

TLC PRESCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK

TLC Preschool
301 E. Stuart St.
Fort Collins, CO 80525
(970) 221-9852

Dear Parents:

This booklet was prepared to provide you with information about TLC Preschool and its policies. We hope to answer the most common questions about the program and the procedures followed. Please use this booklet as a reference for future use. Your child is important to us. Thank you for entrusting us with their care. We will strive to make their time at TLC Preschool enlightening and rewarding. If at any time you have a question, concern or problem, please contact Director Brenda Harju.

Mission Statement

TLC Preschool is a welcoming Christian community, joyfully growing young hearts and minds with love.

The Preschool Program

TLC Preschool, an outreach of Trinity Lutheran Church located at 301 E. Stuart Street in Fort Collins, Colorado, is a non-profit, non-denominational Christian preschool. TLC Preschool is licensed by the State of Colorado and all staff members are state-certified. Classes are offered for children from 3 through 5 years of age.

In a caring and positive atmosphere, we create a safe place for children to learn. Children learn through play, and classroom routines encourage active participation and experimentation. All areas of child development, including large and fine motor, language, social and spiritual development, are incorporated into daily routines and lesson plans. Both teacher and child-directed activities are included in the classroom, and an emphasis is placed on the process of learning rather than on the product. Children are viewed as individuals, as well as an important part of the whole group.

We appreciate the active involvement of parents in our preschool program. Classroom and committee participation are two options for parents who wish to participate. Parent helping allows children to see their parents as part of their preschool environment as well as providing parents the opportunity to watch their child interact with other adults and children.

The purpose and goals of TLC Preschool are:

1. To provide a Christian atmosphere
2. To provide love, understanding and respect to each child
3. To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which young children can grow and learn
4. To provide exploratory experiences for each child, encompassing physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual needs
5. To develop a positive self-image in each child

Enrollment Requirements

TLC Preschool is open to all children from 3 through 5 years of age, regardless of race, creed or nationality. Enrollment is made on a first-come, first-served basis. Children must be the age of their class designation by September 15th of that school year (i.e., 3 years old by September 15th for the 3 year old class). It is preferred that children who attend TLC Preschool be toilet trained; however, special accommodations are possible for special needs children. Enrollment is accepted when the registration fee is paid and all enrollment forms are completed and turned in. A student is considered enrolled from September through May of a school year unless written notice is provided at least two weeks prior to withdrawal.

The application of special needs children is considered on an individual basis and involves a consultation between the Director, parents, and Board of Directors. General guidelines are that the child is able to benefit from the regular preschool program and that their presence will not be disruptive to the program and/or the health and safety of the other children. Enrollment is generally on a trial basis before a final decision is made.

Registration

Since classes are limited, applications are accepted on a first-come basis. Any vacancies are filled from waiting lists. A non-refundable registration fee is payable when initial application is made.

Please cooperate with TLC's request for forms. This is for the safety of your child and the State Department of Human Services requires that we have the requested information on file for each child enrolled. If a child does not have a completed set of forms, they will not be allowed to attend until those forms are complete.

Tuition Payment

Tuition is paid in advance at the beginning of each month. Tuition is considered late if not paid by the 5th of the month and a late fee will be assessed. Tuition payments can be placed in the black tuition box located in the preschool classroom.

If tuition is more than one month behind and arrangements have not been made, the child's enrollment in TLC Preschool will be revoked. There are no refunds or credits for short illnesses, absences or vacations. Tuition is not refunded due to weather-related cancellations.

TLC Preschool does depend on each month's tuition to pay expenses and we appreciate tuition being paid promptly. Checks can be made payable to TLC Preschool. Thank you!

School Calendar

TLC Preschool closely follows the Poudre R1 School District public school calendar to determine dates for major holidays and days off. A school calendar will be provided to you at the start of the school year. Please retain it for reference throughout the school year. Classes are not held on Parent-Teacher conference days in the fall and spring.

Class Schedule and Hours of Operation

Tuesday/Thursday – 3 Year Old Class
Monday/Wednesday/Friday – Pre-K Class

Preschool class time is from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Your promptness is appreciated. The classroom door is usually kept closed until just before class begins. Doors are kept closed so classroom preparations can be made undisturbed.

Arrival and Departure

Please come in the North door on the front of Trinity Lutheran Church, near the banner. If you come in that door and turn to your left, through the double doors, you will be outside the preschool classroom.

The classroom door will open just before the scheduled starting time so the day can begin. If you are waiting in the hallway, please do not allow your child to run up and down the hallway or to pound or knock on the closed door. Please bring your child into the classroom and help them get settled with an activity. If you have other children with you, please do not leave them in your car unattended!

