



A Foundation For Learning. For Life. Forever.

## Parent Handbook

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## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **Welcome**

Welcome to our early childhood ministry (ECM) at St. John. What a precious gift you have been given in your child. During the first 5 years of life children grow and learn at an amazing rate. They are learning to build relationships, move their bodies, trust, share, use manners, be creative, be problem solvers, and much more. The best way to serve children is to partner with you in providing a loving atmosphere that will challenge, stimulate, and encourage your child.

The *Parent Handbook* is designed to let you know about our policies and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please feel free to contact the director. This handbook will be reviewed periodically. You will be notified of any changes.

### **Program**

St. John's ECM offers ½ day and full day options and provides valuable learning experiences for 4-year-old children. We follow the St. John Lutheran School calendar.

### **Our Mission**

The St. John ECM exists to partner with parents in teaching their children by providing a safe, loving environment that offers a high quality, Christ-centered early education.

### **Our Vision**

The St. John ECM will equip children with the necessary tools to excel at the next level of education.

### **Goals**

The St. John ECM will

- a) serve the gospel of Jesus Christ at every opportunity.
- b) serve the whole child in the domains of communication/language, cognition, social and emotional development, physical development and health, creative expression, and spiritual life.
- c) serve the whole family.

### **Objectives**

For the CHILDREN

#### **Spiritual**

- To know the Bible is God's Word to us and therefore all true
- To know God is the Creator of the world
- To learn their need for a Savior from sin
- To learn Jesus is the world's only Savior from sin
- To learn of God's love through weekly Bible lessons, songs, and verses
- To grow in their faith (which Jesus calls adults to model in Luke 18:16-17)

#### **Physical**

- To appreciate likenesses and differences in God's children
- To develop small and large motor control and coordination
- To observe simple health and safety procedures
- To develop good nutrition and hygiene habits

### Social and Emotional

- To grow in Christian love and respect for others motivated by God's love for us
- To grow in their ability to interact with peers, adults, and their environment
- To learn to share, compromise, and cooperate
- To learn appropriate ways to express feelings and respond to the feelings of others
- To see the importance of following rules and directions
- To develop responsibility for self and possessions
- To develop decision making and problem solving skills

### Communication, Language, Cognition & Creative Expression

- To learn their abilities are gifts from God
- To increase their attention skills
- To develop organizational skills
- To develop language skills
- To develop math and reading readiness skills
- To be creative in art, music, and thinking
- To be able to follow directions
- To comprehend simple stories and concepts

#### For the PARENTS

- To understand God gives you the primary responsibility for nurturing your children
- To understand the spiritual, physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs of your children
- To understand the importance of communication between home and school
- To become involved in your child's learning through classroom visits and conferences
- To encourage you to read your Bible and have daily family devotions
- To encourage you to visit our school whenever you desire
- To encourage you to worship at our church regularly
- To encourage you to attend our church's Bible information class

#### **Our Conviction**

The St. John ECM operates as a ministry of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church. Our conviction is that all the Bible is God's inspired Word and we teach according to it. We belong to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). For more details, please speak with the director or the pastor at 920.478.2707. You may also find information at [wels.net](http://wels.net).

#### **Program Organization**

St. John Lutheran School is owned and operated by St. John Lutheran Church, Waterloo, Wisconsin. The director of St. John's ECM is a servant of the church who proclaims the truths of the Bible to children and families. She is responsible for the planning and implementation of the program and is the supervising authority over all ECM staff members. The director is advised by St. John's Board of Education (consisting of three elected members of the congregation) and supervised by the voting members of St. John Lutheran Church.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

### **Bible Time**

St. John Lutheran School wants each child to have an understanding of the love Jesus has for them. The children will have daily opportunities to grow in their faith by hearing God's Word. Bible time will include Bible stories, Bible songs, activities, and verses. Children will have chapel with pastor weekly.

Bible Time is based on the Christ Light curriculum, which is published by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). The monthly classroom newsletter will contain information regarding the lessons, verses, and songs.

