



2022-23 Parent Handbook

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

Welcome all Parents	PH-1
Philosophy	PH-3
Our Goal	PH-5
Who We Are	PH-7
Our Mission Statement	PH-9
Statement of Services	PH-11
Hours and Days	PH-11
Hurricane/Disaster Closings	PH-11
Emergency Closings/Pandemic or Similar Situations	PH-12
Reducing the Spread of Pandemic Illness	PH-12
Cases of COVID	PH-12
Returning to School after Pandemic Illness	PH-13
Important Role of Parents/Guardians	PH-13
Emergency Evacuation	PH-13
Other Closures	PH-13
State Licensing	PH-13
Worship Services and Classes	PH-14
Administrative Team	PH-14
Administrative Requirements	PH-14
Admission and Withdrawal	PH-15
Paperwork, Forms and Annual Renewal	PH-15
Preschool Program Dates	PH-15
Student Drop-Off	PH-15
Student Pick-Up	PH-15
Parking Policy	PH-16
Information Change	PH-16
Immunization Requirements	PH-16
Medication	PH-16
Topical Non-Medicated Physical Barriers	PH-16
Allergies	PH-16
Illness and Continued Health	PH-16-17
Accident Reports	PH-17
Children Requiring Special Accommodations	PH-17
Discipline Policy	PH-17-18
Behavior Intervention Policy	PH-19
Parent/Teacher Conferences	PH-20
Biting Policy	PH-20
Potty Training	PH-20-21
Clothing	PH-21
Toys	PH-21
Supplies	PH-21
Curriculum	PH-21
Preschool Curriculum	PH-22
Daily Schedule	PH-22-23

Music Classes	PH-23
Accreditation	PH-23
Class Divisions and Class Size	PH-23
Student to Teacher Ratios	PH-24
Summer Camp	PH-24
Our Staff	PH-24
Staff and Family Relationships	PH-24
Written Communication	PH-24-25
Verbal Communication	PH-25
Parental Involvement	PH-25
Policy for Parents Who Cannot Participate in Special Events	PH-25-26
Children's Birthdays	PH-26
Visiting the Center	PH-26
Classifications	PH-26
Volunteers	PH-26
Intruders	PH-27
Meals and Snacks	PH-27
Portraits and Pictures	PH-27
Dress Code	PH-28
Registration and Materials Fees	PH-28
Weekly Tuition Fees	PH-28
Tuition Adjustments due to Potential Closure	PH-29
Payment Policies and Procedures	PH-29
Florida Voluntary Pre-K Program	PH-29
Discounts	PH-29
Refunds	PH-29
Receipts and Statements	PH-29
Late Pick-Up	PH-29-30
Vacations, Absences and Leaving the Center	PH-30
Quiet Time	PH-30
Child Abuse Reporting Policy	PH-31
Insurance Requirements	PH-31
Additions and Changes	PH-31
Weekly Events	PH-31
Additional Ministries & Programs	PH-31

Epiphany Lutheran Church & School

Welcome!!

Dear Parents:

God's blessings to you and your family!!! Welcome to our center! We are excited to have you as a part of our family. At ELCS every child is important. Our program is academically rich and designed to promote your child's growth and development. Thank you for choosing ELCS for your child.

A transition into any unfamiliar environment can be challenging and cause anxiety for any child or adult. Our staff is trained to be alert and aware of your child's reaction to their new environment and will be sensitive to their feelings. After enrolling your child at ELCS, your child may visit and be introduced to his/her new teacher. This will also give you an opportunity to get to know the teachers and staff involved in the care of your child prior to their first day.

Separation anxiety is common, and your child may resist being left at ELCS in the beginning. However, after several days, drop-off becomes easier. We suggest that after you do the necessary signing in and walking your child to class, simply give your child a hug and assure them that you will return for them that afternoon to pick them up – Then leave. Prolonging your departure could cause more anxiety for your child. We encourage parents to call any time during the day to see how their child is adjusting. If needed, the director will be happy to provide additional suggestions for a smooth and enjoyable transition into the school environment for both you and your child.

This handbook will help you understand our center goals and policies. Our guidelines are all designed to make sure that each child receives the best education possible. Please look over the information given, so that you are familiar with our operation and guidelines. Also included with this packet is the paperwork for your child's file. Please complete these and return them.

Lastly, to ensure that your child's time at ELCS is as enjoyable and comfortable as possible please bring the following items:

- A complete change of clothes
- A small child-sized blanket for rest or nap
- A familiar cuddly toy to be used at nap time

Additionally, please always label everything with your child's name.

We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child and providing a rich learning environment where all our children develop to their full potential. Thank you for choosing our center for your child's early childhood experience!

In His Holy Name,

Carolyn Einsteder

Early Childhood Director

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EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY:

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL *views children as a resource given by God and acknowledges its responsibility for their care and nurture. Thus,*

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL carries out its mission by establishing and maintaining a program of school care for children of the congregation and community. The purpose of the school is to provide a safe, secure, and caring setting in which children are nurtured in a Christian environment. In addition to providing for the physical care of children, the school will provide settings and programs for Christian nurture and family ministry.



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EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

OUR GOAL

Through the activities in our school curriculum, children will:

- ❖ **GROW SPIRITUALLY**: Children will develop a sense of trust, realize their need for God's love, know Jesus as their personal Savior, respond to God's love and care and see themselves as God's children.
- ❖ **GROW EMOTIONALLY**: Children will develop a positive self-concept, be free to risk failure and be comfortable with mistakes, develop a sense of security and trust, show independence, and demonstrate self-responsibility and channel emotions into appropriate and acceptable avenues.
- ❖ **GROW SOCIALLY**: Children will learn to play, work, and communicate with their peers and adults, adjust to group situations, accept others even though they may be different from themselves, develop a sense of community and accept change in their environment and routines.
- ❖ **GROW PHYSICALLY**: Children will develop gross motor and fine motor coordination, develop hand-eye and foot-eye coordination, and become aware of his or her own body.
- ❖ **GROW INTELLECTUALLY**: Children will continue to develop language skills and understanding, develop pre-reading skills such as visual and auditory discrimination, develop an ever-increasing attention span, be able to complete the tasks that he or she has started and initiate his or her own activities.
- ❖ **GROW CREATIVELY**: Children will view himself or herself as a unique individual created and valued by God, express ideas in his or her own unique way, be free to create artistically using a variety of media and develop his or her God given talents and abilities.



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WHO WE ARE

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL is a ministry of EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD. We exist as an extension and out-reach arm of the church. Our mission is to provide for the basic needs of childcare and after school care for the children of our community. We choose to do this in a Christian and caring environment. It is our desire to share Christ daily in our programs, curriculum, actions, and attitudes. Our vision is: to provide ministry and service to children ranging in ages from 2 through 5 in our preschool and K-5th grade in our afterschool program; to minister to up to 90+ different students each week; and to see the children and families come to grow in Christ.

EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH is an evangelical, Bible-centered, Bible preaching church, which stands upon the Word of God, and its principles. We believe it is important to be up-to-date and alive in the practice of our faith, while holding to the Bible. We are a self-governing church and membership is open to all that have a personal faith in and walk with Jesus Christ.

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod is made up of more than 2.3 million baptized members in more than 6,100 congregations and more than 9,000 pastors. Two seminaries and ten colleges and universities operate under the auspices of the LCMS, and its congregations operate the largest Protestant parochial school system in America.

What We Believe:

- We Believe** *That all scripture is inspired by God, profitable for teaching, reproof for correction and training in right living. The Bible is our standard and measure for living daily.*
- We Believe** *That God exists eternally, as one, in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*
- We Believe** *In God, as the absolute and sole creator of the universe.*
- We Believe** *God became a man in our Lord, Jesus Christ. He was born of a virgin, was crucified, died, and was buried and resurrected. Later He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God and Father. He is the head of the church, and He is our only mediator between God and man.*
- We Believe** *That because Jesus died and rose again, we can have salvation and forgiveness from sin by faith in the work Jesus did on the cross. Our salvation is by God's grace alone.*
- We Believe** *It is the goal of every Christian to grow into "Spiritual Maturity" and discover what God would have them do in His service. This growth comes through searching the Scriptures, Church fellowship, and the leading by God's Holy Spirit. This is a life-long journey.*
- We Believe** *That the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Triune God, and that He will direct us in our daily living as a Christian.*
- We Believe** *The Holy Spirit is working in the church today; leading and guiding His people in our daily walk with God.*
- We Believe** *The purpose of the Church is to lead people to Jesus Christ, to personal growth and discipleship and to Mission Outreach at home and around the world.*

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Mission Statement

“The Epiphany Early Learning Center’s mission is to create a nurturing and educational environment that is essential in the preparation of young minds for a lifetime of development based on Christian values as revealed in the life of our Savior, Jesus Christ”

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STATEMENT OF SERVICES:

ELCS is a year-round program that offers preschool teaching for children ages 2 to 5 years. Our daily activities and program consist of a flexible schedule that has been created to provide diversity and challenge for children in all age groups. We offer a structured program for children of all ages that includes 42 weeks of carefully planned curriculum. Our activities include school readiness skills, arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor play, and story time. We offer Full Time and Part Time spots. The remaining 10 weeks of school is summer camp, and no curriculum is taught during this time. Fun filled activities are planned during the summer camp weeks.

HOURS AND DAYS:

ELCS is open from 7:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Parents are asked not to arrive at 6pm to begin the pickup process; 5:45pm is preferable. This will allow the closing staff to do end of day procedures and close the building promptly at 6pm.

We are closed New Year's Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day. If holidays fall on a weekend day, the weekday closest to that day will be observed as the holiday. (i.e., July 4th falls on a Sunday – ELCS will be closed on Monday.) See actual dates below.

All holidays will be charged at the regular rate. No credit or make up days will be granted for these scheduled holidays. You must still pay your full weekly tuition rate. The following is a list of scheduled holidays that the school will be closed or an early closing day. Please mark these dates on your calendar:

Monday, September 5, 2022	Labor Day
Thursday, November 24, 2022	Thanksgiving Day
Friday, November 25, 2022	Thanksgiving Day Friday
Monday, December 26, 2022	Observe Christmas Day
Monday, January 2, 2023	Observe New Year' Day
Monday, February 20, 2023	Presidents' Day
Friday, April 7, 2023	Good Friday
Monday, May 29, 2023	Memorial Day
Tuesday, July 4, 2023	Independence Day

HURRICANE/DISASTER CLOSINGS:

ELCS will make every effort to remain open during hurricane warnings and other disaster related situations.

Epiphany will endeavor to follow Palm Beach County School District closings in preparation for hurricanes or tropical storms, with reopening based on condition of facility and notification via email, phone, television, and postings on premises. Full tuition payment is expected and due when school is closed due to conditions beyond our control (hurricanes, tropical storms, power failure, etc.). No credit or make up days will be granted due to these emergency closings. When emergency closings extend five (5) days or more, you will be given the option of using your available vacation week in lieu of a tuition payment.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/PANDEMIC OR SIMILAR SITUATION:

When a staff or child attending our school tests positive for COVID-19 – the school or classrooms may be closed anywhere from 2 – 15 days. Families will be immediately informed via email, phone call or in person. Staff will also be informed immediately and if needed, potentially exposed staff and students will need to be tested. We will follow the guidelines in place as per the Palm Beach County Health Department.

Epiphany will endeavor to follow the guidelines from local public health facilities along with the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The Guidelines below are specific to the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines may be subject to change with other pandemic situations.

The following information is provided by the Florida Department of Health regarding the “Guidance for Child Care Providers”:

Reducing The Spread Within the School

Effective strategies for preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the facility include:

- Endeavor to keep children and staff more than six feet apart.
- Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts, including devising a schedule, and focus on toys, games and other objects and surfaces that are frequently used.
- Modify drop-off and pick-up procedures to include thorough screening.
- Maintain an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety.
- If possible, children and childcare providers shall not change from one group to another.
- If more than one group of children is cared for at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room and not mix or interact with each other. (If possible)
- Immediate exclusion of anyone who is symptomatic, who has tested positive for COVID-19, or who is a close contact to a case of COVID-19.

Cases Of Covid-19:

Once a case of COVID-19 (a person with a positive PCR or antigen laboratory result, regardless of symptoms) is identified among a child or staff, we will identify all close contacts associated with the family who had exposure to the case during the infectious period. A case is typically considered to be infections from 48 hours before symptoms first appeared (or date of first positive laboratory test for people without symptoms) up to 10 days later.

We will notify parents and other relevant contacts of the exposure. In addition, we may have to temporarily close the classroom(s) where the COVID-19 case was and disinfect. Additionally, we will work closely with the local county health department staff.

Return To Child Care:

For close contacts who develop symptoms within the 14 days, they should seek medical care and testing. If their COVID-19 test is negative, then they can return to school after 10 days have passed since the last exposure to the case and if their symptoms have resolved. If their test is positive, they will be considered a case of COVID-19 and should follow the guidance for cases as stated below.

An alternative quarantine option that asymptomatic close contacts may include being tested by PCR on Day 6 or later. If negative, they may leave quarantine after Day 7. Without being tested, quarantine can end after Day 10, if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.

Cases of COVID-19 should be allowed to return to the facility after meeting the following criteria:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; if asymptomatic, they should be allowed to return 10 days after their positive lab test.
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.

IMPORTANT ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

School Administration and teachers will communicate clearly and frequently with parent and guardians about keeping children home if they are symptomatic, have tested positive for COVID-19, or have had close contact to a case of COVID-19. Additionally, parents and guardians should screen their children prior to bringing them to school to ensure that students are not symptomatic. Symptomatic child should be taken to a medical provider to be appropriately evaluated and tested.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION:

We routinely practice “fire drills” with the children to be prepared for any situation that would force us to evacuate in a timely fashion. The emergency may not be of an extreme nature such as fire or hurricane, an emergency evacuation may be necessary for situations such as loss of electrical power or building flood.

