TLC EARLY LEARNING CENTER



PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Trinity Lutheran Church 603 Classen Blvd. Norman, OK 73071 (405) 329-1503 www.tlsnorman.com

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. <u>History</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL, established in 1989, is a mission arm of Trinity Lutheran Church. Lutheran Christians, who had settled in and around the Norman area, organized Trinity Lutheran Church in 1901. Like most Lutheran Churches of that time, church services were conducted in the German Language and a small parochial school was operated primarily for the children of the congregation. In 1947, the present stone and wood frame church was constructed, as well as the fellowship hall and center section of the education wing. The south wing was added in 1987. Trinity remodeled and extended the center section in 2004.

Trinity Lutheran Church is a member congregation in the larger church body known as the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). The LCMS is made up of about 6,150 congregations in North America and includes almost 2.7 million baptized Christians striving together in the same Mission and Ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Member churches of the LCMS strongly support Christian education. LCMS congregations own and operate over 2,500 preschools, childcare centers, elementary schools, high schools, universities, and seminaries. For more information about the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, go to www.lcms.org.

What is a Lutheran?

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess:

- Christ Jesus is Lord and Savior, who died once for all people to take away the sin of the world. There is no other way to heaven than through Jesus. There is no other Savior. Jesus rose from the dead to give us life.
- The Bible is God's very Word, not man's word. The Bible, Old and New Testaments, contains no errors or contradictions; the Bible is God's witness to Jesus and salvation.
- Man is saved by grace through faith, that is, without any help from man. Salvation is a gift from God to all believers in Christ Jesus.
- God gives the forgiveness of sin where He promises, by the means of His grace: His Word of Christ, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the proclamation of forgiveness. God's Holy Spirit works through these means to give faith and peace.
- There is only one Christian Church, which will be and remain forever. This Church eagerly awaits the coming of Christ and seeks to remain faithful in the Gospel until His coming of glory.

Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6)

B. Mission Statement

TLC Early Learning Center exists as a community-based mission of Trinity Lutheran Church, designed to provide developmentally appropriate childcare in a church setting where children of all faiths, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds are embraced, taught, and cared for, as a reflection of Christ's love for all people. We are committed to:

- Respecting individuality, while helping the child benefit from the group experience
- Promoting the growth of the whole child
- Employing teachers who demonstrate Christian values
- Supporting families as they meet the challenges of daily life
- Following fair hiring practices without regard to race, gender, ethnicity
- Providing childcare facilities that are clean, well maintained, and programs that are reasonably priced

C. <u>Philosophy</u>

We believe that learning develops through doing and experiencing, rather than simple observation. Therefore, we seek to be developmentally appropriate in our activities so that each child can grow at their own rate of maturation, not necessarily related to their chronological age. We affirm that families are the greatest agents for nurturing the whole child and view Christian education to be the best tool that works hand-in-hand with the parents, not to shelter from the world, but to better prepare them for excelling in the world.

D. <u>Organization</u>

TLC Early Learning Center is solely owned and operated by Trinity Lutheran Church. All policies for the center's operation, as well as the center's philosophy and budget, are determined by the Parochial School Board, which consists of members elected to their positions by the Voters' Assembly of Trinity Lutheran Church and who are accountable to the Trinity Lutheran Church Council. The Administrator and Teachers carry out the decisions of the Parochial School Board.

E. Classes Offered

TLC Early Learning Center provides classes for children ages 1 year old through Pre K4. Child must be 1 year old by September 1st to start at TLC Early Learning Center.

We also offer a summer camp program for children ages 1 year old through 5th grade. Further information about our summer program can be found in Section VII.

Classes	Schedule Available	Hours Available	
Cubs, Bears, Tigers, Koalas	Monday – Friday	0:00 am $2:00 mm$	
& Pandas	(Choose any 2 to 5 days)	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	
PreK4	Monday – Friday	0:00 am 2:00 mm	
(Must include Monday)	(Choose any 3 to 5 days)	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	
Before Care	Monday – Friday	7:30 am – 9:00 am	
Before Care	(Choose any 1 to 5 days)	7:30 am - 9:00 am	
After Care	Monday – Friday	2:00 pm 6:00 pm	
Alter Cale	(Choose any 1 to 5 days)	3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	

II. ADMITTANCE PROCEDURES

A. Policy of Non-Discrimination

TLC Early Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and programs.

B. Admittance Priority

An early enrollment period is held each year during late February early March. Currentlyenrolled students are encouraged to re-enroll during this time. This will secure the child's spot in class for the following year. Once a class is filled, names will be placed on a waiting list.