### **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is built around meeting the needs of each individual child while supporting and guiding the development of the "whole child." Our "whole child" philosophy focuses on child development in the domains of communication and language, cognition, social and emotional development, physical development and health, creative expression, and spiritual life.

In our HighScope setting, teachers maintain the overall routine as consistently as possible while flexing it to accommodate individual children's natural rhythms and temperaments. Following a consistent routine day after day gives children the sense of security they need to make choices and take risks which opens the door to exciting learning opportunities.

Teachers will plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities into a daily schedule that alternates activities between quiet and active, large and fine motor, imaginative and concrete, social and personal. Daily activities will be chosen from research based knowledge about what is best for children and also collaboration among staff members. Teachers are encouraged to share ideas, resources, and knowledge about what is best for each individual child. The lead teacher completes a weekly lesson plan that is posted in the classroom.

We use the HighScope Curriculum to help each child learn through hands-on experiences, exploring, and discovering. HighScope is supported by research and is based upon active learning. Teachers plan in all areas of development with Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs). These KDIs are listed in categories, helping each child grow academically, intellectually, socially, and physically. The HighScope Curriculum is categorized into subject areas, making it developmentally appropriate for preschoolers. HighScope also focuses on the child's social needs, helping children interact with one another and solve problems through communication.

Each classroom environment is organized into different interest areas. These may include: Art, Dramatic Play, Blocks, Sensory, Music, Science, Math, Writing, Reading, and a Circle Time area. Classrooms are organized in this way so the children can feel a sense of structure and know exactly where everything is located. With the room organized this way, the areas become a part of the whole curriculum and the children can explore many concepts as they play.

Throughout the day we teach positive social interactions to help children learn to share, communicate, cooperate, and care about themselves and others. Through daily interactions with staff and other children, our students will learn their thoughts and opinions are valued. They will learn to make positive choices and develop self-sufficiency. Please visit the HighScope website for more information ([highscope.org](http://highscope.org)).

### **Outside Time**

Our playground serves as an outside classroom and is designed to provide children the opportunity to develop their large and small motor skills as well as their appreciation for God's creation. Learning opportunities will be provided on the playground on a daily basis when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a risk. When weather conditions prevent outside time, gross-motor activities will be provided inside and supervised at the same level. Please assist your children in dressing for the weather. We will go outside when it's hot. We will go outside when it's cold. We will go

outside when it's raining (unless there's lightning). As the Norwegians say, "There's no such thing as bad weather, only inadequate clothing."

Please provide seasonal changes of clothes so that your child has appropriate clothing in hot and cold weather. There is shade on the playground. When in the sun, the children should wear sun-protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection must be either sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher. We will apply sunscreen to exposed skin. Parents are asked to provide the sunscreen.

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellent due to high risk of insect-borne disease, it will be applied. Parents are asked to provide the repellent.

### **What to Wear**

DRESS FOR PLAY!!! Keep in mind that while your child is at school, we will be doing creative, messy, muddy, and artsy activities. Please don't send children to school in clothes that might limit their ability to learn and play. Dress your child in comfortable clothing and shoes that allow for easy and safe movement. Please ensure all shoes have a strap on the back to allow children to run safely in the gym (during music and movement) and on the playground. Shorts and capri pants may be worn during the months of August through October and April through June at your discretion.

Your child will need two complete sets of extra clothing (shirt, pants/shorts, underwear, socks) in case accidents occur or clothes become wet on the playground. These clothes can be stored in your child's assigned space in the hallway. Please label clothing for easy identification, including extra clothes, jackets, and winter gear. Please update extra clothes as your child grows and the weather changes.

### **Discipline**

It is a fact that children will misbehave. God made the first two human beings in this world perfect. But they believed the devil's lie that life is better without God and so introduced sin into the world. That's why children and adults exhibit sinful behavior. Just like in your home, there are consequences for sinful behavior at school. In great mercy God chose not to punish us but sent his Son Jesus to take the punishment for our sin in our place. He is our substitute. He is our Savior. These two teachings, the law that shows us our sin, and the gospel that shows us our Savior, are the framework in which we discipline children. We show them where they sinned (law) and where they have free and unconditional forgiveness in Christ (gospel). Then we encourage corrected and God-pleasing behavior, not to earn God's favor but because we have it through Jesus. We are motivated to do better because of what he has done for us (Exodus 13:8).