Please remember to sign your child in and out each day. The State requires this!

Class ends at 12:00 pm. Please plan to pick your child up on time. If you will be delayed, please try to let us know so we can reassure your child that you are on your way. Chronic problems of lateness will be addressed. Please wait in the hallway for your child's class to be dismissed. Come in to the classroom to pick up your child and help them with their things. This will help us avoid congestion in the doorways.

Late Arrivals and Pick-Ups

If a parent and child arrive after the class has departed on a field trip, the parent may bring the child to the field trip location to join the group. They must stay with the child unless arrangements for their safe return to school are made. The child may not be left at the preschool if the group has already departed and the parent is unable to take them to the field trip location.

Please plan for children to be picked up on time. A staff member will remain with a child until the parent or designated person arrives. If a child is not picked up, staff will attempt to locate the parents at all phone numbers and locations provided and then those listed as emergency contacts will be phoned. If no one can be located to pick up the child, the director will assume responsibility for the child. The child may be taken to the director's home and efforts to contact the family will continue. At this point, the police and/or child protective services may be contacted.

Keeping You Informed

We use many methods of keeping you informed of the happenings at TLC Preschool – monthly calendars and newsletters, weekly lesson plans, notices in the hallway and notes home – but it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to check the bulletin board and read those calendars, newsletters and notices! If you have sitters or grandparents dropping off and picking up your child, we will do our best to help them get all necessary information to you.

Authorized and Unauthorized Pick-Up

No unauthorized person will be allowed to take a child from TLC Preschool. Anyone other than parents who may be picking a child up from school on a regular basis should be listed on the enrollment forms. In the event of a change in your regular pick-up pattern, please notify the school by telephone call or in person.

In the event of an attempted unauthorized pick up of a child, attempts will be made to contact a parent to verify this information. If verbal authorization is obtained, the child may leave with the person. If verification can not be made, the child cannot be allowed to leave with the person. If the person continues to attempt to take the child, they will be informed that they may be committing a crime and the police will be called. If necessary, the child will be taken by a staff

member to a safe, locked location (preschool office, church office or vacant classroom) until authorities arrive.

Parent Help

TLC Preschool encourages parents to participate in their child's preschool experience by being a parent helper when possible. Your participation helps to provide a quality preschool and you are also benefiting by having the opportunity to interact with and observe your child in the preschool setting. There may also be additional opportunities to help on field trips or for special events.

Discipline

The children and their welfare is the first concern at TLC Preschool. The preschool years are an exuberant time for children, during which they like to test the limits of acceptable social behavior. This is also a time when they begin to learn self-discipline and the rewards of getting along with others. There are three primary rules of discipline at our school:

1. We keep ourselves safe
2. We keep others safe
3. We keep our things safe

Staff will aid the children in gaining these skills in a positive manner; however, a child may still sometimes have difficulty in learning the skills. When an issue occurs, the following methods are used:

1. Talking with the child about their behavior, reminding them of the rules at school and the reasons for those rules.
2. Re-directing the child to another activity or group of children if a problem continues.
3. A time-out away from the class if problems continue or blatantly disrespectful behavior is occurring. Time-outs are brief, lasting 5 minutes at the maximum. Before releasing the child from time-out, a teacher will speak with the child. Following a teacher/child discussion of why the time-out occurred and ideas for solutions to the issue, the child will rejoin the group.

The use of logical consequences is a very effective method of teaching children and helping to explain rules. It is utilized whenever appropriate. The use of ridicule or corporal punishment is not tolerated.

If a chronic discipline problem continues, parents may be called to take a child home and a formal conference will be scheduled. Dismissal from the program will be considered when the health, safety and welfare of the child and/or that of other children in the program are at risk.

Illness and Communicable Diseases

A child should not be brought to school if they are not feeling well or has a fever. A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child appears ill upon arriving at school or while at school, the teacher is required by state law to send the child home. Often a child will ask to come to school even if they are sick. Although your child may be disappointed, please keep them home when ill. Please do phone the school if your child will be absent that day. If your child becomes ill while at school, they will be isolated from the group and parents will be contacted.

Please do not bring your child to school if they are exhibiting the following:

- Has a fever or has had one within 24 hours
- Has a new cold
- Has a constant runny nose and/or cough
- Has a sore throat
- Is fussy, cranky and generally not themselves
- Is overtired – rest at this time may prevent future illness
- Has any other symptoms of communicable illness

Please notify the school if your child does have a communicable illness (chicken pox, strep, conjunctivitis, etc.) We need to notify other parents and occasionally the Health Department if these illnesses are in our school.

