

Family Handbook

Little Lights Preschool

2026-2027

Welcome & Philosophy

Welcome

Welcome to Little Lights Preschool! We offer a Christian preschool program focused on learning through nature, play, and hands-on experiences. We believe that the early years are an important time for children to develop the skills and attitudes they need for a successful transition to kindergarten and beyond. More than academics, we want to help children become confident learners, caring friends, and problem-solvers. Further, as a Christian preschool, we believe that every child is created by God and has unique gifts, abilities, and needs.

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" Matthew 19:14

Our Philosophy

Our Vision

We are focused on a program that supports each child's:

- Social development - learning to cooperate, communicate, share, take turns, and build friendships.
- Emotional development - recognizing and expressing feelings, developing self-regulation, building confidence, and learning how to respond to challenges.
- Intellectual development - developing curiosity, growing in language, and learning problem-solving and thinking skills.
- Physical development - developing fine and gross motor skills, and healthy physical habits.
- Spiritual development - learning about God's love and experiencing a community that reflects Christian values.

Learning Through Nature

Nature is an important part of our preschool. Through outdoor play and exploration, children develop curiosity, confidence, problem-solving skills, and a deeper appreciation for God's creation.

Preparing Children for Kindergarten

We believe kindergarten readiness is about more than letters and numbers. Through play and everyday experiences, we help children develop the skills they need to feel confident and successful in kindergarten.

Our Christian Foundation

We believe every child is a unique creation of God, deeply valued and cared for. Daily routines are rooted in faith. The children learn Bible stories and songs, pray together before meals, and learn about the beauty of God's creation.

Enrollment and Operations

Admissions & Enrollment

Children must be 2.5 yrs old and potty trained before starting preschool. A completed registration form must be submitted, along with the first month's fees, to be fully enrolled in the class.

Hours of Operation

The preschool operates Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 8:30 am to 11:30 am. The preschool follows a 10-month program year, running from September through June. The program will be closed on statutory holidays and during scheduled Christmas and spring breaks. Families will receive an annual calendar at the beginning of the preschool year.

Arrival & Departure

Children should arrive on time and be accompanied by an adult when entering the preschool. At the end of the preschool day, children will only be released to a parent/guardian or to individuals authorized by the parent/guardian in writing.

Families are required to provide current emergency contact information and written authorization for any person permitted to pick up their child. Identification may be requested when needed.

If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child, the child will not be released until permission has been confirmed with the parent/guardian.

If a person picking up a child appears unable to safely care for the child due to illness, impairment, or concerning behaviour, staff will take reasonable steps to ensure the child's safety. This may include:

- contacting another authorized pick-up person,
- requesting alternate transportation, or
- contacting appropriate authorities if necessary.

If a child has not been picked up by closing time and staff have not been contacted, reasonable attempts will be made to reach the parent/guardian and emergency contacts. If no authorized person can be reached within a reasonable period of time, the appropriate authorities may be contacted in accordance with licensing requirements.

Fees

Monthly fees are \$250/month and are payable at the beginning of each month via cheque or e-transfer. Payments received after the 6th will be subject to a \$5 per day late fee. If a monthly fee remains unpaid for one full month, the preschool may need to review the child's enrollment and may withdraw the child from the program.

Repayment Agreement

Fees will not be refunded for occasional absences due to illness, vacations, or personal reasons, as staffing and spaces are reserved in advance.

If the preschool must close due to a prolonged educator illness, emergency, unsafe conditions, or unexpected circumstances, families will receive either:

- A credit toward future fees, or
- A refund for the days care was unavailable

Families are required to provide 3 weeks' written notice when withdrawing from the program. If proper notice is not provided, fees for the notice period may still apply.

If care is discontinued by the preschool, families will be provided with as much notice as reasonably possible, except in situations involving safety concerns or policy violations.

