



**2020-2021**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

## OPERATING POLICIES

*"Instruct a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6*

In keeping with the mission of St. Matthews Lutheran church, it is our desire to provide a Christ-centered preschool experience in which we assist parents in bringing up their children tenderly in the training, discipline, and counsel of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4) Our staff, with the support of St. Matthews Congregation, strives to encourage children who:

- \*recognize that they are children of God and have a best friend in their Savior, Jesus Christ.
- \*have a positive self-concept
- \*are physically healthy and coordinated
- \*begin to relate to other children and adults and deal with their own emotions
- \*expand their understanding of the world
- \* use language to communicate with others
- \*express themselves in art, music and dramatic play
- \*are curious and want to learn
- \*are independent

The School is licensed for up to 20 children, 3 - 5 years of age. Children must be 3 years of age by September first of the enrollment year to be admitted. Parents are expected to read these operating policies and keep them for future reference. We also expect parents to read supplemental notes and newsletters that we send home. We hope that you will feel free to be a part of the program, offering suggestions, comments, and constructive criticism, as well as financial and moral support. We encourage you to visit at any time.

### Non-discrimination policy

St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool enrolls students of any religion, race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs. St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool will accommodate each child's needs, including special needs, which require program changes. These are arranged between the school, the parents and the Esko Special Education and/or Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative staff.

### 2020-2021 Session:

Our session begins September 9th and will continue for 9 months through June 2nd. We will follow the Esko Public School Calendar for holidays and emergency closings. If Esko schools have a **scheduled** late start or early dismissal, **we will hold class as usual**. A variety of class options are available: If a two-hour late start occurred due to weather we will start class at 9:30am and resume the day at usual time.

Tues./Thurs from 8:30-11:45 Geared toward the 3 and young 4-year-old child.

Mon./Wed./ Fri. 8:30-11:45 Geared toward children who will be attending Kindergarten the following year. We now have before and after care. The before care will start at 7:30am and the aftercare will go to 5:30pm.

## Financial arrangements:

Monthly tuition is as follows:

- \* \$106 for the two-day class
- \* \$155 for the three-day class
- \* \$ 260 for the five-day class (offered to the older 4's).

Non-refundable enrollment fee due at registration: \$30.00

Supply/snack fee: \$50 for 2-day class, \$50 for 3-day class, and due before first day of school.

**Checks are payable to St. Matthews LELP** and can be sent to 4 Elizabeth Ave., Esko, MN 55733 or placed in the payment box in the classroom. You will receive a payment booklet for monthly payments. There are also single payment options available on the Tuition Payment and Fees Form. In addition, you may request a Simply Giving brochure, which allows for electronic withdrawal from your bank account. If you are having any problems with payment, a teacher will put you in contact with our Treasurer. Those behind on tuition will be notified by phone and then by mail. A signed registration form implies your intent that your child will remain enrolled for the full year. If circumstances force you to drop your child from school, we require **30 days' notice**. **Tuition is due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, which is payment for that month. A late fee of \$5 will be assessed after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. If you give less than 30 days' notice, you will be responsible for tuition for the full month that follows.** If you are interested in receiving some assistance in paying your tuition, talk to a teacher or the treasurer. A scholarship may be available.

Tuition is based on actual costs of operating the program including operational costs, salaries, insurance, workers' compensation, social security, equipment, license and expendable supplies. We count on your tuition and fundraisers to operate this program. No credit on tuition is given for regularly scheduled school holidays and vacations or other reasons, unless absences run into several consecutive weeks, in which case an arrangement with the Preschool Board can be made.

## Arrival and Departure

Please be timely in dropping off and picking up your child. Teachers need time to prepare for class, and so would appreciate you not coming more than 5 minutes before class begins. Some children become quite nervous if their parent is late picking them up, so for the comfort of your child please try to pick him up on time. If no one picks up the child within 10 minutes of the end of class, we will call the parent and the emergency contacts. There will be a late charge of \$10 after 10 minutes and after 15 minutes it will be a \$15 charge. If we are unable to contact anyone we may have to call Human Services or the police and have someone take care of the child until an authorized adult can be found. If this is the case a note will be left to let you know where the child is. At no time will your child be left alone.