We provide a positive environment that will encourage appropriate behaviors from all children. All staff will be knowledgeable of appropriate developmental stages, family backgrounds, special needs, interests, and medications being given (if any), to ensure each child is treated as an individual. What might be a good disciplinary technique for one child might not be the best for another. When discipline is needed, it will be administered immediately and consistently so that a climate of trust can be established and maintained at all times.

The staff will do all that is possible to prevent biting, pinching, and hitting. However, please understand that the staff may not be able to intervene in every incident. Teachers will fill out an *Accident Report* if your child has been hurt. An *Injury Report* will be completed if your child has injured another child. Please sign and date these forms at pick-up time. These reports will be sent home in your child's take-home folder. Please sign the form and return it to school the next day.

Staff, parents, and volunteers will not, under any circumstances, use punishment that is humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to the child. This includes spanking, yanking, threatening, derogatory remarks, tying a child to restrict movement, withholding or forcing foods, or enclosing in a confined space.

The following are some ways in which staff members will help children gain better self-control and teach them to love others as themselves:

- Prevention
  - a well-planned schedule with little wait time
  - changing activities when children become restless
  - teach children about safety – help children understand and feel physical and emotional safety
- Redirection
  - focus the child’s attention on something besides the inappropriate behavior
- Be positive
  - make positive requests using, “Please, walk” or “Let’s use walking feet” instead of “Don’t run” or “Stop running”
  - use specific praise, “You worked really hard building that tall tower” or “You put all the books in the bin” instead of, “Good job” or “Good girl”
  - encourage and model polite manners with the children
- Be consistent
  - say what you mean and mean what you say. If you cannot follow through, don’t say it
  - teachers work together as a team to enforce room rules
  - teachers and parents work together to create a discipline plan for the child if needed
- Dignity
  - misbehaviors will be handled privately
  - a child’s misbehavior will not be announced to the class
  - teachers will treat each child as a unique gift from God
- Provide choices
  - Every choice given must be acceptable to the teacher
  - Give many choices before unacceptable behaviors occur
  - Give acceptable choices when a misbehavior occurs

### **Persistent Challenging Behaviors**

Occasionally a child might exhibit recurring challenging, negative, socially unacceptable, disruptive, and/or violent behaviors. Teachers will use the discipline policy to teach the children the acceptable behaviors. However, if the negative behavior persists, teachers will track the behavior on the *Incident Log* to discover the patterns and possible reasons for the behavior. The director may observe the child in an effort to develop a plan of action and make recommendations to improve the challenging behavior. If the director’s recommendations do not improve the challenging behavior, the director will make arrangements for a conference with the parents to discuss a plan of action for home and for the classroom. The director may also request outside consultation with written parental approval.

### **Rest Time for Preschoolers**

Rest time will be offered after lunch. If a child is unable to sleep, he/she may play quietly on their cot so as not to disturb the other children. Quiet activities will be provided on a daily basis (eg. books, puzzles, math materials, etc.). Please send a blanket for your child, to be used at rest time. Blankets will be sent home on Friday, to be laundered and returned on Monday. We will have a selection of sleeping buddies in the classroom for children who need a little extra support falling asleep.

### **Preschool Field Trips**

Preschool children may take field trips for fun and learning. You will be notified ahead of time when a field trip has been planned. Occasionally, field trips will include the price for admittance and bus fee. Please sign necessary forms so your child can attend. Parent volunteers are invited and encouraged to attend. In addition, the director will arrange visits to our center from members of our community (e.g. firefighters and police men and women). Parents are welcome to join us for these visits. Please speak with the director if you would like to participate in the classroom this way!!

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **General Staff Qualifications**

It is very important for us to hire staff that will partner with parents and that are committed to giving quality care and loving guidance to all children. Our staff was selected based upon their understanding of appropriate childcare practices and their willingness to provide a safe, respectful, loving, yet stimulating and challenging environment for the children.