Students shall be admitted to TLC Early Learning Center based on the following priorities:

- 1. Currently Enrolled Students
- 2. Members of Trinity Lutheran Church or Sister LCMS Congregations
- 3. New Students from the Community

C. <u>Enrollment Procedure</u>

- 1. Obtain enrollment forms from the office or download online.
- 2. Complete all required enrollment forms.
- 3. Submit a copy of each child's immunization records. DHS requires a current copy to be on file for your child to attend TLC Early Learning Center.
- 4. Return completed forms to the office. Payment of the enrollment fee is due with these forms. The enrollment and curriculum fees are non-refundable.

Waiting List: If a particular class is full, your child will be placed on the waiting list. When an opening exists, parents will be notified and will need to pay the enrollment fee prior to final admission.

D. <u>Tuition</u>

- Payments / Late Fees Payments are due on the 1st of each month and considered late after the 10th of the month. If your payment is not paid by the 10th, there will be a late charge of 10% of the balance due. If you miss one month's payment, and two months are due, you will be contacted by the TLC Early Learning Center Director. Your child may be released from the program on the 10th of the second month at the discretion of the Director. If you are experiencing short-term financial problems or need other payment arrangements, please speak to the Director.
- 2. Returned Checks Checks returned to TLC Early Learning Center for nonsufficient funds (NSF) must be picked up in the school office and payment made

by cash or money order. Failure to do so may result in the check being turned over to the District Attorney. The patron is responsible for any charges experienced by TLC Early Learning Center for returned checks.

E. Attendance

- <u>Drop Off</u> We ask that you make arrival time as easy as possible for all the children and staff. In order to do this, we do <u>not</u> allow parents to remain in the classroom. Please give your child a hug and say good-bye. You are welcome to remain in the building as long as your child cannot see you.
- 2. <u>Pick Up</u> Please be prompt in picking up your children. REPEATED LATENESS in picking up your child will result in a charge. These charges are at the discretion of the director.
- 3. <u>Signing In /Out</u> teachers will sign your child in and out every day using our Brightwheel app.
- 4. <u>Adding Days</u> Your account must be current and in good standing to add days to your child's schedule.
- 5. <u>Dropping In –</u> Drop-in space is available to currently enrolled children upon availability. Drop-ins must be pre-scheduled with office staff.
- 6. <u>Before/After Care</u> -Before Care – 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. After Care – 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- <u>Changing schedule</u> If you need to change your child's schedule you must notify the office staff by the 3rd week of the month for upcoming month change. Once billing has been complete you will not be able to change schedule until the next billing cycle.
- 8. <u>Make up days</u> Make up days will be allowed for any sick days your child must miss. We do not offer make up days not pertaining to illness.
- 9. <u>Arrival Time</u> Children are NOT permitted to arrive prior to 8:50 a.m., unless a parent takes them to Before Care. This service is offered to provide a SAFE environment for children prior to the beginning of the school day. Children arriving prior to 8:50 a.m. and found unattended will be taken to Before Care and a fee will be assessed. Children not picked up by 3:10pm will be taken to After Care and a fee will be assessed.

F. <u>Withdrawal</u>

A two-week written notice is required prior to the withdrawal of any child from the program. If less than a 2-week notice is given, a total of 2 weeks tuition will be required from the date of notification.

G. Dismissal Policy

TLC Early Learning Center teachers are not expected to handle students with exceptional developmental and/or other special needs. Every student enrolled at TLC Early Learning Center will be accepted and retained based on their academic performance and their positive behavior.

TLC Early Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time based on the following criteria:

- It is determined that the child's developmental and/or educational needs are not being met at the center
- Unacceptable behavior at the center or at center functions
- If it is determined that a child is disruptive, uncooperative or in any other way disturbs the other children in the program
- Shows improper respect for faculty, staff, peers and other adults in our building
- Inability to participate in daily routines of the program

III. CLASSROOM INFORMATION

A. Class Schedule

Each classroom has a daily schedule posted. The schedule is flexible and at times may change depending on the day or age of the child. Throughout your child's day they will be learning, exploring and developing through their active learning environment. Our classes are teacher directed and child initiated. Your child will also have the opportunity to learn about God's love.

Our staff plans daily activities that foster the development in the areas of social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. There will be a choice of various activities such as art, science, dramatic play, math, literacy, social studies and religion. A small portion of the day is set aside for group activities such as praise/worship and story time, but for most of the day the children are interacting with their peers and teachers individually and in small groups. We offer a variety of "hands on" experiences in which the children learn by doing.