## Authorization to Pick Up a Child

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. **If someone other than those authorized will be picking up your child, please write a note.** If an unauthorized person, a person who is incapacitated, or a person who is suspected of abuse attempts to pick up your child we will immediately attempt to call you. Please ensure we have an updated phone number for you at all times. If we cannot reach you, we will call 911.

## Missing Child Policy

If a child is missing from the classroom or field trip the following procedure will be followed:

1. Staff member will contact parent
2. Staff member will contact alternative person on emergency identification form
3. Staff member will contact authorities, if indicated

## Absence Policy:

Please call or email your school if your child will not be attending school that day do to sickness, out of town etc. Email us at [lelpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:lelpreschool@gmail.com) or call at 879-2853.

## The Health and Safety of Your Child

Medical and immunization forms are required by the Minnesota Department of Human Services when your child begins preschool. The telephone number for the Department of Human Services is 651-431-6500 (the Division of Licensing). The number for the Carlton County Department of Human Services is 218-879-4511. Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. **Upon enrollment, we must have a health form signed by a physician. We also require that the child have certain standard immunizations or the parent has signed a conscientious objection form.** A daily health inspection is given upon each child's arrival. Your child may be sent home if he/she appears to have symptoms of illness during the day. In such cases, the child is separated from the group and taken care of until a parent or emergency contact person arrives. The child will be given a cot and blanket and supervised until the adult's arrival. If a responsible adult cannot be found, we will contact the health care source stated on the enrollment form. If necessary, we will call 911. This age group is a prime target for communicable diseases and colds. Other parents will appreciate your thoughtfulness if you keep your child home when showing symptoms of illness. Parents must notify the school within 24 hours if the child has a communicable disease.

The school must notify all families if any child has come to school with any of the following communicable diseases: strep throat, head lice, pink eye, fifth's disease, roseola, chicken pox, ringworm, scabies and impetigo.

**The school may not accept or must send home any child who exhibits any of the following symptoms or conditions:**

A fever of 100 or higher	Vomiting
Abdominal pain	Diarrhea
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	Step throat
Undiagnosed rash	Chicken pox
Impetigo	Ringworm
Scabies	Head lice
Significant respiratory distress	Significant nasal drainage
Unexplained lethargy	

**Your child should not return until 24 hours after the symptom or condition has subsided and/or has been treated with prescribed medication. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school.**

## Allergies and Medications:

**Please inform staff on your school forms and verbally if your child is allergic to anything.** This includes food allergies, insect bites, medications and animals. Also provide written information as to how the child reacts if in contact with the allergen and the necessary treatment.

In order for us to administer any medication you must fill out the Medication Administration Record sheet. **All prescription medication must be in original prescription container** and be accompanied by a note from a parent/guardian. All non-prescription medication must be **accompanied by a note from a physician with written instructions.**

## Accidental injury

The classroom will be inspected daily for potential hazards. The teachers are required to have current first aid training. Although closely supervised, accidents do sometimes happen. For minor injuries the wound will be washed with soap and water and covered with a band-aid, or we will administer a cold pack, as necessary. In case of serious injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact the parent and then the emergency contact people. If we cannot reach any of them, we will call the child's source of medical care listed on the emergency form. If necessary, we will call an ambulance. The Director or assistant will be in charge and make

all decisions about the care of the child until the arrival of a parent. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resulting expense. St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool will maintain a parent's signed consent form agreeing to this provision. **It is your responsibility to keep the school up-to-date on phone numbers and other pertinent information.**

The following steps will be taken to prevent the following types of injuries:

Burns – All electrical outlets will be capped. Open flame or any heat source which may injure a child will not be used within children's reach.

Poisoning – All cleaning supplies will be kept in a cupboard with a child-safety lock in place.

Choking – Children are not allowed to chew gum in school or be out of their chairs with food.

Suffocation – All potential sources of suffocation, such as plastic bags will be put out of reach of children.