All caregivers are encouraged to further their education in caring for young children. Full-time teachers receive at least 25 hours of training yearly and part-time, at least 15. All staff members are trained in "Introduction to the Child Care Profession", "Skills & Strategies for the Child Care Teacher" and first aid and CPR.

A criminal justice background check is conducted on each staff member. Staff members have a health assessment completed by a practicing physician stating they are free from any disability that would prevent them from caring for children.

### **Child Abuse/Neglect**

Teachers are required to report all incidents of suspected or actual abuse or neglect of children. We are obligated by law to report such instances to the proper authorities. We are also required to cooperate with authorities if they come to visit with a child. A teacher will be present with the child during such a visit.

### **Illnesses and Absences**

St. John is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children and teachers. If a child becomes ill while at school, we will make sure they are comfortable and away from the rest of the children. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children so it is important that your child is picked up as soon as possible. When a child becomes ill, every effort will be made to contact the parents. After 30 minutes of unsuccessful attempts we will notify the emergency contact(s) listed on the registration form.

We will abide by the following *Sick Child Policy*. Staff members and children may not attend when they have the following symptoms and may return when the following conditions are met:

- Temperature: 100 degrees (axillary) or higher
  - Child may return when fever free for 24 hours *without* the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Breathing difficulty/coughing: Uncontrolled coughing, labored or rapid breathing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing
  - Child may return when symptom free or
  - Child must have physician's written approval and director's approval to return.
- Diarrhea: 2 watery stools in a 4 hour period, watery stool mixed with blood, or watery stool that is large in volume
  - Child may return when they are diarrhea (watery stool) free for 24 hours.
  - If diarrhea could be explained by medication, child must have director's approval to return.
- Abdominal issues: Vomiting, abdominal pain, or upset stomach for more than 2 hours
  - Child may return when free of upset stomach and vomiting for 24 hours, able to take food, and in no danger of dehydration.
- Viral and bacterial conjunctivitis: Red, watery, or draining eye(s)
  - Child may return when all discharge from the eye(s) has stopped or
  - 24 hours after treatment has been initiated or
  - Child must have physician's written approval and director's approval to return.
- Rash or infected areas of the skin: crusty, yellow, gummy, or dry area(s) of the skin (could be a contagious disease, chicken pox, impetigo, ring worm) or a rash on the skin

- Child may return when skin sores are healed or
- 24 hours after treatment has started or
- If physician has determined condition is noninfectious child may return with physician's written approval and director's approval to return.
- Infestations: Untreated scabies, lice, or other infestation (severe itching of the body or scalp and/or constantly scratching the head)
  - Child must have physician's written approval or health professional's written approval to return.
- Fainting or seizures: Fainting or seizures (other than preexisting conditions that have been diagnosed and we have been trained how to respond) or general signs of listlessness, weakness, drowsiness, flushed face, headache, or stiff neck
  - Child may return when symptom free or
  - Child must have physician's written approval and director's approval to return.
- Unusual behavior: Irritability, crankiness, listlessness, crying more than usual, obvious general discomfort, loss of appetite, requires unusual amounts of attention, or any unusual behavior
  - Child may return when symptom free.
- Infections: Mouth sores, thrush, yeast infections
  - Children with thrush will be excluded from care until 24 hours from beginning of treatment.
  - Physician must determine the condition is noninfectious. Child must have physician's written approval and director's approval to return.

If you are unsure whether or not your child may attend, please contact us before bringing him/her to school. ***Please contact the office by telephone if your child is ill and will be staying home.***

In the case of a communicable disease, a doctor's statement must accompany the child upon returning to school. This statement should indicate the recovery is such that the disease can no longer be communicated to other students and the student may participate in all activities. In the event your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, a note will be sent home.