B. Dress Code

The following are some guidelines we ask children to follow at our center and for all center-related activities.

Children are permitted and encouraged to wear these items:

- Clothing which is comfortable for the season of the year. Please do not forget to send along warmer clothing in the fall/winter months, as the children will be outside for various activities.
- Appropriate and durable clothing for learning, recess, and physical education
- Footwear which is safe and appropriate for recess play and physical education
- Clothing that is clean and in good repair
- Clothing which advertises our school, church, and Savior

Children are **not** permitted to wear the items described below:

- Flip-flops or other footwear which can easily come off the foot while running or playing (for safety reasons)
- Any clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco, violence, TV shows/movies/music that undermines our Christian values

It is the parent's responsibility to send children in clothing and shoes appropriate for indoor and outdoor play. Our teachers do plan a craft project every day for your child to enjoy and we cannot be responsible for any damage done to your child's clothes.

C. Labeling Items

We require that you label all of your child's items, i.e., cups, diapers, clothing, blankets, coats, <u>EVERYTHING</u> you bring here for your child.

D. Bottle Policy

We do not allow bottles in our program. We request that you bring a sippy cup and leave it here for your child if they are enrolled in our Cub or Bear class. Children enrolled in the Panda classes are not permitted to bring sippy cups.

E. Potty Training

When a child is able to communicate that he or she needs to go potty, we consider them potty trained. When a child is not able to communicate that they need to go potty and they must be taken to the restroom frequently to avoid accidents, we do not consider them potty trained. We are more than happy to help you in the pottytraining process, but we do ask that you respect our viewpoint. Children in the Panda class must be well on their way to being trained. Children in the PreK4 class must be completely potty trained.

F. Supplies

You will be given a supply list that pertains to your child's class. In effort to keep your costs down, we are minimalizing the list. We may ask in January for additional items as needed.

G. Lunches

A nutritionally balanced meal will be provided for your child each day at no extra charge. Parents are allowed to provide meals, snacks or both for their children. If a parent chooses to provide meals and or snacks there will be no reduction in rates. You will need to send their food in the proper insulated container to keep hot or cold. We cannot refrigerate or microwave food for the children.

H. Field Trips (Pre-K Only)

Parents must complete, sign, date, and return the Field Trip Permission slip, BEFORE any child is allowed to be transported and attend a field trip. Telephone authorizations are accepted only if two TLC Early Learning Center employees verify telephone consent for participation in a field trip experience. As difficult as it may be, children without proper parent/guardian authorization shall be denied attendance on class field trips.

Any parents volunteering to transport children in their personal vehicles must complete a special transportation form with vehicle information. This form, along with a copy of current driver's license and vehicle insurance policy, will be kept on file in the office.

Parents volunteering to transport children in their personal vehicles are agreeing to spend special time with their child and their classmates. Siblings, whether older or younger, are not allowed to attend field trips so that parents are available to supervise children more effectively.

I. <u>Toy Policy</u>

Children are not allowed to bring toys from home. If your child is at our center and brings a toy for show-n-tell, they will need to put the toy in their cubby.

J. Birthday Policy

Special store-bought treats (please **NO** homemade) are welcome on a child's birthday. Please inform the teacher in advance when to expect the treats in the classroom. Classrooms <u>cannot</u> be used for birthday parties. In the event that a private birthday party for the entire class is planned, invitations may be passed out. If party guests are limited to only certain classmates, the invitations must be mailed from home to avoid hurt feelings.

K. Discipline Policy

TLC Early Learning Center follows the Love & Logic® discipline techniques. Love & Logic® is a common-sense approach that cultivates confidence and good decisionmaking in children by offering them choices, empathy, and respect while adults avoid anger, threats, warnings or lectures. We have trained our staff in the techniques developed by Jim Fay, Charles Fay, and Foster W. Cline (Love & Logic® Institute, Inc.). We offer Love & Logic Early Childhood Made Fun! ® classes once a year. Our director is an independent facilitator of Love and Logic Early Childhood Made Fun! ® For more information, go to www.loveandlogic.com or call 800-338-4065.

L. Chapel

Children and teachers gather in the sanctuary once a week for a short, child-centered worship service. These chapel services are conducted by Trinity's Pastor or Vicar, and include songs, Bible stories and lessons. An offering is taken every week. The offering collected will be sent to a mission selected and approved by the staff. Parents are always welcome to join chapel.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Closings

WEATHER CLOSINGS: TLC Early Learning Center may close in the event of inclement weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. We will notify parents via the **Brightwheel** app. We take other metro area school closures into consideration when making our decision. Parents are advised to take special note of the other school closing notices on local TV channels and check your **Brightwheel** app for information on TLC Early Learning Center's status. Delayed opening or early release times are also a possibility.