Traffic accidents – St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool does not transport children. If public or school district transportation is used for a field trip, children will be closely supervised and instructed in how to behave on such transportation.

Pedestrian accidents - When under the responsibility of the school, children will be closely supervised and will be instructed on how to behave and where to be when with the group in a traffic area.

All accidents requiring more care than can be given by staff will be documented.

### Severe Weather

**If the Esko School closes or starts late because of severe weather LELP will be closed.** If school has not started yet, closings will be announced on several local radio and TV stations. If school is already in session for the day you may call the church (218-879-3510) or listen to the local radio stations for information. We will make every effort to contact you to pick up your child if you have not contacted us. Your child will never be left alone. A staff person will stay with the child until someone comes to get him/her. Tornado drills are conducted monthly in the months of September, April and May as required by law. Our shelter for tornadoes and other natural disasters are the bathrooms on the east side of the church near our classroom.

### Fire

In case of fire, staff and children will leave the preschool room by the outside exit door. If this door is not usable, staff will lead the children out the front door. The teacher will take attendance again once the class is in a safe location. Children and staff will remain in this location until the staff person in charge gives the "all clear" sign.

Safety drills will be conducted monthly during the year to familiarize the children to the procedure. Staff is trained regarding how to use the fire extinguisher located right outside the classroom door, how to act in case of a fire, and how to close off the fire area.

### Evacuation

If an evacuation is necessary, our safe site is the Esko Public School building. Staff and students would be removed from the church and would walk to the Community Education area at entrance #6. Once inside the building, parents would be notified of our arrival and readiness for pick up.

### Emergency Medical Source

St. Matthews emergency medical sources are Cloquet Community Memorial Hospital, 218-879-4641, and Raiter Clinic, 218-879-1271. The emergency phone number is 911.

### Field trips, Transportation

Since so much of children's learning is hands on experience, we try to take field trips throughout the year. Transportation to our destinations will be done by Cloquet Dial-a-Ride, parents or those authorized by parents, or on foot. **At no time will Little Eskomo staff transport children.** We will obtain written parental permission from each family prior to each trip.

### Insurance

St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool carries required Minnesota insurance policies based on code 8868 (Professional Employees and Clerical).

### Staff

Each staff person is qualified for his/her position as required by law. Staff attends yearly inservice training in various aspects of child development, Abusive Head Trauma and maltreatment, and periodic CPR/First Aid training as required. The state mandated staff to student ratio is 10 students per staff member. Our room capacity is 20. To provide the optimal environment for learning and growth, St. Matthews Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool strives to have two teachers in the classroom, even if this exceeds the ratio required by law.

### Substitute staff

Although we would prefer to have a trained teacher fill in for an absent teacher, sometimes this is not possible. It is allowed by law to use an unqualified substitute on occasion. Because a parent will often know his/her child's classmates, this could be a good way for you to volunteer.

### Child Abuse

All staff members are mandated by state law (MN Stat. 626.556, Subd.3) to report child abuse. Please refer to the policy on maltreatment of minors mandated reporting policy for DHS licensed programs that was distributed at the start of the school year.

Discipline Please refer to the attached Behavior Guidance Policy.

### Parent/Teacher Communication

A vital aspect of a child's preschool experience is good communication between parents and teachers. You will receive a monthly newsletter informing you of the chapel topics, the classroom topics, upcoming events, etc. **This is our main way of communicating scheduled classroom activities. Please read and save the newsletter.** There are also bulletin boards outside the classroom with class schedules, the yearly calendar and notes. Twice a year conferences will be offered. At conferences your child's physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth will be discussed. Teachers cannot have lengthy conversations during class, but we would be happy to discuss any questions or concerns outside of class time. You can call the church at 218-879-3510 or call Mrs. Keske at home at 763-354-0180, or stay for a few minutes after class is over. Parental input regarding your child or the preschool in general is valuable.

### Snacks

To simplify things for teachers and parents and because of food allergies, the school will buy snacks. The snack fee you pay in September should cover your child's snacks for the year. If the snack budget is depleted however, you may be asked to pay a small fee later in the year. **If you would like to bring something special for a birthday or other occasion, simply discuss it with a teacher. All snacks must be store bought and in their original package when brought to the classroom.**

### Lunches:

Parents please provide a nutritious bag lunch for your child. We will provide milk or water for lunch time.