Our emergency evacuation plan is to move all children and staff to one of our alternate buildings on property site: The Church Sanctuary or Emmaus/Seed Hall. Both Epiphany buildings are utilized daily and would provide the necessary means of safety for our children and staff.

In any situation, once we have all children evacuated to a safe location, we then will notify all parents of the emergency and evacuation location.

A written Emergency Evacuation Plan and Release Form are included in each enrollment packet. Completion and signature are required to allow us to keep your child safe should an emergency evacuation become necessary.

OTHER CLOSURES:

ELCS will be closed a minimum of five days during the school year for professional development and teacher workdays. The Professional Development days for 2022 are scheduled as follows: Monday, August 1 through Friday, August 5th. The first four days of the week are teacher development and teacher planning. The last day of this week will be an Open House for all parents to come and meet their child’s teacher.

STATE LICENSING:

We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with the state licensing regulations to ensure a quality environment for your children. ELCS complies with the applicable state licensing

regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facility, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios.

WORSHIP SERVICES AND CLASSES:

We are excited to welcome you into our family in Christ and to have the opportunity to share the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with you and your family. We invite you to join us in worship and giving thanks as we grow in the saving grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We offer the following worship services as well as Sunday School and fellowship time

Worship Times:

9:00am – Contemporary Worship Service
11:00am – Traditional Worship Service

10:20am —Children’s Sunday School

Wednesday Children’s Chapel Preschool 10:00am & Aftercare 3:00pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Study 7:00pm-8:00pm
Thursday Bible 101 Bible Study 6:30pm -7:30pm

Lutheran Teachings/Lutheran Classes are offered throughout the year to all families and is FREE to all preschool families & staff, visitors, and friends. This class will educate those who are currently non-members of the Lutheran faith—learn about the Lutheran teachings, beliefs, sacraments, and history of our church. Topics in this ongoing series will include Holy Baptism, The Lord’s Supper, The Lord’s Prayer, The Apostle’s Creed, the Ten Commandments, and more.

As part of our preschool family at Epiphany, our congregational families and members include you, your child, and family in our Sunday prayers. Each week a preschool family is designated in our Sunday worship as our ***“Preschool Family of the Week.”*** Please complete the worship form included in your enrollment packet so we may be able to include your family members in our weekly prayers and special greetings of the congregation.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM:

ELCS has an administrative team to help with school communications and supervision of the preschool. The administrative team consists of the Director, Assistant Director and Pastor. Any one of these people can assist you with questions or concerns.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Enrollment in our program is open to all families of our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex, or national origin. Only the child(ren)’s parent or legal guardian may enroll a child(ren). Proof of custody will be required. All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend ELCS. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell, and work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to the center upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. ELCS must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)’s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this Parent’s Handbook. All personal and medical information submitted on enrollment forms and or other requested documentation is not disclosed without parent authorization. This information is retained in child’s file for reference if needed.

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL:

Parents wishing to enroll their children in the center are encouraged to come and tour the center and meet the director, assistant director, and their children's Lead Teacher. (Tours are scheduled at the parent's convenience anytime between the hours of 10:00 am – 3:00 pm - Monday through Friday). The purpose of the informal tour is to answer any questions you might have concerning our policies and procedures. At this time, we will give you a copy of the parent's handbook and any forms necessary to enroll your child(ren) in the center. All children shall be considered continuously enrolled from the time of enrollment until they are formally withdrawn according to the procedure outlined in the section "VACATIONS, ABSENCES, AND LEAVING THE CENTER" on page PH-30.)

PAPERWORK, FORMS and ANNUAL RENEWAL:

We are required by the state to have current and updated information on each child in our center. This is also for your safety. As mentioned above, we require all forms to be filled out on each child prior to their initial attendance at ELCS. Also, each year upon enrollment we will have you renew and refresh all your paperwork and all forms. Upon receipt of your enrollment form, the annual registration fees and annual material fees will be collected.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM DATE:

Our 2022-23 preschool program begins on Monday, August 8, 2022 and ends on Friday, May 26, 2023. A student is enrolled and accepted into the Epiphany program with the understanding that he/she will remain for the full preschool year. Families have the option of keeping their child enrolled at Epiphany throughout the summer months. Our summer camp program immediately follows the school year and runs for the full summer.

STUDENT DROP-OFF:

Parents must accompany their child(ren) into the ELCS lobby every morning and check in their child(ren) immediately before dropping them off in the appropriate room. All families will be given a security code to enter building and registered to use to check in system to clock in their child(ren). The check in/out system is in the front lobby of the school building.

We require all children have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. If any of these things are determined, the child must go home immediately.

Children will not be permitted to come to school after 10:00am without a doctor's note. If arrival time is 9:00 or later, administrative staff will bring child to their classroom.

STUDENT PICK-UP:

All children must be picked up and clocked out by an adult and/or person approved by the parent and the center. All children must be clocked out before being picked up from their classroom. Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick the child up, ***must*** be listed on the Pick-up List included on the Enrollment Form or be approved in writing by a parent. In an emergency, parents may call the center and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. However, this is strongly discouraged. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto ELCS property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem. Anyone not recognized by sight will be asked for a picture ID. In the event anyone out of the ordinary is to pick-up the child, please alert the office prior to that time. This is in addition to them being on the Enrollment form or approval as stated above. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office and make changes on this form whenever necessary. This form is renewed annually.

PARKING POLICY:

ELCS has parking spaces in front of the school building. Please use these spaces when you come into drop-off or pick-up your child(ren). We strongly urge you to turn your car off and lock it. ELCS is not responsible for items lost or stolen from cars or from the parking lot or facility.

INFORMATION CHANGE:

Parents are to notify the center of any change in home or work phone numbers and addresses. This is for your safety so that we may reach you in an emergency. The center requires that someone listed on the Pick-Up List of each child be available within thirty (30) minutes notice to come and pick up a sick child or a child that ELCS has determined needs to go home. It is required that all changes of phone numbers, places of employment, residence changes or changes in pick-up information be turned into the office immediately. Please give the director written notice of the change as soon as possible.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:

All children enrolled must have their immunization records up-to-date or provide an exemption affidavit. The child's immunization record must be provided by the parent and all information must be current. The parent shall also provide proof of this with a form signed by a health care provider. This form will state that the child has received all current, age-appropriate immunizations. Parent's wishing to take a religious exemption must contact the Health Department to find out the proper procedure for providing an affidavit of such a religious opposition. We have adopted the public-school policy "No Shots; No School; No Kidding."

MEDICATION:

It is our policy NOT TO dispense medication. If your child needs medication to be administered during school hours, please arrange to come, and administer the medication. The exception to this rule would be an EpiPen. EpiPen's must be in its original packaging and must have a permanent sticker with the child's name and the date the medication was left at the center. A "Medication Permission Form" needs to be filled out and kept with the EpiPen.

