



Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten

Parent's Handbook

A ministry of
First Saints Community Church
St. Paul's Campus

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LICENSE

Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education, Child Care Division #18-107070.

OPENING PRAYER SONG

(Used in most classes)

This is the day, (Echo)
That the Lord has made. (Echo)
Let us rejoice, (Echo)
And be glad in it. (Echo)

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day, (Echo)
That the Lord has made.

PHILOSOPHY

Welcome to Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten!

It is our goal to provide your child with a complete developmental experience within an environment of Christian love and care.

While attending Little Seedlings, your child will be encouraged to grow...

Spiritually, through bible stories with real-life application and through building his/her relationship with God;

Intellectually through age-appropriate lessons teaching numbers, letters, colors, shapes, calendar, name recognition and more;

Physically by providing opportunities to develop small motor skills through the use of manipulatives and tools, large motor skills through organized games and physical activity.

Socially by growing interaction skills with other children, teaching politeness and respect of others; and

Emotionally by encouraging independent thought and building each child's self-confidence.

The Kindergarten follows the Maryland State Department of Education's Curriculum and the Maryland Model for School Readiness. The Kindergarten is a well rounded mixture of the above philosophy along with strengthening literacy, math, writing and science skills.

We recognize and respect that each child grows at his/her own pace. Your child will be encouraged to participate to the best of his/her ability and will receive positive reinforcement for his/her efforts.

All staff members have met the necessary requirements for licensing from the Office of Child Care. The staff is comprised of a director, and two classroom teachers for each preschool class, and the Kindergarten has a teacher and an aide, necessitated by enrollment numbers. The staff is governed by our First Saints Community Church Board of Advisors which consists of seven members, the lead

minister, the Director of Children's Ministry, and one parent representative each from Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten and the Mother's Day Out Program. The Board is scheduled to meet semi-annually. Information about becoming a member of the Board of Advisors is available upon request.

GOALS

- To help children learn about God and His importance in their lives
- To help each child realize that he/she is special and loved
- To familiarize each child with Bible stories from Old and New Testaments
- To help children discover who they are and what the world is about
- To stimulate communication between children and each other, with adults and with God
- To teach children Christian values
- To help children develop new skills and build the foundation for the continuing of their education
- To help children build positive relationships with adults and other children
- To show children that church is a good place to be
- To provide theme-related activities that reinforce learning
- To provide learning activities in a non-competitive setting
- To provide teach and encourage students in Kindergarten to become ready for First Grade.

CURRICULUM

At Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten, children become a part of an exciting, Christ-centered preschool and kindergarten curriculum. We do follow the Maryland State Department of Education State Curriculum and the Maryland Model for School Readiness. The program is designed to introduce young children to a loving God through the guidance of caring adults. Each day is centered on a primary concept such as "God cares for me", "the Bible teaches me about God", etc. Children will be encouraged to grasp and apply these important concepts to their own lives.

By offering developmental centers, children will "learn through play" in a child-friendly environment. We will explore the fundamentals (colors, shapes, letters, numbers, etc.) by applying these various subjects creatively in small groups.

Students will be participating in arts and crafts as well as playing outdoors daily, weather permitting. No open-toed shoes or flip-flops. Please label any removable clothing or loose items.

The Kindergarten follows the State of Maryland Department of Education kindergarten state curriculum and the Maryland Model for School Readiness. The teacher works individually with each student in advancing their literacy, math, and writing skills.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We maintain an open door policy in our classroom. Parents are always welcome to participate in their child's day. However, too many parents at one time can be overwhelming, so please schedule a time to visit in advance (when possible) with your child's teacher. Parental involvement establishes a connection and promotes a unity between home and school.

Many opportunities are available for parents or other adult family members. These may include providing snack on a special day, chaperoning a field trip, participating in fund raising, sharing skills and talents with the children, and becoming a mystery reader.

