, advisors, employees, instructors, volunteers, childcare workers, and all other persons or entities acting for them from any and all claims, demands, suits, cost and shares, in connection with or arising out of St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare programs, including but not limited to personal injury, bodily harm, injury, or property damage occurring while your child is in our care at St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare.

## Illness

Illness is always a concern in any preschool environment. Since children are susceptible to disease, for the protection of all the children and staff, your child should be kept home and will be sent home if he/she displays any of the following signs or symptoms below:

- **Chickenpox:** Chickenpox is a very highly contagious disease. Children may not return to preschool until blisters have formed scabs, child is fever-free without acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours and can comfortably participate in the program.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye):** Conjunctivitis can be caused by bacterial or viral infections or by allergic reactions to dust, pollen, and other materials. A child will be considered to have conjunctivitis when there is white or yellowish pus that accumulates in or around the eye. If the physician has determined the cause of the conjunctivitis to be infectious and requires treatment, the child is excluded until medication has been administered for 24 hours.
- **COVID-19:** COVID-19 is a contagious virus that can have a wide range of symptoms ranging from mild to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, body aches, headaches, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, or diarrhea. If a member of your family has tested positive for COVID-19, please contact the Childcare Director for information about quarantining.
- **Coxsackie virus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease):** Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease is a common childhood illness. Infection may result in painful blisters in the mouth, on the gums and tongue, on the palms and fingers of the hand, or on the soles of the feet. The child is excluded until fever-free without acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours and can comfortably participate in the program.
- **Diarrhea:** Unfortunately, diarrhea can be triggered by a variety of different causes such as germs, bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Children can also have diarrhea without having an infection, for instance food allergies and antibiotics can result in diarrhea as well. Children will be excluded until symptoms have disappeared.
- **Fever:** Any child with an elevated temperature of greater than 100°F orally or 100.5°F axillary is excluded until fever-free without acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours and can comfortably participate in all program activities.
- **Fifth Disease:** Symptoms begin with a mild fever, complaints of tiredness and rash on the trunk, arms, and legs. The child is excluded until fever-free without acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours and can comfortably participate in the program.
- **Head Lice:** Lice are primarily spread through direct head-to-head contact. Families should notify the Director immediately if their child has head lice. The child is excluded until he/she has been treated with lice-specific medicated shampoo, rinse, or lotion as directed.
- **Impetigo:** Impetigo is a skin infection that appears as a blistering rash. When the blisters open, they produce a thick, golden-yellow discharge that dries, crusts, and adheres to the skin. Impetigo is spread among children in close contact. The child is excluded until blisters are gone and rash is dry.

- **Influenza:** Influenza, also known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by an influenza virus that infects the nose, throat and sometimes lungs. Symptoms include cough, fever, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. The best way to prevent influenza is to get a flu shot yearly. Children that have flu symptoms will be excluded until their fever, vomiting and diarrhea are gone for 24 hours.
- **Measles:** Measles is a very contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. Symptoms include rash, high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. Measles can be prevented by receiving the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. Children will be excluded until are no longer contagious (4 days after onset of rash) and must have a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to school.
- **Ringworm:** Ringworm is a fungal infection of the scalp or skin. A child is infectious as long as the fungus remains present in the skin lesion. The fungus is no longer present when the lesion begins to shrink. The child is excluded until treatment from a pediatrician has begun and infected area begins to shrink.
- **Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever:** Symptoms of strep throat may include severe sore throat, fever, headache, and swollen glands. If not treated, strep infections can lead to scarlet fever, ear infections and pneumonia. A bright red, rough textured rash that spreads all over the child's body characterizes scarlet fever. The child is excluded until he/she has received at least 24 hours of antibiotics, has been fever-free without acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours, and can comfortably participate in the program.
- **Vomiting:** Children who experience any episode of vomiting will not be able to attend St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare until there is no sign of vomiting for 24 hours.