TOPICAL NON-MEDICATED PHYSICAL BARRIERS:

Sunscreen and insect repellent can be applied ONLY with the signed parental/legal Epiphany consent form. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to supply the lotion, spray, or ointment for the child. It is recommended that all parents apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to Epiphany each morning. We will apply the sunscreen and/or bug repellent once a day before the child goes outside to play in the afternoon.

ALLERGIES:

We must be aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. If your child has any known food allergies, you will need to note the allergies on the Enrollment Form. This allows us to alert all staff to be aware of their allergy. This form is updated annually. We also need to be aware of any non-food allergies that can affect your child. If your child has any non-food allergies, please note this on the Enrollment Forms as well.

ILLNESS AND CONTINUED HEALTH:

These guidelines are for the welfare of the children. To provide a safe and healthy environment, we rely on our parents to monitor their children with these guidelines in mind. Outdoor play is essential to your child's development. We feel that if your child is too sick to play outdoors then they are too sick for group care. A child that is ill or has a temperature of one hundred degrees or above should be kept at home. All children shall have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior, see the Drop-Off section (PH-16). A child that is too ill to remain in the center shall be supervised and cared for until the child can be cared for elsewhere. The child will be sent home if he/she is running a

temperature of over one hundred degrees, if he/she is vomiting or has diarrhea, or if it is suspected that he/she has a contagious illness. In the event you are called to come pick up an ill child, **you must pick your child up within 30 minutes.** If a child needs to be sent home and their parents are unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts listed on the Pick-up List. The center reserves the right to request the child see a physician or have a physician's note prior to returning.

Each child will be treated on an individual basis to determine when a child is well enough to return to Epiphany. In all cases involving a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, **a child must be fever-free; vomit free and diarrhea-free continually for a 24-hour period without medication and or fever reducing medication before returning to school.** The staff will informally evaluate each child each morning for any of the above symptoms and/or communicable diseases. It is our desire to maintain a healthy environment and to do so, we need the cooperation of all families. **We sympathize with the hardship's parents must endure when they must miss work due to their child being ill but keeping all students and staff healthy is our priority.**

Please notify staff immediately of any contagious illnesses so that we may take the necessary steps to alert other parents. Following an illness due to a communicable disease, a written note from a physician is required before a child may return stating that the child is no longer communicable or contagious.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS:

Safety is a top priority of EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL. Yet, there are times when a child will have an accident/ incident with another child. If the accident/incident requires "more than a hug and/or TLC," our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. The Incident Report is prepared and signed by the teacher who witnessed the incident. The report will also be reviewed and signed by the director or assistant director before being sent home. A copy of the Incident Report will be sent home and will require you to review; sign and return to your child's teacher. The original Incident Report will remain with your child's teacher. This system is aimed at ensuring communication at all levels and can be a particularly effective way to be certain things are not forgotten in a hasty departure. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child's privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. It not only puts our staff in an awkward situation but could cause a confrontation between families. We will handle all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate manner.

CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

ELCS complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We desire to make special accommodations for children who require such accommodations, provided it is within our power and authority to do so. Accommodations can be a specific treatment prescribed by a professional or a parent, or a modification of equipment, or removal of physical barriers. The accommodation shall be recorded in the child's file. Whenever we deem it appropriate to the needs of the child to have a child with special needs in our center, the entire staff must follow the reasonable accommodations we have made for that child. Any questions about the accommodations of the child should be referred to the Administrative Team.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

We believe that children need limits to feel secure about themselves and their environment. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. The basis for our Discipline Policy is an organized classroom and prepared staff members. At ELCS, we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and the child. We also believe that if an

interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, then discipline problems are at a minimum.

If inappropriate behavior does occur, we begin with a positive approach.

According to licensing rules for childcare centers in the state of FLORIDA:

Behavior Management and Guidance:

Attention spans and skills of children shall be considered so that caregivers do not require behavior of children which is developmentally inappropriate.

- (a) Discipline shall be reasonable, appropriate, and in terms the children can understand.
- (b) Praise and encouragement of good behavior shall be used instead of focusing upon unacceptable behavior only.
- (c) Language that is shaming, humiliating, frightening, verbally abusive, or injurious to children shall not be used.
- (d) Discipline shall not be related to food, rest, or toileting.
- (e) Spanking or any other type of corporal punishment is prohibited. ("Corporal punishment" is the infliction of bodily pain as a penalty for behavior of which the punisher disapproves.)

The following is considered unacceptable behavior:

Running in the classroom	Leaving the area or group without permission
Becoming disruptive	Removing shoes or other articles of clothing
Throwing toys, rocks, sand	Using toys and materials inappropriately
Aggressive behavior	Abusive, or inappropriate language
Arguing with team members or other children	Lack of Cooperation
Behavior determined by the Director to be unacceptable	
Hurting themselves or others, such as hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, and pulling hair	

The teacher has these prime responsibilities when dealing with inappropriate behavior:

- 1) **Redirection** - Encourage child's good behavior and/or redirect his or her activity.
- 2) **"Time out" or "think time" within their area**
 - a) If a problem still exists, the child is then removed from the situation
 - b) One minute per year of age, no more than three minutes after the child has regained control or composure.
 - c) "Time out" or "think time" shall be defined as an area away from the group or activity yet within their area.
 - d) The child will be allowed to return to the group as soon as possible.
 - e) The teacher will not only decide if the child is ready to return, but will encourage him/her to be ready.
 - f) If redirection and "time out" / "think time" periods are not sufficient, staff members intervene as soon as possible to prevent physical or emotional injury.
 - g) The teacher will try to help the child identify his/her unacceptable behavior and possible alternatives
- 3) **"Time out" or "think time" away from the group**
 - a) If the child continues in the inappropriate behavior
 - b) And/or the "time out" / "think time" with-in the area becomes either inappropriate or ineffective
- 4) **Behavior Report**
 - a) If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate
 - b) OR the severity denotes an un-resolved problem.

5) Sending a child home

- a) When the child becomes out of control
- b) And/or when the child fails to respond to the measures taken by the **ELCS** staff
- c) This is at the discretion of the Director or the most senior team member present

6) Termination of services

- a) When the severity of a problem is great enough that it could endanger the safety of the child(ren)'s welfare
- b) Termination may be effective immediately after consulting the Administrative Team member present
- c) The parent or guardian will be notified.
- d) The Center considers this to be a drastic measure and would not resort to such termination unless the child's behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of one or more of the other children or team members and, that threat cannot be eliminated.

In addition to the above, the center will use two methods to track behavior and communicate with parents.

- 1) Daily Reports – teacher may communicate child's behavior on this report. If the teacher deems necessary, a copy will be kept on file.
- 2) The "Incident Report" –These forms are completed by the staff member that witnessed the incident. Director or Assistant Director sign these forms. A copy will go home for parent to review, sign, and return to their child's teacher. Teacher will file the original.
- 3) The center reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of a child according to our "Discipline Policy" and or the "Behavior Intervention Policy." The center also reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of any child whose parent and or guardian has become a problem at the center or who has developed and un-cooperative, aggressive, dissatisfied, or angry demeanor towards the center, its policies, or its staff.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION POLICY:

At **ELCS**, our vision is to provide the best education to the most children possible. We strive to help every child be successful and to achieve their highest potential. We implement the Behavior Intervention Policy when needed to ensure this happens.