### Birthday parties and invitations

So as not to hurt the feelings of the children, we ask that you only hand out birthday invitations in class if you are going to invite the whole class. Your parent packet includes a consent form indicating if parents have given permission for us to release address, phone, and email. We will send home a class list of all families who have consented to release this information. We always acknowledge a child's birthday in class on the date you select.

### Permission needed

Permission is needed each time your child goes on a field trip or has his/her picture taken for publicity purposes. No permission is needed if the picture is taken by the newspaper. A permission slip will be sent home or a sheet will be posted on the wall by the classroom if we require your consent. Some things need your consent only once. Therefore, **a consent form for the following is included in your packet:**

\*Authorization to transport your child to a doctor or hospital, and the treatment of your child in the event of an emergency.

\*Permission or denial of permission to release your address, phone, and email to other families at school.

\*Permission or denial of permission to allow pets in the classroom.

\*Permission or denial of permission for your child to use hand sanitizer.

\*Permission or denial of permission for your child to use sunscreen provided by the school.

We cannot and will not do any of these without your permission.

### Pets

We love to have pets visit our classroom if it benefits the children. Written consent needs to be given before we allow a pet in the classroom. We will not allow a pet into your child's class without consent. We will, however, allow a pet into the classroom for a different class unless you have specified a reason we should not do so.

### Forms to return

**It is required that the following forms be fully filled out and returned to us before your child may enter school:**

Registration form and fee

Emergency and Identification form

Immunization form

Health Care Summary (completed once by new students)

Consent form

Tuition and Fees Payment Plan form

"All About Me" form

\*The Health Care Summary must be signed by your doctor and returned within 30 days of the beginning of school. It is much simpler if you can return everything at or by the orientation date.

\*The form "All About Me" is helpful to us in getting to know your child.

### Volunteers

We are always in need of volunteers. This is **your** preschool, and we need your assistance in planning trips, programs, public relations, recruitment for future students, fundraisers, and other activities. The Parent Board meets once a month. You are encouraged to become a member of the Board or just sit in on a meeting. You may also come to the classroom and help with project or snack, read a story, or just hang out! It is helpful, but not required, if you let us know ahead of time that you are coming.

### Ways in Which We May Be of Help to You

When you enroll your child, we assume responsibility for giving you assistance with special needs in relation to your child's school adjustment, as well as his or her growth and development. A minimum of two conferences will be held with parents. You will be notified of a conference date and time. You are invited to visit anytime. Your child will be given maximum consideration as an individual. We will look after his/her health and safety while he/she is in school, and present a planned program that is developmentally sound and educationally beneficial, underlying all actions with love.

### Pictures

Your child may be included in pictures taken and used to interpret our program through the press, Facebook, or other publications. Any such photography will be done under the supervision of teachers. You will need to sign the consent form giving permission and may be asked to sign additional permission slips for additional specific instances in which your child's picture is used.

### What to Wear to School?

Dress your child in comfortable play clothes that let him/her feel free to participate in all activities. You may leave a pair of shoes in your child's cubby-hole space. Be sure the clothing is washable as we do use messy art materials. Please put a label or name on all outer garments, including hats and boots. If your child is prone to having toilet accidents, it is a good idea to have a set of extra clothing at school. Please put them in a bag with your child's name on it and keep the bag in his/her backpack for easy retrieval. We also have a few extra clothes on hand you may wash and bring back if your child has a need for them.

### Nap and Rest time

Children will have an active morning. Full day students will therefore be given the opportunity to rest or nap for up to 2 hours per day. No child will be required to rest longer than 30mins. Parents must provide blankets and pillows. Parents are responsible for taking bedding home to wash each week or more often if needed. The center will provide cots and sheets (sheets will be laundered weekly).

### Contact Information

St Matthews Lutheran Church      218-879-3510  
[www.stmatthewsesko.org](http://www.stmatthewsesko.org)