Children only enjoy school if they are well. Symptoms such as a cold, coughing, sneezing, sore throat, earache, headache, fever, chills, or red eyes are cause for keeping your child home. ***Please inform the teacher of any medical concerns you may have for your child.***

*\*\*The Center Director reserves the right to decide whether or not a child should be sent home due to illness. By signing this handbook, you as the parent agree to promptly pick-up your child from our center in the event that the Center Director determines they are too ill to remain in class.*

## Medication

Medications can only be administered with a proper medical release/authorization on the child's record and by filling out the Medication Permission and Instructions form. All Medication must be in an original container with the child's name on the prescription label. The staff will maintain a record of the time and the amount of medication given or applied. Medication will be returned on the ending date on the container or when expired. If your child has an allergy or asthma, etc., and requires an epi-pen or medication to treat the allergy, a Food Allergy and Action Plan form will need to be completed and signed by your doctor.

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare cannot give the first dose of medication. The first dose must be given by the parent and monitored for the risk of side effects and/or allergic reactions to the medication.

## Parents-In Case of School Emergency

When possible, we will make sure that parents know children are safe and the nature of the emergency. Although your first reaction would be to call or rush to your child, please follow the tips listed below:

- Do not call or rush to your child's childcare or preschool. Phone lines and staff are needed for emergency response efforts.
- Check for emergency notifications on the **Procare app**.
- Rely only on official communication from childcare/preschool or public safety officials.
- Listen for official communication regarding reunification with your child.

## Parent Reunification

Reunification is the process of reuniting children with their parent, guardian, or other person listed on the emergency pick-up list. Reunification is conducted after an emergency disrupts the normal dismissal process and regular dismissal procedures cannot be followed. Parents/guardians will be directed by St. Mark Lutheran Preschool or public officials by phone, TV, radio, website, or other social media as soon as it's safe.

The contact information for parents/guardians as well as all emergency contact information for each student is stored and kept accessible to necessary staff members in the following ways:

- Paper records stored in binders in three separate locations throughout our facility.
- Digital records that are backed up and accessible to the Senior Pastor, Center Director, and Church Administrator at all times.

When notified, parents/guardians will be provided information to reunite with their student(s) at the evacuation site.

## Release

Children will only be released to parents/guardians and to emergency contacts on the pick-up list (proper identification will be needed).

## Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire drills will be conducted monthly and at least one fire drill per year will be practiced during naptime. Tornado drills are conducted at least 4 times per year during the months of March through September. During tornado emergencies both teachers and children take refuge in the storm shelter.

## Parent Volunteers

All parents and any other adult must be fingerprinted by the Nebraska State Patrol and fill out a Report of Law Enforcement Contact form in addition to passing the Nebraska Central Registry Check in order to volunteer in our center. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Childcare Director.

## Parent Orientation

Parent orientation is required to be attended by all parents, both new and returning, and will be held in mid-August. A specific date and time will be announced upon acceptance of enrollment. Orientation will ensure all parents are made aware of our center's rules and procedures as stated in the St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare Handbook and ask questions regarding the operation of our center.

## Open House

Our center Open House is also held in August. The Open House is an opportunity for parents to get to know their child's teacher.

## Breakfast/Snacks/Lunch

Breakfast is served between 7:00-7:50am in the Fellowship Hall. Childcare and Preschool children will have a snack at 10:30 am. Children who attend childcare after preschool will have lunch between 11:30 -12:00 and a snack at 3:10 pm. All snacks will meet USDA requirements regarding food groups and serving sizes. Milk will be served to all children unless parents request their child be served water. Children must be served a lunch if they are staying in the childcare center after 11:30am. Children will be served the hot lunch option through Midday Meals catering. Please inform the teacher of any allergy your child may have.

## Birthday Celebrations

We welcome the opportunity to celebrate each child's birthday. Parents may send in a special treat for their child to share with their class. All treats must be individually packaged, we suggest items like cookies or Rice Krispy treats. Please do not send in birthday cakes or cupcakes, because of the clean-up that these food items require.