Communicable diseases include:

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| + Chicken pox                | + Ringworm (scalp, skin, feet)              |
| + Conjunctivitis (pink eye)  | + Rubella (German measles)                  |
| + Influenza                  | + Pertussis (whooping cough)                |
| + Impetigo                   | + Scabies                                   |
| + Measles (rubeola)          | + Streptococcal                             |
| + Mononucleosis (infectious) | + Gonorrhea                                 |
| + Mumps                      | + Hepatitis                                 |
| + Pediculosis (lice)         | + Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) |
- \*to be handled on a case by case basis

## Medication

If at all possible, administer your child's medicine before arriving at school. Please note that a child must be fever free for 24 hours **without** medication before returning to school. Please do not bring your child to school if you have given medication for a fever.

If a child must take medication (prescription or over-the-counter, ointments, drops, cough syrup, inhalers, nebulizer breathing treatments, etc.) during the day, parents must fill out the form, "Request for Giving Medication at School." This form is available from the school office upon request. We may not administer any medication if the instructions are contrary to the instructions on the container unless there is physician's written approval.

If children need special medical procedures we ask that a parent come and perform these procedures or that you provide a health professional to do so.

All medication must be labeled with the child's first and last name, the date the prescription was filled, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it.

For safety reasons, medications (including over the counter medications) must *not* be left in the child's cubby or backpack. Please give the medication to the teacher so it can be stored in a locked box.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Fire drills are conducted throughout the school year to acquaint the children with the procedure to be followed in the event of an emergency. When there is a fire drill, visitors are required to leave the building.

Tornado drills are conducted in cooperation with the Wisconsin Division of Emergency Government. Visitors are required to go to the area of safety.

Emergency drills are conducted in correspondence to our "Crisis Response Plan." This plan is posted in each classroom. Visitors are required to participate in lock-down or evacuation procedures.

In the event of inclement weather, St. John Lutheran School follows the Waterloo School District. School closing information will be posted at [www.waterloo.k12.wi.us](http://www.waterloo.k12.wi.us).

Please consult our school newsletter for a listing of radio and TV stations that broadcast emergency closings. Occasionally, it becomes necessary to dismiss early because of threatening weather. In these situations, the school recommends that each family establish an emergency plan in order to accommodate the children who arrive home before the usual time.

## **Meals and Snacks**

Our morning routine includes snack time. Parents may choose to provide a certain number of snacks for the entire classroom throughout the school year (based on enrollment) or pay a quarterly fee to cover the cost of healthy snacks for the children. Each child will be offered the same food(s) at snack time. The director will account for food allergies when planning daily snacks. Milk and/or water are encouraged at snack time. Parents may pay for milk weekly, quarterly or yearly.

We eat lunch at 11:45. Hot lunches are served on a daily basis. Yearly, monthly, or weekly tickets may be purchased. Refunds will be given only for extended periods of absence. Children may bring their own lunch.

Milk is served with all hot lunches at no extra cost. Milk can also be purchased on a yearly, monthly or weekly basis.

During meal time, the teachers sit with the children and engage them in conversation and practice using manners.

Applications for free and reduced meals will be distributed to each family at the beginning of each school year. They may also be obtained from the principal. Please turn applications in to the principal.

## **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

### **Toothbrushing**

Toothbrushes and toothpaste will be provided for each child. These items will be stored in a sanitary manner out of children's reach. The children will brush their teeth after lunch.

## **ADMISSIONS**

### **Services Provided**

Our classroom provides developmentally appropriate learning experiences with options for full-day and half-day preschool for children ages 3 to 5 years. Children must be 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup> and potty trained to enroll.

- Options:
  - Full-day (8am – 3:10pm)
  - Half-day (8am – 11:30am)

### **Eligibility Requirements**

We serve children of any race, color, religious background, national and ethnic origin with all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available at the center. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, or gender in administration of educational policies, admission policies, and other center-administered programs.

### **Immunizations**

Immunizations must be up to date before enrolling. You may provide certification from a licensed physician stating that immunizations would endanger your child's life, or you are an adherent of a religious denomination whose teachings are opposed to immunizations. If a child at St. John becomes ill with a vaccine-preventable disease for which your child is not vaccinated, we will immediately separate your child and notify you so you can pick up your child. Your child will be excluded from school until the classroom(s) have been cleaned and sanitized and the incubation period for the disease has been completed.