REFUNDS DUE TO UNFORSEEN CLOSURE: TLC Early Learning Center does **NOT** refund tuition due to unforeseen closures.

PARKING LOT CONDITIONS: Please note that even though the road conditions are good, our parking lot may be covered in ice/snow. We advise caution when driving or walking on the parking lot surface in hazardous conditions (ice). We will not be held responsible for injuries sustained in the parking lot when the parking lot is hazardous. We are not able to spread salt over the entire parking lot surface. You may consider bringing your child in a little late to allow time for the ice/snow to melt. We will not count students tardy when weather conditions are hazardous.

B. Parent Communication

TLC Early Learning Center strives to have paperless communication with our parents. Please make sure you use the **Brightwheel** app and that we have your correct email address when you enroll your child.

C. Visitors

Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to visit and acquire a better understanding of our program. TLC Early Learning Center requires that all parents and/or visitors <u>check in</u> with the office before going to any classroom during the day. Patrons wishing to make classroom visitations are encouraged to contact the office prior to visiting the center. This procedure is used to protect students during the course of the day and not interrupt their classroom schedule.

D. Grievances

When parents have concerns about or disagreements with staff members of TLC Early Learning Center, we wish to resolve any differences quickly and, in a God, - pleasing manner. The following grievance procedure is taken from Matthew 18 and is expected to be followed when concerns and/or disagreements arise:

- 1. First, parents are to approach the staff member with whom they disagree and privately discuss the problem/concern in a Christian manner. This usually brings understanding and resolution.
- 2. If the parent and staff member fail to resolve a problem/concern in a private meeting, a meeting including the parent, staff member and the Director shall be held in order to seek resolution.
- 3. In the event that resolution of the concern/problem is not reached, all concerned parties will request a meeting with the Parochial School Board for a final decision in the matter.

E. Child Abuse

Suspected child abuse and neglect are required by law to be reported to the Department of Human Services.

F. <u>Compliance File</u>

There is a current copy of our DHS compliance file located on the wall outside of the office.

V. MEDICAL CONCERNS

A. <u>Illness</u>

Do not bring children when they have signs of any illness. Your child will be sent home if any of the following conditions exist:

- Undiagnosed rash (bring note from doctor if it has been diagnosed)
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Sore throat or persistent cough
- Vomiting
- Continuous diarrhea
- Head lice This condition is prevalent in Oklahoma and easily passed from student to student, especially in preschool and childcare. Students suspected of having head lice shall be sent home and must be treated before readmission to school. If the condition persists, parents will need to submit documentation of a physician's visit, as well as proof of physician-advised treatment. When head lice is reported, our teachers will check all children.
- Any contagious disease
- Child is not well enough to participate in daily activities
- Fever

Young children are very susceptible to come in contact with illnesses so the dismissal of any child will always be at the discretion of the Director. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you, but the well-being of the children in our program is our first concern. Do not bring your child unless they have been without these conditions for 24 hours without medication. If your child should become ill at Trinity, you will be called and asked to pick your child up as soon as possible. Your child will be removed from the other children until you arrive. We do not refund money if your child misses due to an illness.

For the following condition and/or illnesses children may return as listed:

- Scabies, morning after the first treatment
- Chicken pox, until six days after onset of rash
- Whooping cough, until five days of antibiotic treatment
- Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- Measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash
- Flu, 24 hours fever free and symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Covid, 5-day quarantine required. Symptom free without medication for the final 24 hours of quarantine.

If a physician determines that a child has a communicable illness, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school office immediately so that other parents may be warned to closely observe their children for symptoms.

<u>TLC Early Learning Center reserves the right to remove from the classroom</u> any student suspected of having an illness or condition that may be passed on to other students, or deemed too ill to remain in school.

B. Medication

Children are NEVER allowed to keep medications either on their persons, at their desks, in their cubbies, or in backpacks. Any necessary medications MUST be checked in with the office with written and signed directions for dosage and time to be administered. The child's name must be clearly written on both the box and the original container. All medication is handled through the office.

C. Injury

In case of injury at the center, an injury form is filled out by the teacher and the Director and parents are notified. If medical treatment is needed, we follow the instructions as to which doctor and hospital to use, as indicated on the enrollment form.