## Clothing/Personal Belongings

Children should be dressed in play clothes and comfortable shoes. Have your child wear clothes that he or she can easily manage for the restroom. Please label jackets, boots and the insides of mittens and caps with your child's name or initials. Children can have similar-looking items, and name or initials help the teacher keep it all organized. Occasionally, toileting accidents will occur. Please send an extra set of clothing in a Ziploc bag marked with your child's name to be kept in the backpack.

## Arrival

The safety of the children is always a priority in our facility. All preschool classes should arrive between 8:25-8:40 am at the Childcare entrance door #9. Children may be dropped off using the valet system, or parents may park in the lower parking lot and walk their children to the Childcare Center entrance at door #9. All children will be directed to their classroom by the preschool staff. Any family arriving after 8:40 am should come to door #9 and ring the doorbell. Once identity is verified, parents are required to walk their child to the classroom. Parents are responsible for signing the children in and out each day. A member of the Center staff will sign in all children that are brought to school by a grandparent, carpool person, or party other than the parent/guardian.

For those children that are dropped off between 7:00 and 8:20 for our before-school care, parents will park in the lower parking lot and come in door #9. Parents are responsible for signing their children in and then taking them to the assigned before-school area.

## Dismissal

Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals. The teacher must have a written notification in advance from the parent if someone other than the parent or usual childcare-carpool person will be picking up their child. In an emergency, a call to the office is acceptable

notification. A person unknown to the staff will be required to show a photo ID for us to release the child to him/her.

Children attending Preschool between 8:25 and 11:30 am should be picked up at the Childcare entrance (door #9) in the lower parking lot. Preschool is over at 11:30 am daily; please be prompt in picking up your child as the staff has certain responsibilities and lesson preparations they need to complete for the following school day. Any child that has not been picked up by 11:40am will be assessed the late fee of \$2 per minute. Please call the school if an emergency arises that keeps you from picking up your child.

If children are staying for afternoon childcare (between 11:30 am and 5:30 pm) a parent must come to door #9, ring the video call box, and ask to be let in. Parents will sign their children out in Procure, then proceed to the classroom to pick up their children. Because communication is so important between teachers, parents, and the child, we ask that you do not use your cell phone during drop-off or pick up.

**IMPORTANT:** All students must be checked out in the Procure app BEFORE their scheduled release time and be in parent's custody by no later than their release time. For example, if your release time is 5:30pm, please arrive to the classroom by no later than 5 minutes before (5:25pm) to check your student out and help them gather their things. The late pick-up fee of \$2/minute begins one minute after your scheduled pick-up time.

## Parking Lot Safety

The safety of all students, staff, and visitors on our campus is a top priority. The maximum speed limit in our parking lot is always 10 mph. If you are running late or in a hurry, this is not an acceptable reason to speed and risk the safety of others. All traffic signs, including entrances, exits, one-way directional signs, specific and no parking signs, handicap signs, and the like must be followed without exception. Parents will be given one warning when traffic rules are not adhered to. After this warning a fee of \$50 will be automatically billed to your student's account.

## Emergency Closing

St. Mark Lutheran Childcare and Preschool reserves the right to close in the event of inclement weather. We will make every effort to be open, keeping in mind the families we serve. We want to make safe decisions for your children in our care, their families, and our staff members. If we are closed or opening late, the decision will be sent as a message through Procure app. Announcements will be on your local news channels. If the center needs to close early because of severe weather, parents will be notified through the Procure app. St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare will stay open in cases of extreme cold as we have the drop off and indoor facilities to support extreme cold temperatures. No tuition adjustments are provided for inclement weather closings.

## Curriculum

In programming activities for the children, we follow the Early Learning Guidelines: Nebraska's Birth to Five Learning and Development Standards (ELGs) and One-in-Christ curriculum. We develop activities centered on stories, songs, math, fine and gross motor skills, circle time, science, music, theatre and arts/crafts. We strive to prepare your children for their early school years by exposing them regularly to letters, numbers, colors, shapes, name recognition, and new vocabulary. Weekly lessons will include activities in the following domains:

- Social & Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Health & Physical Development
- Language & Literacy Development
- Mathematics
- Science
- Creative Arts
- Religion

Our Preschool programs runs September 1<sup>st</sup> through the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in May. We offer a quality play-based childcare program during the last week of May through the end of August. This program will continue to plan lessons by using the State of Nebraska Early Childhood Guidelines and the One-in-Christ curriculum.