A Behavior Intervention Meeting may be called in three different manners:

1. The primary teacher or a member of the Administrative Team may call for a Behavior Intervention Meeting at any time prior to the third disciplinary action as they deem necessary.
2. Either parent may call for a Behavior Intervention Meeting at any time prior to the third disciplinary action as they deem necessary.
3. A Behavior Intervention Meeting may be requested after the third Behavior Report is sent home.

Under the first two scenarios, our first goal will be to determine and identify the behavioral difficulties that the child is having. The child's primary teacher will document the circumstances surrounding the behavior and the current actions that are being taken to correct this. Parents will then be asked to provide information concerning any changes in the home and will give input if they have noticed this behavior and what actions they are currently taking to correct it. A plan of action will then be discussed and agreed upon by all member's present. If problems continue, an additional intervention will be scheduled.

The approach will vary slightly in the case where a mandatory Behavior Intervention Meeting has been called after the third Behavior Report. Our first goal will be to determine if our program is appropriate for the needs of the child. Services will be terminated if it is determined that we cannot meet the child's needs in our program. We will follow the steps listed above if we determine our program is appropriate for the child's special needs.

ELCS expects parental involvement and cooperation in all aspects of discipline. Failure to comply can warrant termination. We reserve the right to discontinue work with any child/parent whose needs we cannot meet. The key to effective discipline is consistency. We try to be as consistent as possible in all areas. We provide the child with a warm and loving atmosphere in which to grow and learn.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE:

Parent/Teacher conferences are held on an as needed basis. If at any time a Lead Teacher feels that your child is not progressing towards their next targeted milestone, a conference will be scheduled. An agreed upon time will be coordinated with teacher, parents, and administrative team (if necessary.)

BITING POLICY:

Biting is a common and a developmentally appropriate behavior in young children, especially from 9-30 months. Children over the age of three have developed more appropriate ways to communicate. Experts in the field of child development report that biting occurs chiefly because of a child's incapacity to communicate. Children may become upset by a new experience and may bite as a response. While biting during the toddler years is developmentally appropriate, it is upsetting to parents and caregivers when it occurs, the goal of our policy is to replace the child's undesirable behavior with a more effective way of communication and to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our program.

The following is a plan of our pre-emptive strategies:

- When children bite out of frustration or anger, behavior will be redirected to some other activity and/or will be shown an alternate way to communicate what they want. We will encourage the use of language to express wants and needs.
- Parents of both children involved will be notified if their child was involved in a biting incident. However, to protect the privacy of all our families, each parent will not be told who the other child is.
- If a child bites frequently, staff will utilize a more intensive approach which involves carefully observing the child to determine precipitating events and maintaining a log to help track the behavior. Conferences with parents may also be utilized to discuss the child's actions at home, search for outside resources, etc.
- Biting incidents will be communicated to the parents of the biter to ensure staff and parents are working together to understand and prevent this behavior.

To ensure the safety of all children, if all attempts to stop chronic biting fail, we reserve the right to remove the biting child from the program.

POTTY TRAINING CHILDREN

ELCS believes that toilet training should start with the parents at home. Our staff will be here *to assist* and *continue that training* within the classroom.

While being potty-trained, he/she will wear pull-ups with side tabs. Together we will transition him/her into regular 'big boy' or 'big girl' underpants. NO diapers allowed. Please be sure you have packed extra clothes, shoes, socks and most importantly undergarments for your child. If your child does not have clean clothes to be changed into, he/she will be loaned Epiphany clothes that must be

laundered and returned the next day. All soiled clothing must be removed daily from the classroom upon pick-up.

Please note, all aspects of our potty-training policy have been set in place to assure all families of a sanitary and healthy classroom.

CLOTHING:

We encourage the children to dress for play and comfort as the seasons change. Because our program is based on play and exploration your child WILL get dirty!! Children will have opportunities for outdoor play twice a day weather permitting. Children will go outside if the temperature is below one hundred degrees with the heat index taken into consideration. It is required that you bring one set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or accident. We have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in center clothes, please wash the clothes and return them the next day. **It is strongly suggested that all clothing brought or worn to the center have the child's name on it.**

TOYS:

ELCS has a wide variety of toys, games, and other resources to offer children during center time. Preschool classes will have a weekly Show & Tell related to the week's lesson. All Show & Tell items must fit in a "gallon size" zip lock bag. Personal toys are not permitted in the center, as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show-and-tell or sleep-buddy which should be labeled with the child's name. ELCS is not responsible for stolen, lost, or broken toys or clothing. ***Toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction are not permitted.***

SUPPLIES:

Each child will be provided with all the instructional supplies necessary here at ELCS. An annual supply and materials fee of \$75 will be collected at the time of enrollment. All children's belongings are to be brought into school in a collapsible/reusable bag.

Backpacks are not permitted. All naptime items are to be brought to school on the child's first day of each week and then taken home on the child's last day of the week to be laundered.

Additional personal items needed might include:

- 1) A small blanket for rest time
- 2) A one" thick mat which may be purchased at the center
- 3) A sheet for the mat or a mat cover which may be purchased at the center
- 4) If your child prefers a small pillow and/or a stuffed animal/doll for resting, please be sure to leave one in the child's cubby at school.

CURRICULUM:

Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Physical and Language development will be explored through an integrated curriculum which is created by teachers and aligns with The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. Areas in the classroom will encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment. Curriculum will provide for respect of cultural diversity through books, material experiences, music, art, and foods. Each child's home culture and language will be brought into our school.

Children will feel accepted and a part of our "school community." We will encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices. All children will be provided with active and quiet play time. Large group time, small group time and individual playtime will be provided each day. The areas of language and literacy, writing, math, science, social studies, art, music, drama, and dance will all be explored. Lesson plans are posted outside each classroom.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM -The preschool curriculum will cover the following areas:

Movement and Coordination

- Physical attention and relaxation
- Gross motor skills
- Eye-hand, and eye-foot coordination
- Group games
- Creative movement

Autonomy and Social Skills

- Sense of self and personal responsibility
- Working in group setting

Work Habits

- Memory Skills
- Following directions
- Task persistence and completion

Language

- Oral language
- Nursery rhymes, poems, finger plays/songs
- Emerging literacy skills

Mathematics

- Patterns and classifications
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Numbers and numbers sense
- Basic Addition and subtraction
- Money

Orientation in time and space

- Vocabulary
- Measure of time
- Passage of time (past, present, future)
- Actual and represented space
- Simple maps
- Basic geographical concepts

Science

- Human, animal, and plant characteristics
- Physical elements (water, air, and light)
- Tools

Music

- Attend to different sounds
- Imitate and produce sounds
- Listen and sing
- Listen and move

Visual arts

- Attend to visual detail
- Creating art
- Looking at and talking about art

DAILY SCHEDULE:

Although your child's schedule varies day to day, the typical flow of a day's activities is below. Specific activities vary based on age; all are posted weekly outside each classroom.