VI. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

A. Tornado

TLC Early Learning Center will practice tornado drills monthly. We may choose to close early due to approaching storms. Parents will be notified on the **Brightwheel** app in a timely manner.

B. <u>Fire</u>

TLC Early Learning Center practices monthly fire drills.

C. Evacuation

The objective of this plan is to reduce the possibility of harm to the children, staff and visitors to the center in the event of an emergency. In the event of an evacuation emergency the children will be walked to Our Lady Catholic Church, 500 Alameda St., Norman, OK. Parents will be notified on the **Brightwheel** app as soon as possible.

D. Lock Down

When necessary, TLC Early Learning Center will lock-down the facility. Children will be kept in their classrooms with the doors locked. No one will be allowed to enter or leave the facility. Parents will be notified on the **Brightwheel** app as soon as possible when the lock down is in effect and when it is lifted. We ask that parents remain calm and patient during this time and do NOT phone the office. Our goal will be to focus on keeping your children as safe as possible.

I. SUMMER INFORMATION

A. <u>Enrollment Procedure</u>

- 1. Obtain enrollment forms from the Office.
- 2. Complete all required enrollment forms and submit to the office with the enrollment fee. The enrollment fee is non-refundable.
- 3. Submit a copy of each child's immunization records. DHS requires a current copy to be on file for your child to attend TLC Early Learning Center.

Waiting List: If a particular class is full, your child will be placed on the waiting list. When an opening exists, parents will be notified and will need to pay the enrollment fee prior to admission.

B. Classes Offered

TLC Early Learning Center Summer Camp provides classes for children ages 1 year old through 5th Grade. Child must be 1 year old by September 1st of the previous calendar year to start Summer Camp.

Classes	Schedule Available	Hours Available
	Monday – Friday	
Cubs, Bears, Tigers, Koalas, Pandas &	(Choose any 2 to 5 days)	9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Explorers		
Cubs, Bears, Tigers, Koalas, Pandas &	Monday – Friday	7:20 am 6:00 mm
Explorers	(Choose any 2 to 5 days)	7:30 am – 6:00 pm
Before Care	Monday – Friday	7:30 am – 9:00 am
Belore Care	(Choose any 1 to 5 days)	7.50 am = 9.00 am
After Care	Monday – Friday	2:00 mm 6:00 mm
Alter Cale	(Choose any 1 to 5 days)	3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Camper 1 – Kindergarten & 1st grade	Monday – Friday	
Camper $2 - 2^{nd}$ grade thru 5^{th} grade	(Choose any 2 to 5 days)	7:30 am – 6:00 pm
(Must have completed Kindergarten)		

C. <u>Field Trips</u> – Campers 1 (Kindergarten – 1st) Camper 2 (2nd - 5th grade)

All Campers must have a Sonshine Station t-shirt to wear on field trip days for safety reasons.

If a Camper is dropped off late and Campers have left for their field trip, you will be responsible for driving your child to the field trip destination.

D. Vacation Policy

Summer Camp ONLY – Sonshine Station will allow each child to have 1 week equal to child's schedule of vacation credit. You must notify the office when your child will be on vacation.

2023 - 2024 TLC Early Learning Center Rates

	All ra	tes in	clude	lunch
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Class	Enrollment Fee	Curriculum Fee	Fulltime Rate (M-F 7:30- 6:00)	M-F Rate (9:00-3:00)	Daily Rate
Cubs, Bears, Tigers, Koalas	\$150.00	N/A	\$895.00	\$640.00	\$35.00
Panda, PreK-4	\$150.00	\$75.00	\$855.00	\$610.00	\$33.00
Before Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$10.00
After Care Drop-In After Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$13.50 \$18.00

*Discount: (2nd child 10% less on tuition; 3rd child 25% less w/ no enrollment fee)

2023 Sonshine Station Summer Camp Rates

All rates include lunch

Class	Enrollment Fee	Fulltime Rate (M-F 7:30-6:00)	M-F Rate (9:00-3:00)	Daily Rate
Cubs, Bears, Tigers, Koalas	\$60.00	\$895.00	\$640.00	\$35.00
Pandas, Explorers	\$60.00	\$855.00	\$610.00	\$33.00
Campers 1 (Kindergarten – 1 st grade)	\$150.00	\$855.00	N/A	\$45.00
Campers 2 $(2^{nd} - 5^{th} \text{ grade})$	\$150.00	\$855.00	N/A	\$45.00
Before Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$10.00
After Care Drop-In AC	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$13.50 \$18.00

*Discount: (2nd child 10% less on tuition; 3rd child 25% less w/ no enrollment fee