In order to make your visit a positive experience for you, your child and your child's teacher, we must ask that you leave any siblings at home. Also, siblings can detract from the 'specialness' of your visit for your student. If you have any questions, comments or concerns we ask that you please wait until the end of class time and schedule a conference as needed. The instructors' time with the children is limited and therefore precious. They wish to spend as much classroom time as possible teaching your child. Thank you in advance for being understanding!

SCHEDULE/POLICIES

Hours of Operation –

4 year-old morning Tree House Class is Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30am –12 noon.

3 year-old morning Tree House Class is Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30am - 12 noon.

3 & 4 year-old morning Farm Room Class from 9:00am - 11:30am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

3 year-old morning Farm Room Class from 9:00 a.m. -11:30am on Tuesday and Thursday.

4 year-old afternoon Tree House Room Class from 12:30pm – 3:00pm on Monday through Friday.

Kindergarten in the Farm Room Monday through Friday, 12:00pm – 3:30pm.

Arrival and Dismissal –Please sign in your child daily on the *Sign In Sheet* provided along with whether your child will be attending JumpBunch or Mother's Day Out. Also, please initial this sheet upon departing with your child.

Class is scheduled to begin promptly. Please do not enter the classroom before this time. The teachers need time to prepare for the day's activities in order to give your child the greatest benefit while in their care. Prompt arrival is important. Many activities that determine your child's day are explained to the children at the beginning of class. The bell will ring at 9:00, 9:30, 12:00 or 12:30 signaling parents to drop off the children at the room door. It is best for both you and your child if you say a quick good-bye at the door. (Less tears!)

We also ask that you be prompt in picking up your child. Parents will be charged late fees according to the following schedule:

6-10 minutes late	\$ 5.00
11-15 minutes late	\$10.00
16-20 minutes late	\$15.00

If parents are habitually late at pick-up time, we reserve the right to request that your child be withdrawn from the program. We do not want to have to enforce rules such as these. Please be courteous and on time. Please also remember that your child depends on you to be there at pick-up time and may feel insecure and displaced if you are late. Please call if you are running late so that we may reassure your child and relieve them of any fears.

No child will be released to an unauthorized person. We must know IN WRITING (or in an emergency by phone) from the parent or legal guardian, any changes to your list of persons authorized to pick up your child.

Holidays and Closings –Little Seedlings will open after Labor Day and end before Memorial Day. Otherwise we will follow the St. Mary's public school calendar. For inclement weather or emergency closings, *if the public schools are closed or operating on a delayed schedule, we are closed.* Please consult our website for any update on these conditions.

ENROLLMENT

Children must be 3, 4, or 5 years of age by September 1st to enroll unless special arrangements are made by the Director and the Board of Advisors.

All children must be toilet-trained prior to admittance into any program unless a disability prevents toilet-training.

The Office of Child Care requires that the following forms be completed and submitted before a child can be admitted to class:

1. HEALTH INVENTORY FORM (completed by Physician) includes immunization record and lead screening
2. EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD
3. PARENT-SIGNED CARD FROM BACK OF *Choosing Childcare* Booklet

Registration -Little Seedlings requires a registration fee at the time of official registration and the first tuition payment. The class is filled on a first-come, first-served basis, in accordance with licensing regulations. Registration Fee and first tuition payment are Non-Refundable.

Non-Discrimination Policy -Little Seedlings is open to all children regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. All children will receive the full benefits of our program and will be treated with dignity and respect.

Religion –Children from all religious backgrounds are welcome and each belief is respected. The curriculum we use will reflect and teach the views of the Christian faith. Bible stories, verses, songs, dramatic activities and games will be used during the school year. We also use the Maryland State Department of Education’s State Curriculum.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

We have many toys to choose from and share here at school, so please refrain from bringing toys in from home. It is much easier for a student to learn to share a toy from school rather than a favorite toy brought from home. Jewelry, candy or gum, personal money, sharp or breakable objects, whistles, keys, guns or weapons should also remain at home. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items brought from home. There will be designated days for *show and tell day* for all the classes with teacher-designated topic suggestions. Each class will inform you as to when your student’s show and tell day will be.