Activity Time: Activities specific to the weekly theme are presented along with basic activities such as puzzles, table manipulatives, dramatic play, blocks, etc.

Group Time: Group times are child-centered participative sessions. The planned group activities include reading, music, movement, finger plays, discussion, dramatization, games, and experience stories.

Outdoor time: The playground is an extension of the classroom. Children can participate in an activity of their own choosing. Inclement weather, special events, or celebrations will occasionally affect the scheduling of outdoor time.

Snacks and Mealtime: Staff sits with children while they are eating, encouraging and participating in quiet conversation.

Rest Time: Children are given the opportunity to nap or rest each day.

MUSIC CLASSES:

Weekly music classes are held at Epiphany for all classes. Days and times are scheduled by the music director with each individual classroom. Music is also part of our regular Wednesday Chapel instruction.

ACCREDITATION:

ELCS has distinguished itself as one of the top childcare centers in the nation by seeking outside accreditation with National Lutheran Schools Accreditation. For more information concerning this see Administrative Team or visit NLSA.com.

CLASS DIVISIONS AND CLASS SIZE:

We endeavor to have a challenging and appropriate atmosphere for children of all ages. Class divisions are based upon three criteria. These are: the age (based on their date of birth and age on September 1st) and developmental needs of the child; state set student to teacher ratios, and the overall enrollment management plan of the center. Children not yet in school are divided into classes by age since this usually keeps them with children in their own developmental level and keeps our age-based student to teacher ratios easy to calculate.

Shining Starfish:

- Child must be age 2 to be enrolled
- Students in this class turn three during the school year
- Eligible students move to the Busy Bee class next August

Busy Bees:

- Child must be age 3 on or before September 1st
- Students in this class turn four during the school year
- Students move to the Leap Frog or Learning Lions class next August

Leap Frogs/Leaning Lions & VPK:

- Child must be age 4 on or before September 1st
- Students in these classes turn five during the school year
- Parents must present a valid VPK eligibility certificate to participate in VPK
- All students participate in year-end Preschool Graduation
- Eligible students in these classes enter kindergarten in August

STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS:

Student to teacher ratios is based upon guidelines set by FLORIDA law. The following chart shows the maximum ratios that we observe:

Age of children	# Of Students	Per teacher	Group Max
2-Year-Olds	11	1	20
3-Year-Olds	15	1	20
4-5-Year-Olds	20	1	20

In addition to the teacher to child ratios each group also has a group maximum. We always meet or beat these ratios and minimums.

SUMMER CAMP: (off campus field trips may not be offered due to COVID-19)

A summer camp program is offered during the summer months for preschool aged children as well as children in kindergarten through fifth grade. The camp is built around weekly themes. Activities include various art projects, music, water fun, sports, stories, cooking, and in-house field trip for preschoolers and off campus field trips for the K-5 group. Separate summer program fees and rates are charged to help cover tuition and field trips. Summer camp enrollment begins in March each year.

OUR STAFF:

At ELCS, we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly qualified staff are an integral part of providing this environment. Our current staff has had:

- A detailed interview and screening process.
- Approval by the state of FLORIDA through a background analysis that cross references state and federal criminal records as well as child abuse reporting records to insure each employee has a background that is clear.
- State CPR and first aid requirements fulfilled (must be current or take class within 60 days of employment)
- Passed a required drug test.

We believe firmly in training and continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to continue to work in an early education setting.

STAFF AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:

ELCS considers it inappropriate for families to solicit our staff to work for them either in their business or homes. We are not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock or no longer employed by ELCS. All employees have been informed that that they will not engage in “care for hire” or any employment by or for any past or current client family of ELCS while currently employed by ELCS. An employee who violates this policy is subject to termination.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and our staff. Open and frequent communication will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child’s day and overall development through several written means.

- Parent newsletters and monthly calendars to keep you informed as to the overall program.

- Hallway News Board (outside each classroom) – updated with current information about ELCS, curriculum, announcements, and lesson plans.
- Daily written communication in the form of “Daily Report” forms and classroom memos will be placed in the child’s “file” every day.
- “Incident/Accident” forms will be sent home when necessary. Parent to sign and return to child’s teacher.
- Parents always have the option of requesting specific parent/teacher interaction to aid in the child’s development.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

We will endeavor to be communicative during drop-off and pick-up times. However, this is not a suitable time for extended conversations since the staff members/teachers have responsibilities for all the children in the group. Furthermore, the person caring for your child at the pick-up time may not be the individual who has spent most of the day with your child.

Since children learn best in the morning, we schedule the teachers who are responsible for most of the classroom development for the earlier hours and most of the day. We suggest that you go to your child’s “lead” or “primary” teacher to obtain detailed information on your child’s general growth and development. You can call to see how your child’s day is going or speak to your child’s teacher for more detailed conversation. The best time to call and speak to your child’s teacher is during naptime. There is always a member of management available for you to talk to in person or on the phone.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

We encourage all parents and or guardians to be involved in school activities. We believe that parental participation is key to any successful childcare program. At ELCS, we strive to fill the gap created during early separation and educational opportunities and when parents are not available. We welcome parental visits. We have an open-door policy that allows parents access to the center during operating hours. We have enclosed a sample list of some of the opportunities for involvement in our center. Parents are in no way limited to the involvement listed below. Any parent wishing to be involved in another area is strongly encouraged to contact the ELCS office with their suggestion.

Parent Meetings (upon request)

1. Fall Open House
2. Individual conferences/year (at the request of the teacher or parent)
3. Programs and Special activities, such as the Christmas Program
4. Special parent involvement activities such as THANKSGIVING FEAST/PICTURE DAYS etc.
5. Party Day Volunteers
6. Classroom Volunteer
7. Send special treats for snack or meals (please notify the teacher a day or two in advance)
8. Help with center Fund Raiser.
9. Participation in a parent’s group
10. Reverse Field trips (When we bring a “field trip” type activity to our property)

We also expect parental involvement in discipline and behavior intervention as outlined in these policies.

POLICY FOR PARENTS WHO CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL EVENTS:

If a parent feels like they would like to be more involved in the center but cannot be due to their work schedule, or due to other conflicts, we will help them find a project that can be done on their own time. A member of the Administrative Team will meet with the parent to find their area of interest. We will

offer suggestions to them based on their interests and time. For example, if the parent likes to sew, we may offer to have them make doll clothes or repair mat sheets.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS:

Birthdays are special days for children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at ELCS, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. Hard or chewy candy is not permitted because they pose a choking risk. Our policy for birthday celebrations is to take place in the afternoons during snack time only.

If you are planning a birthday party outside Epiphany and you would like to invite your child's classmates, we respectfully ask that invitations be distributed to everyone and not just a select few. We want to avoid any feelings being hurt if someone does not get invited.