We feel that if your child is well enough to attend school, they are well enough to participate in all activities, including those outside. Please don't ask us to keep them inside, as this is very difficult to arrange.

Medical Emergency

In the event of a minor injury to a child, staff will take appropriate measures such as cleaning a wound, applying ice, covering injury with bandage, etc. The date, time of injury, circumstances, measures taken and staff initials will be noted in an injury notebook in the first aid kit.

In the instance of a more serious injury requiring medical attention, attempts will first be made to contact parents or the authorized emergency contact person. If unsuccessful, the child's physician will be contacted. If necessary, authorized emergency personnel will be contacted or a staff person will transport the child to a medical facility. A detailed written report will be made and a copy provided to the child's parents.

By signing the Medical Consent form in the enrollment packet, parents agree to pay for any costs incurred by the preschool when seeking medical attention for their child. TLC Preschool is not responsible for any issues or difficulties arising as a result of false information provided on enrollment forms.

Medication Administration Policy

Due to the short time period children are at TLC Preschool and increasing legalities regarding the administration of medications, both prescription and non-prescription, staff at TLC Preschool WILL NOT administer any medications, with the exception of emergency medications, such as epi pens and Benadryl. In a short-term situation, a parent may return to the preschool or parent help that day in order to administer a medication. If a situation should arise involving long-term medication use, the staff and preschool board can take the issue under consideration on an individual basis.

Sunscreen and insect repellent will only be applied with written authorization and instructions for application by a parent or guardian.

Identifying Where Children Are At All Times

Those responsible for bringing children to school and picking them up are also responsible for signing them in and out each day as well as making sure that the teacher knows the child has arrived or is departing. Children will be supervised by an adult any time they leave the classroom, while in the classroom and on the playground. Please see section on Field Trips for information in that instance.

Lost Child

If a child is missing, other children will be left with one adult while the teacher and other available adults begin a thorough search of the premises. The other children will be questioned as to their knowledge of the missing child's whereabouts.

If the child is not located after a brief but thorough and complete search of the area, the authorities will be called for assistance and the child's parents will be contacted.

If a child is missing in a potentially more dangerous area such as a body of water, on a very busy street or highway, in large area which can't be quickly searched or is thought to be kidnapped, authorities and parents will be immediately contacted.

Snacks

Parents are asked to provide snacks for their child's class. Sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board. Birthdays will be noted so that day can be reserved for a special celebratory snack.

We try to keep snacks nutritious, but cookies occasionally are fine and special birthday treats are always fun! The Health Department does have regulations stating that snacks must be commercially prepared, which is packaged or from a commercial bakery or food preparer. Fresh fruits or vegetables should be carefully washed and, if necessary, cut into appropriate sizes.

A Snack Suggestion List is available if you need help with ideas. Parents are asked to provide enough snack and beverage (milk or 100% juice) for their child's class, plus teachers and any parent helpers. Snack foods with artificial sweeteners are not allowed.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal parent-teacher conferences will be held in the spring. Sign-up sheets are posted ahead of time for your convenience. If you have concerns or questions at other times, please let Brenda know and I will always be happy to take time to meet with you.

Dress

Preschool should be a place where children can experiment with many kinds of materials, including paint, water, glue and sand. In order for your child to feel comfortable, they should have suitable clothing that will not inhibit them. We do our best to keep your child's clothing clean by using smocks, etc., but spills will occur. Clothing should be comfortable, sturdy and washable. Rubber-soled or sturdy shoes and sandals are suggested. Thong sandals and dress shoes are not suitable for the playground area.

During changeable fall and spring days, please send a sweater or light jacket for your child. We will go outside most days during the winter so your child will need a hat, mittens and boots as well as their coat. Snow pants are also recommended when there is a lot of snow. Snow is one of nature's most fabulous play materials! Please label your child's clothing. Many times mittens and boots end up in a heap on the floor and we often have the same brands and styles of items.

Children's Belongings

Children are each assigned a cubby or locker space. Personal belongings such as coats, backpacks, etc. are to be kept hung on the hook or in the cubby space. The preschool cannot be responsible for breakage or missing items if these guidelines are not followed.

We do suggest a backpack to bring home artwork, book order forms, etc.

Children should not bring money with them to school unless it is for a field trip or special activity, in which case it should promptly be given to the teacher.