## Learn Through Play

Play is a vital part of a child's social, emotional, language, physical and cognitive growth during the preschool years. Play and learning go hand in hand; they are not separate activities. Play allows children the opportunity to develop speech and language skills as well as listening skills. Children practice and reinforce their learning in multiple areas during play. It gives them a place and a time for learning that cannot be achieved through sitting at tables and completing a worksheet.

## Preschool Daily Schedule

8:25-8:40	Arrival
8:45-9:05	Circle time - Song, Prayer, Bible Story, Calendar, Weather
9:05-10:15	Centers and Projects
10:15-10:20	Sharing Time
10:20-10:30	Restroom Break
10:30-10:45	Snack
10:50-11:20	Large Motor Play in gym or outdoor
11:20-11:30	Prepare for dismissal/Closing Activities

## Childcare Daily Schedule

7:00-7:50	Breakfast
7:00-8:20	Arrival, Breakfast, Gross Motor Play in Gym
8:30-10:30	Story Time, Circle Time, Centers and Projects
10:30-10:45	Snack Fellowship Hall
10:50-11:20	Large Motor in Gym or on Playground
11:20-11:30	Prepare for lunch
11:30-11:55	Lunch in Fellowship Hall
12:00-12:30	Large Motor Play
12:30-12:55	Story Time (Children that are napping will go to the nap room at 12:00)
12:55-2:25	Projects, Centers or Naptime
2:30-3:05	Large Motor Play in the Gym or on Playground
3:10-3:30	Snack in Fellowship Hall
3:30-3:45	Story Time
3:45-5:00	Center Time, Free Art Projects, Games



5:00-5:30 Large Motor in Gym or Playground

## Discipline

Discipline will be handled in a loving, Christian manner and through frequent communication with parents. Teachers will try to build good discipline through:

1. Encouraging and praising good behavior.
2. Changing the environment.
3. Redirecting the child.
4. Removing the child from the group for a brief, supervised time out.

## Dismissal from Center

Though we desire to see all families and children thrive, St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare reserves the right to dismiss a student and/or family from participation in our programs at any time and for any reason as we determine necessary for the health and well-being of all parties involved, including the membership, staff, students, and parents of St. Mark. Though this is not a comprehensive list, these are the general reasons for which a child or family may be dismissed from our center:

- Socially unacceptable behavior. Constant disruptive behavior on the part of one child denies the other children a peaceful environment in which to learn.
- Aggressive or inappropriate behavior towards classmates or teachers. This includes but is not limited to, biting, kicking, spitting, hitting, yelling and running away from teachers.
- Unsuccessful toileting.

A family may be dismissed for:

- A parent's aggressive or violent behavior towards staff or children enrolled at St. Mark Preschool or Childcare.
- Habitual lateness in picking up a child after school or childcare.
- Failure to make tuition payments.

The Childcare Director or Senior Pastor have the authority to permanently dismiss a child or family from St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare.

## Outdoor Play

Outdoor activity is planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills and express themselves freely and loudly. On days we do not go outdoors we will enjoy using the gym. We will try to take your child out as often as possible. Rain, snow and freezing cold do keep us inside. Please dress your child for the weather. Send a jacket with them when needed. Tennis shoes protect your child the best. Slip-on shoes or shoes and boots with slick soles are fun to wear but are not the best choices for outside play. Give your child footwear with rubber soles combined with easy closures. Safety must always be emphasized. Tennis shoes or other soft-soled shoes are a prerequisite for gymnasium play.