SNACKS

Parents will be providing a snack (one or two items) and drink for their child. We will be encouraging good and healthy eating habits and suggest you send in non-perishable, nutritious, finger foods. Please write your child’s name on their lunch box or bag and thermos or juice box. (Please refrain from using the juice ‘bags’ as they are difficult for children to manage.)

Please do not send a full lunch with your child. There is not enough time for your child to have a complete lunch before recess.

Your student’s teacher will inform you if any students in the class have food allergies. Please be understanding of the needs of these students.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special and we can celebrate birthdays during our regular snack time. Make arrangements in advance with the teacher to schedule a birthday celebration. (Please, no cupcakes or party favors.)

TUITION

Tuition is due by the 1st of each month for the subsequent month. All checks should be made out to: **Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten or LSCPK**. The checks may be placed in the Tuition Box in the Director's office.

A \$35 fee will be charged, in addition to any fees required from the bank, for any returned check. If a problem should arise and prompt payment cannot be made, you should contact the director immediately. A late fee of \$10 will be charged for tuition payments not paid by the 5th of the month and \$10 per day after the 5th unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director.

DRESS CODE

Please dress your child in comfortable, durable and washable clothing that is easy to manage by your child. Open-toed shoes or sandals are not appropriate because of the mulch/ sand on the playground being caught in the shoe and making walking uncomfortable. The students will be participating in arts/crafts and science as well as playing outdoors daily, weather permitting.

Please label any removable clothing or loose items. This will help us ensure each child goes home with their clothes.

ILLNESS

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that all children brought to a school must be clean and in good health, therefore, we cannot accept any child who exhibits signs of illness (such as a fever of 99°F or higher, respiratory/breathing difficulties, vomiting, diarrhea, rash [other than a heat rash], sore throat) or any communicable disease (i.e. impetigo, strep, chicken pox, pink eye, head lice, etc.). We ask that you report any communicable disease to the school, as we are required to report this to the Health Department.

Children who exhibit symptoms of illness after they are dropped off will be removed from their class and isolated with adult supervision until a parent can pick them up. Parents are expected to immediately pick up a sick child once called so that germs will not be spread. We are concerned with the health of your child as well as the health of our other children. ***NOTE:*** Re-admittance to the school will be when the child is either free from all symptoms, has been on medication for no less than 24 hours or with a doctor's written permission to return stating that the child is no longer contagious.

EMERGENCIES

The health and safety of your child is of utmost concern to the school staff. In the event of an accident, the staff will administer first aid and, if warranted, call you. In the case of a serious accident, the rescue squad will take your child to the nearest hospital. All staff members are First Aid/CPR certified. You will be informed of bumps, small scratches and small accidents or incidents of which you should be aware. ***PLEASE KEEP EMERGENCY CARDS CURRENT AT ALL TIMES.***

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is our goal to guide children so that they understand their boundaries and the appropriate ways to handle problems they may encounter. In helping children develop this inner discipline we will set reasonable limits with logical consequences.

- STEP 1 The Teacher will specify or model acceptable and positive behavior.
- STEP 2 The child will be redirected towards another activity when displaying inappropriate behavior(s).
- STEP 3 The child will be removed from the situation or conflict and will be given a brief quiet time.
- STEP 4 The Teacher will discuss the appropriate and acceptable behavior with the child.
- STEP 5 If the child is unable to rejoin appropriately with the group or activity, the child will be given additional time to gain control with the Director.
- STEP 6 The Teacher or Director will contact the parents/guardians to discuss a more detailed behavior management plan.
- STEP 7 If the above actions merit no change in behavior the Director will discuss with the parents removal of the child from the program.

For further explanation, please refer to our Discipline and Behavior Policy in your packet.

IN CLOSING

The staff of Little Seedlings Christian Preschool and Kindergarten wishes to thank you for letting us be a part of your child's educational experience. Parents are their child's first and most important teachers. We are grateful to you for choosing us to guide your child through this early stage of their lifelong journey.