Candy, gum and stickers should not be brought to school unless it is something to be shared with everyone and it will be passed out just prior to dismissal. We do not allow toy weapons or violent toys at school please.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a very special time and we will have a small celebration for each birthday. Parents are encouraged to parent help and provide snack on the day designated for the celebration (in the instance that your child's birthday doesn't fall on a class day). Summer birthdays can be celebrated in September (for late summer birthdays) or in May (for early summer birthdays).

Fire Evacuation

In the event of a fire, the children will be led in a quick, orderly manner to the South door and across the parking lot to the playground. The children will stay at the far end of the playground, away from the building until it is possible to return to the building or until a parent/authorized person can pick them up.

If the South door is blocked by fire, the children will be led into the hallway and out the East door, across the parking lot and away from the building. In both instances, the Director will be responsible for obtaining information forms so that parents can be notified.

Fire drills will be held regularly throughout the school year in order to acquaint the children with appropriate procedures during this emergency.

Inclement Weather

If public schools are closed due to inclement weather, then TLC Preschool will also close. Staff will attempt to phone families to inform them of a closure. In the event of a closure when public schools are not closed, staff will phone all families to inform them of this closure.

Tornado/Weather Alert

In the event of a tornado or severe weather alert or warning, the children will be led to the a storage room down the hall as these have no windows. The children will kneel on the floor with heads down and covered by their arms.

Other Emergency Evacuation

In the event of a bomb threat or attack of another kind within the building, evacuation procedures following the Fire Evacuation procedure will be implemented. Once the children are safely removed from the building, they will be led across the bridge to PFA Fire Station #3 at 2000 Mathews St. or to the Mountain Center at 419 E. Stuart St, which is directly east of Trinity Lutheran Church.

Field Trips

Children must have the signed permission of a parent or guardian on file with TLC Preschool in order to participate in a field trip. Only the MWF 4/5 year old Pre-K Class participates in field trips.

TLC Preschool adheres to all state seatbelt and child restraint seat laws on all field trips. All children and adults must be seated and wear a seat belt while a vehicle is in motion. Each adult and child must be in an individual seat belt. Children will be belted into an appropriate child restraint seat in accordance with state age and weight limits. Children are not allowed in the front seat of vehicles. Drivers will abide by safety standards and rules of the road.

Parent drivers must have vehicle liability insurance as well as a current driver's license and good motor vehicle record. Adult-to-child ratios must be maintained during field trips and name tags which include the school name and phone number will be worn by the students. Several times during the field trip, staff will see that all children are accounted for. Vehicles from each class should travel together so there will be help available in the event of an emergency on the road. Staff will have student information with them on all field trips in order to be able to contact a parent or doctor.

Special Activities Supervision Policy

When a child's parent or other authorized person is present for a special school activity (program, fundraiser, etc.) either during or after school hours, the staff members are not responsible for the supervision and safety of that child. Staff will be responsible for children during programs until performances are completed and the children are released to their parents or other authorized person.

If a child's parents are not present at the activity, staff will maintain responsibility for the child, unless another parent has agreed to take responsibility, or until a parent or authorized person arrives for the child.

Visitors

All visitors to the preschool will immediately check in with the Director. New or unknown visitors to the preschool are required to sign-in and a staff member will

check ID to verify the visitor's identity. Visitors will be in the presence of a staff person at all times and will never be left alone with preschool students.

Television, Video and DVD Viewing Policy

The viewing of television programming is not part of the preschool curriculum. On occasion, a special show, tape or DVD may be viewed to complement a theme or Bible lesson. Such occasions will be 30 minutes or less of class time.

Reporting Child Abuse

All staff at TLC Preschool is required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse. The Director will contact the appropriate authorities at The Colorado State Department of Human Services and local law enforcement agencies.

Complaints

If a parent has a concern or complaint regarding the care of their child or school policies and procedures, they must first arrange a conference with the Director. All efforts will be made to see that a resolution is arrived at fairly. If a parent feels that a concern is not adequately addressed by the Director, the TLC Preschool Board President may be contacted.

To report a licensing complaint, call 1-800-799-5876 or contact the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Care, 1575 Sherman Street, 1st Floor, Denver, CO 80302-1714.

Closing Procedure

Classrooms are picked up, with toys and supplies put away or prepared for the next day. Playground toys are put away in baskets and bikes are secured in the shed. All classrooms and bathrooms are checked for children. Sign-in and out logs are checked to see that all children were picked up. Windows are closed, classroom lights turned off and classroom doors are locked. South classroom door is secured and the preschool office door is locked. Preschool entrance door is locked if last one out of the building.