Daily Schedule and Programming

Daily Schedule

- 8:30 Arrival and welcome
- 8:35 Free play and small group craft
- 9:20: Large group time for faith-based learning and language games
- 9:35: Focused theme-based activity - movement/rhythm, science/exploration, etc.
- 10:05: Snack
- 10:25: Literacy-focused activity - stories, books, audiobooks, puppet shows, rhyming, etc
- 10:50: Closing circle and get ready to head outside
- 11:00: Outside play and exploration
- 11:30: Dismissal

Monthly Theme

Each month has a new theme, one that is connected to language/skill learning, the children's interests, and the seasons/events of the year.

Active Play Policy

We believe active play is an important part of children's healthy growth, learning, and well-being. As such, we provide opportunities for active play every day.

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily program whenever weather and conditions allow. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather of the day, including an extra change of clothes.

There is no screen time at the preschool, as the priority is given to hands-on play, movement, and social interaction.

Snacks

Children should bring a healthy snack and water bottle each day. Please send snacks that are

easy for your child to eat independently and do not require heating or preparation.

For the safety of all children, the preschool is peanut- and nut-free. Please inform the preschool if your child has any allergies or health concerns.

Clothing & Supplies

Please send the following items with your child (label all personal belongings with your child's name):

- A backpack
- Water bottle
- Healthy snack
- Indoor shoes
- Complete change of clothes, including underwear and socks
- Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing
- Sunscreen (when applicable)

Health & Safety

Sick Policy

To help keep all children and staff healthy, children should stay home when they are sick or unable to comfortably participate in the preschool day.

Children with a fever must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to preschool. If a child becomes sick while at preschool, parents or an emergency contact will be contacted and the child will be cared for in a comfortable, separate area until they can be picked up.

Medication: Medication will only be given when appropriate written authorization and instructions have been provided by the parent/guardian and according to preschool policy. Prescription medication must be in its original container and clearly labelled with the child's name and instructions.

Injuries & Incidents

Staff will provide appropriate first aid for minor injuries such as small cuts, scrapes, or bumps. Parents will be informed of injuries or incidents that require first aid.

If a more serious injury or medical emergency occurs, staff will contact emergency services when necessary and then contact the child's parent or emergency contact as soon as possible. An incident or injury report will be completed at this time.

Emergency Preparedness

The preschool has emergency procedures in place to help keep children and staff safe. Children and staff will practise emergency procedures throughout the year in an age-appropriate way.

Emergency procedures may include:

- Fire: Evacuating the building and moving to the designated meeting location.
- Severe weather: Moving to a safe area of the building as directed by staff.
- Lockdown: Following established safety procedures and remaining in the designated secure area.
- Evacuation: Leaving the building or moving to an alternate location if the facility cannot safely be occupied.

Emergency contact information must be kept up to date so parents or emergency contacts can be reached quickly when needed.

Child Protection & Reporting

The safety and well-being of every child is very important to us. Preschool staff are required by law to report any concerns about a child's safety or well-being to the appropriate authorities. The educators have the responsibility to report concerns so that they can be properly assessed and investigated.

5. Classroom Community

Class Management

Staff will use a positive and respectful approach when helping children learn appropriate behaviours. This may include redirection, offering choices, helping children identify and express their feelings, modelling appropriate behaviour, and supporting children as they work through conflicts.

Biting, hitting, kicking, or other aggressive behaviour will be addressed promptly and calmly. The safety of all children is our priority. Parents will be informed when ongoing or serious behaviour concerns arise so that we can work together to support the child.

Communication with Families

Parents will receive important preschool information and updates through email and the monthly newsletter. Parents are always welcome to speak with staff about their child's development, experiences, or needs.

Parent Involvement

Parents may have opportunities to be involved through classroom activities, special events, and field trips. Parents who volunteer will be expected to follow the preschool's safety, confidentiality, and supervision policies.

Media & Photography

Parents will be given the opportunity to choose whether they give permission for their child's photograph or video to be taken and/or shared. Photos will only be used for the purposes outlined in the consent form. Families may change their consent by contacting the preschool.

We ask that parents also respect the privacy of other children and do not photograph or share pictures of other children without permission.