### **Enrollment Priority**

At times, when space is limited, enrollment will be considered in the following order of preference:

1. Children of members of St. John Lutheran Church.
2. Children of members of other WELS or ELS congregations.
3. Children of families who are not members of a church.
4. Children of families who are not members of WELS or ELS.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition can be paid with check or money order (payable to St. John) or cash. Payments can be made monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually and are due the first of the month. Failure to pay tuition on time will result in a monthly late fee of \$6.

Your child's placement in the classroom is reserved. Tuition must be paid even if your child has been or will be absent.

Registration and tuition rates will be reviewed and adjusted annually by the director, our Early Childhood Education Committee (ECEC), and the Voters of St. John Lutheran Church. Tuition and fees will be charged according to the signed tuition agreements.

### **Special Needs/Developmental Delays**

We rejoice in the fact that God has made each of us special. Therefore, we will make reasonable accommodations to include children who have limited abilities in our classrooms. Children will be admitted for a 30-day trial period to determine if we will be able to meet their needs. If after the 30 days, it is determined that we cannot adequately meet the needs of each child in the classroom, we will work with parents in finding an alternate program. To maintain quality care for all the children, parents and teachers will discuss and assess the care provided on a regular basis.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **Items from Home**

Our classroom provides a wide variety of items to play with, so we ask that children not bring toys from home to be used at school. We will have share day once a week. Share day toys or objects may be kept in cubbies or in the area the teacher has designated. Sleeping buddies may be kept in cubbies or on cots until naptime and returned immediately following naptime.

### **Arrival and Departure**

Children should arrive at school each morning no sooner than 7:45am. School doors will remain locked until then. If students must arrive earlier, the back outside school door will be unlocked and students may remain between the outside and inside door. School is in session from 8am to 3:10pm.

All vehicles picking up or dropping off students are to do so in back of the school. All children walking to or from school are to enter or exit the front doors, using the front sidewalks.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and protecting the good reputation of all people associated with St. John Lutheran School is very important. It is our belief that every person (whether staff, child, parent or others related to one of these) has a right to his/her own personal information. We will uphold this belief by encouraging everyone involved with St. John to keep personal information about others to themselves and those directly related to the situation. Information regarding activities at school, progress of a child, incidents and accidents of the child, and also home life of the child, parent, staff, and others involved will remain in the classroom. Information regarding behavior of a certain child will only be shared with that child's parents. If an incident happens between two children, staff will only use the name of the parent's child. The other child will be referred to as "another child." Personal information will not be shared without prior consent from the individuals involved. Making reports as required by law shall not be considered a breach of the confidentiality policy.

All information contained in children's records, including personal information, is confidential. This includes, but is not limited to, enrollment information, tuition payment information, and incident and accident reports. The content of each file is immediately available to administrators and teaching staff, the child's parents or legal guardians and regulatory authorities, upon request. All others will not have access to the records without written authorization or court order.

### **TV and Computer Policy**

In the first few years of life, children learn best by interacting with other people. Our policy is that there will be no televisions in the classroom. In addition, children will spend their time enjoying classroom and outdoor materials, rather than using screens.

### **Volunteer Program**

Volunteers are necessary for the smooth running of the entire school program. Assistance in coaching, vision and hearing screening, library work, working with children in school, supervision at sporting events and working the concession stand are all ways in which parents can support the school.

## **FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

### **Church Service**

It is surely a privilege to sing praises to our Lord. Occasionally the school children will prepare special songs for a Sunday morning church service. Parents will be informed of the date and time of these special opportunities. Please know you are always invited and welcome to join us for worship. Our times are as follows:

September 1 – May 31  
Worship 8am & 10:30am  
Sunday School for all ages 9:15-10:15  
June 1 – August 31  
Worship 9am  
All year  
Monday worship 7pm

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Our mission is to partner with parents to support each child's growth and development. Parents and the child's lead teacher will meet twice a year to review each child's portfolio which includes observations, developmental summaries, and examples of the child's work. The conferences are a way to share with parents not only where the child is developmentally, but also to set goals with parents for their child's future growth and development. During the conference, parents and teacher can discuss the joys and concerns they might have.