VISITING THE CENTER:

You are welcome to visit your child at the center at any time. We do ask that you check in with the office or sign-in desk before going to your child's room. It is the responsibility of each employee to make sure any visitor for a child or employee has checked in with the office. If you are coming to eat lunch with your child, please let us know in advance. Persons not listed on the "Pick-Up List," will not be allowed to visit your child. In a custody situation, please note that the same procedure will be followed as listed in the Pick-Up section. Extended family members such as grandparents and aunts are also welcomed to visit in certain pre-arranged situations. The custody challenges of our current society demand that we follow strict guidelines in this regard. Feel free to contact a member of the administrative team if you wish to set up a "visit" from an extended family member.

CLASSIFICATIONS:

Due to strict licensing guidelines and safety issues, we require that all individuals on our property be categorized as one of the following:

- 1) A scheduled employee during the regular course of their workday
- 2) A child who is in our care (all paperwork has been filled-out)
- 3) Parents or others during regular drop-off or pick-up (This to be approximately fifteen (15) minutes)
- 4) Delivery personnel – From a regular or expected company delivering items to the center (should always be in eyesight of an employee and arriving at an expected time)
- 5) Visitor's – Must be approved by the office and should always be accompanied by an employee not to exceed once per month and limited to a maximum of 2 hours.
- 6) Volunteers – Anyone who is helping with a class party or in any other capacity or anyone who has been a "visitor" for more than once a month or for over 2 hours.
- 7) An Intruder – the staff will take Action to notify the proper authorities.

Therefore, anyone who is in the building or on the property for an extended period must be considered either a "visitor" a "volunteer" a church member or an "intruder" including parents and employees who are off the clock.

VOLUNTEERS:

Parent volunteers are also welcome in our center. Anyone visiting or volunteering for more than one day per month must go through a screening process. Our screening process includes, but is not limited to, 1) a signed statement indicating whether they have had a conviction of any law in any state, or any record of founded child or dependent abuse in any state; 2) undergoing a fingerprinting and background check, 3) and a signed statement regarding child. Any "visitor" who spends extended periods of time in the center will be considered a volunteer and be required to go through the screening and training listed above.

INTRUDERS:

The safety of the children is our first concern. Although we have an open-door policy and welcome parents to visit their children, we also have a commitment to the parents of the other children in the program. Since we cannot attest to the background of anyone that has not gone through our screening process, we also cannot allow parents to spend extended periods of time in our facility without requiring them to fulfill certain screening and training requirements. These are set by state law and our policies. Any individual who does not submit to our safety policies concerning “Visitors” and “Volunteers” must be considered an intruder and the necessary steps will be taken to remove intruder from the premises.

MEALS AND SNACKS:

The Florida Department of Health requires that each child have a nutritious lunch and snack each day. At Epiphany, we will provide the morning snack for all students. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide an adequate, healthy lunch and an afternoon snack for their child.

- Parents must provide lunch AND an afternoon snack. Please provide a drink with your child’s lunch AND afternoon snack. The school will provide morning snack and drink for your child.
 - Please do not pack soda/pop for your child’s drink.
 - Please do not pack candy as part of your child’s lunch or snack.
 - Please do not pack a “snacks only” lunch. This is not considered an adequate or nutritious midday meal for your child.
- Do not send any food items that require preparation.
 - Please pack only already prepared food ready to eat.
 - The teachers are NOT equipped to prepare any lunches other than setting them out.
 - All lunches that need to stay warmed/heated must be in a thermos.
- Do not forget to pack the necessary meal items and utensils inside the lunch box:
 - Fork, spoon, napkin; please do not pack knives of any kind in the lunch box.
- An icepack must be packed in your child’s lunchbox if his/her food needs to be kept cold.
 - For sanitary reasons, we do not store student lunchboxes in our school refrigerator.
 - The teachers will use their discretion when serving your child’s lunch. If we feel your child’s lunch has not been safely stored and is unsafe to serve to your child, we will provide an alternative meal and you will be charged a lunch replacement fee.
- If you/your child has forgotten his/her lunch, we will provide his/her meal and a lunch fee will be assessed to your preschool account. Please note, this service should not be considered a daily lunch plan.
- Please have your child’s name labeled on the outside of his/her lunchbox. If your child’s name is not labeled on his/her lunchbox, the teacher will label it for you. Many children have the same or similar lunch boxes. Please remember to take your child’s lunchbox home each afternoon.

PORTRAITS AND PICTURES:

We offer school pictures two times a year, in the spring and fall. The fall photos usually include two sittings per child and should be delivered in time for use as holiday gifts. The spring portraits include one sitting. You will receive proofs before purchasing. Additionally, we may take pictures of the children playing or for use on their cubbies or for use with a project or we may need pictures of children for promotional use. There is a “Photo Release form” included in the enrollment packet giving us permission to take your child’s picture for display in school and or on our website.

DRESS CODE:

- ❖ Please have your child dress in clothing that is comfortable for play. Try to provide clothing that is easily managed by a young child as the children will be encouraged to dress themselves whenever possible. Children should always be dressed appropriately for outside play and regular seasonal/temperature conditions.
 - ❖ An extra change of clothes and undergarments should always be kept in your child's cubby. An additional pair of shoes & socks for Starfish students should also be kept in the cubby. Please label ALL belongings with your child's name. We are not responsible for lost clothing.
 - ❖ Children are active in play throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors. They will get messy and dirty from time to time. Clothes may get soiled during play based on how active
 - ❖ your child may play, especially during playground time. We monitor for safe and fun play throughout the day.
 - ❖ Please have your child wear sneakers. Having rubber soles is a necessity. The floors are ceramic tiles and we have found that sneakers or tennis shoes are best for reducing slips and falls.
 - ❖ ALL children must wear closed toe and closed back shoes. No open toed shoes, sandals, or flip-flops are to be worn to school. Please do not send your child to school wearing slip on type shoes such as crocs, mules, or clogs, where the shoes are not securely worn on the foot. This is for safety purposes.
- ❖ If your child comes to school wearing inappropriate shoes, you will be telephoned and asked to bring in sneakers or tennis shoes. If arrangements cannot be made, we may be able to provide your child with shoes that have been donated. If your child wears a pair of "Epiphany" shoes, they must be returned the next day. If no shoes can be located, the child will not be able to play in the playground. **No boots of any kind are to be worn to school.**

REGISTRATION AND MATERIALS FEES:

There is a registration fee and curriculum fee that are due prior to the child's first day at ELCS. These fees are due upon initial enrollment. These fees shall suffice for that "School Year's" materials provided the child remains continuously enrolled in the program. Children who pull out of the program for a specified or un-specified length of time will be required to pay a re-registration fee. The exception to this will be children who physically pull out of the program but whose parents continue to pay their full weekly fees to retain the spot in our program.

WEEKLY TUITION FEES:

It is our philosophy that you are paying for the spot your child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but on a set weekly fee that is due regardless of the attendance habits of the child who has the spot. Our fee structure is based upon a weekly fee that is set by the Fee Agreement (included in the enrollment packet) which is signed by the parents upon enrolling the child(ren) in the program.