## Naptime

Children will have the opportunity to nap or rest each afternoon, with nap times and duration depending on the child's age. Each child may bring in a special blanket for naptime. Parents are asked to provide a reusable bag (not plastic) with handles with your child's name on it for their naptime supplies. The bag will be left in the nap room and sent home monthly to be laundered. Please label the blanket with your child's name.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are offered twice a year in October and March. We encourage parents to take time to meet with their preschool and or childcare teachers.

## Parental Expectations

Please keep the staff informed with any information that would give insight into your child's behavior, such as changes at home, a parent's absence, guests, a newborn in the family, the inability of the child to sleep at night, etc. Please arrange an appointment to discuss any problems regarding the child at school or home. The better we understand your child, the better we will be able to help him or her. Parents may visit the childcare at any time.

## Staff

### Staff Qualifications

#### Childcare Director

- Holds a current state of Nebraska Teaching certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education
- Is certified in CPR and First Aid
- Proves to have no history of convicted misdemeanors or felonies as revealed in the comprehensive state and federal background check required of all employees and volunteers of the childcare
- Agrees to be fingerprinted every 5 years as mandated by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- Completes 12 training hours accredited by DHHS each school year
- Has at least three years of successful experience as a preschool teacher
- Has experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum
- Maintains a totally Christian atmosphere within the classroom at all times
- Has strong organizational, and written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to communicate effectively with Preschool and Childcare staff, church staff, volunteers and parents

#### Part-time Preschool or Childcare Teacher

- Complies with DHHS regulations 3-006.05A for certificated teachers or 3-006.05B for non-certificated teachers
- Proves to have no history of convicted misdemeanors or felonies as revealed in the comprehensive state and federal background check required of all employees and volunteers of the childcare
- Agrees to be fingerprinted every 5 years as mandated by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- Has experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum
- Is certified in CPR and First Aid
- Completes 6 training hours accredited by DHHS each school year

#### Support Staff

- Complies with DHHS regulations 3-006.06

- Complies with DHHS regulations 3-006.05A for certificated teachers or 3-006.05B for non-certificated teachers
- Proves to have no history of convicted misdemeanors or felonies as revealed in the comprehensive state and federal background check required of all employees and volunteers of the childcare
- Must be at least 16 years old and of good moral character
- Must always have a teacher in the room with them

**Staff Immunizations and exclusions of ill staff**

- St. Mark Lutheran Preschool and Childcare recommends that staff be current on the following vaccination's: DTAP, Influenza, and Varicella if applicable
- A member of the childcare staff will not be permitted to attend school if he/she has any illness associated with a fever or any other communicable condition such as COVID 19, diarrhea, ringworm, impetigo, head lice, or pink eye

**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

Contact Child Care Licensing with any questions or concerns you may have.

- DHHS Child Care Licensing & DHHS Licensure Unit: (800) 600-1289

Child Care Licensing  
 PO Box 94986  
 Lincoln, NE 68509

DHHS home page: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Contact-DHHS.aspx>

DHHS how to file a complaint: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Childrens-Services-Licensing-How-to-File-a-Complaint.aspx>

**Parent Grievance, Questions or Concerns**

If a parent has a grievance against a preschool or childcare teacher, they should contact the Childcare Director Julie Kyriss at (402) 913-2255. If they feel that their concerns are not fully satisfied, they should contact the Senior Pastor Eric Jay at (402) 391-6148.

**St. Mark Church, Preschool, and Childcare Staff**

**Pastor**

Pastor Eric Jay

**Preschool & Childcare Director**

Julie Kyriss

**Tuition Questions**

Beth Kelly (contact through Procure)

## St. Mark Worship Information:

### St. Mark Lutheran Church Regular Worship Schedule:

#### **Saturday evening**

- 5:00pm Traditional

#### **Sunday mornings:**

- 9:15am – Adult Bible Study and Sunday School
- 10:30am – Contemporary

**Church Office:** (402) 391-6148

**Preschool and Childcare Office:** (402) 913-2255

#### **Websites:**

[www.DaycareOmaha.org](http://www.DaycareOmaha.org)

[www.StMarkOMaha.Org](http://www.StMarkOMaha.Org)