If a developmental delay is suspected, the director will refer parents to special services provided in the community. Additional conferences may be scheduled by the parents and lead teacher as needed.

### **Communication**

A school newsletter is sent to each family weekly. This letter provides an opportunity for the school to communicate with you. In addition, a monthly classroom newsletter will be sent home.

St. John Lutheran School strives to partner with you to love and guide your child. When something at home occurs that might affect your child's behavior or mood please let us know so that we can give better individual care to your child.

We invite you to address the director at any time to help us give your child the best possible care and to ensure that your child is growing in all areas of development.

### **Grievance Procedure**

At St. John we seek transparency and very open communication. In Matthew 18 our Lord tells us how to handle any sort of issue or grievance that may come up. There he calls us – out of love for and benefit to all parties involved – to go first to that person and work out any issue or problem. If that breaks down the next step would be to bring these concerns to the director or principal, who are there to serve God by serving you, your family and the teachers.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are children's first and most important teachers. We make every effort to partner with you in your children's education. The following are a few ways that we encourage parent involvement:

- Parent Orientation – All parents are invited and encouraged to attend one of our family orientation nights (in July) in addition to registration night (in August).

- Classroom Participation — We strongly encourage both dads and moms to spend time in their child’s classroom. You may do this any time your child is in the classroom. We also plan to include parent talents in the curriculum and would be delighted if you could share what you know (guitar playing, juggling, coming in uniform, etc.)
- Classroom Posters – We encourage you to gather 4-5 pictures of your family. This may include pets and extended family. You may bring the pictures and the teacher will assemble a poster or make it with your child’s help. We would also like to include in the classroom any pictures, clothes, or music from other countries or states that are meaningful to your child. This will help the teachers and other children get to know your child’s family and/or background.
- Classes — The members of St. John would like to invite you to informational classes that give an overview of what our church teaches—please speak to the pastor or director for more information.
- Get-togethers — Each year we will arrange a few times for the families and staff to get to know each other.
- Consider scheduling a lunch or snack date with your child. Just let us know so we can plan for you.

### **Mission Program**

Envelopes will be sent home with your children weekly that provide an opportunity to “give to God.” Why in the world would we give God anything? He has everything! It’s a fantastic thing that God lets us give to him and he takes it with gratitude. And giving just a little bit of the everything he gives us is actually God giving to you - giving you a way to say “thank you” and “I trust you,” words he loves to hear. So even when we give, God is giving to us. What a gracious God we serve!

### **Special Days**

You are welcome to bring special treats for your child’s birthday, or for a special occasion. We will provide children with the snack on the menu along with the treat you have brought. Please let your child’s teacher know that you will be bringing a snack and check about allergies in the classroom.

We will also have special celebrations for holidays such as Mother’s Day, Christmas, and Easter. These may include performances by the children. These special days will be noted in school and classroom newsletters, message boards and on our Facebook page. We encourage you to attend!

### **Posted Information**

The following are posted in each classroom and/or on the parent news board:

- Emergency Exit Plans
- Emergency Procedures
- Menu
- Daily Schedule
- Weekly Lesson Plan

### **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

All parents and guardians of children enrolled at St. John Lutheran School are members of the parent teacher organization. Membership is also open to members of St. John Lutheran Church. PTO sponsors many worthwhile projects in support of the educational program throughout the year. The PTO meets annually during the school year, in April or May, to take care of business matters.

## Contact Information

Please feel free to call St. John Lutheran Church and School (920.478.2707) with any questions regarding the school or church. We will be happy to assist you.

Pastor Chris Esmay (cell) (785)409.0634

Director Kerri Esmay (cell) (785)409.3502

St. John Lutheran Church Chairman Harland Walker

St. John Lutheran Church School Board Chairman Ryan Skalitzky

**Note:** *The director, principal and teachers are always available. If something is left unresolved, please feel free to contact our congregation's chairman or school board chairman in writing in care of the church.*