No credit or make up days will be granted for absentee days. If your child is absent from school, you must still pay your full weekly tuition rate. If your child will be out more than (2) days, please notify us. If you are participating in our VPK Program, all absentee days must be documented and submitted on the first day of return. Failure to provide documentation of any VPK absences will result in a VPK undocumented absence fee and may also result in your child be dismissed from the VPK program.

TUITION ADJUSTMENT DUE TO POTENTIAL CLOSURE (PANDEMIC)

Unlike weather related closures where we lose power and are not able to open, a pandemic situation could cause us to close the school entirely or close affected classrooms. (We are going to use COVID, as this is the pandemic that we are experiencing currently.)

1. Full tuition will be payable if the school/or classroom is open 3 or more days in the same week
2. Tuition will be adjusted if the school/classroom is closed for 3 or more days. The adjusted tuition will be \$70/week.

PAYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Weekly fees are due each Monday, by 6pm. Payments can be made via cash; check; bank draft or credit card. There will be a \$15.00 late payment fee added if the account is not paid by the close of business on Monday. Failure to pay on time may also result in termination of services. No account will ever be allowed to carry a balance unless the Director has approved arrangements. There will be a \$25.00 fee added on all returned checks. A 3% convenience fee will be assessed on credit card payments.

After two NSF checks are received by the center, payment will be required by cash; cashier's check or money order. Fees for two weeks will be added if a two-week written notice is not given prior to your child leaving the center. Clients may pay by cash, check, credit card, cashier's check, or Money Order. All payments will be **payable to: ELCS. Payments are to be put in tuition box in school lobby.** All tuition is non-refundable except for prepaid tuition that is over-and-above any additional charges, including the two weeks. Registration fees are non-refundable. If ELCS elects, it may immediately terminate all services provided by it including but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the children from its facility.

FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PRE-K PROGRAM:

Epiphany is a licensed provider for the Florida State Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program. To enroll for VPK at Epiphany, each family must present a valid VPK eligibility certificate for their 4-year-old child. More information about the Florida VPK program can be found on the following website:

<http://elcpalmbeach.org/voluntary-prekindergarten-vpk>

DISCOUNTS:

ELCS is pleased to offer the following discounts – 10% discount per week for sibling.

REFUNDS:

We do not issue refunds. In the event you have over-paid the credit will be applied to your next week's tuition. In the event you have a balance after your child's last day, all applicable fees including the two weeks' notice required will be subtracted from any balance prior to a final refund being issued. Checks for this are cut monthly and will be mailed to you.

RECEIPTS AND STATEMENTS:

Receipts are available upon request. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes are available upon request for all accounts with a zero balance.

LATE PICK-UP FEE:

Epiphany Lutheran Preschool closes at 6:00pm every day. Time is a precious commodity to all of us. Therefore, to show consideration to our staff, we feel it is important that all children be picked up by

our closing time of 6:00pm. Late fees are assessed when a child is not picked up by 6:00pm. Please be prepared at that time to pay the following late fees:

- \$ 5.00 per child for the first five (5) minutes late: 6:01pm to 6:05pm
- \$10.00 per child for late pickup between 6:06pm to 6:15pm
- \$20.00 per child for late pickup between 6:16pm to 6:30pm
- \$40.00 per child for late pickup after 6:31pm

You will be required to sign a late fee form when you arrive after 6:00pm to pick up your child. Late fees are payable in cash to the staff member working at the time of pickup. If you are unable to pay your late fee at the time of pick-up, please bring your payment in the following day. All late fees must be paid before the week's end and paid directly to the staff member. We will contact any or all individuals on your authorized pick-up and emergency list if we cannot reach you after 6:00pm. Failure to pick up your child by 6:30pm will result in a call to police authorities. Repeated late pickups will result in dismissal of your child from our preschool program.

VACATIONS, ABSENCES AND LEAVING THE CENTER:

One-week vacation is granted to students who enroll in preschool between August 2022 thru December 31, 2022. If your child is enrolled January 1, 2023 or later, NO vacation is granted. Your vacation week must be taken during the school year and may not be carried over to summer camp enrollment. Please submit advance written notification to the school office when you will be taking your vacation. If you are taking advantage of the vacation credit, your child cannot attend school during that time. Vacations and illnesses will be charged at the regular weekly rate. We request that all absences be reported to the ELCS office prior to or the day of the absence. We require a two-week written notice prior to your child leaving the center or a change in your child's contract. You may not use this free vacation week towards a withdrawal notice.

QUIET TIME:

It is required by the Health Department that children under 5 years of age are provided adequate quiet time and or rest, as a part of their daily routine. Since all the children are constantly engaged in stimulating activity, we require that everyone rest on mats after lunch. Realizing each child's rest needs are different, we try to offer alternative ways of resting by providing soft music, stories, etc. for those who choose not to sleep. If your child does not sleep during the rest period, he/she will still be required to rest quietly on his/her mat. We thank parents for supporting our rest time guidelines, as individual exceptions during this quiet time will not be allowed.

- For naptime, your child is required to have a mat, one" thick.
- Mats and mat covers must be purchased at Epiphany for \$25.00.
- Your child may bring a small "travel size" pillow and small blanket to sleep with
- Please do not bring large pillows or blankets to school, as they will not fit in your child's cubby
- Blankets and mat covers must be taken home weekly for laundering
- Please remember to bring your clean linens back the following week
- All your child's belongings must be able to fit in their cubbies. (*No backpacks permitted*)
- **Please label your child's name on every item** that will be brought to school.
- **We are not responsible for lost items.**

Age	Number of Naps Suggested	Napping Time
Two Years	1	2 hours
Three Years	1	2 hours
Four Years	0-1	1.5 hours

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY:

The State of FLORIDA requires that ELCS and all members of childcare institutions be on the lookout for, and report to the State and appropriate authorities all suspected cases of abuse to a child.

At ELCS, our center and staff are **Mandatory Reporters** of child abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the Department of Children and Family Services for investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of child abuse or endangerment.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

ELCS complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by our independent agent. For more information concerning policies and liability see director.

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES:

ELCS reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. The center will make all changes and additions available at the time these changes are made. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system of the center at the time they are made effective.

WEEKLY EVENTS:

Mondays: **3:30 pm - Soccer Shots****. Parent permission/consent form must be submitted for your child to participate. There is a separate participation fee payable to /Soccer Shots.

Wednesday: **10:00 am - Preschool Chapel & 3:00pm – Afterschool Chapel**
Parents are welcome to attend. Visitors are also invited to chapel when considering enrollment for their preschool child.

Fridays: **Show and Tell / Pizza Day**

**** Please note: Extra-curricular programs offered are subject to change. These programs are not contracted and may be canceled at any time by either the program provider or ELCS. ELCS will endeavor to provide extra-curricular programs that we feel are economical for our families.**

ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES & PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO OUR FAMILIES

Youth and Adult Confirmation Classes
Lutheran Teachings
Baptism
Youth Ministry
Elders & Lay Ministry
Board of Education
Fellowship Activities and Events
Summer Camp and Vacation Bible School
Traditional Choir and Praise Band

