

# Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center

# Handbook



## OUR PURPOSE

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center (ZLECC is the abbreviation we will use in this handbook) exists for the purpose of aiding and assisting parents in their God given command, “Bring your children up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). We are also instructed to serve the Christian church by teaching God’s Word. We here at Zion are dedicated to making disciples and preserving and strengthening the Christian Church so that all generations may come to know Christ as their Savior.

All children attending our Early Childhood Program will daily hear the truths of God’s everlasting love through the Bible. It will be incorporated through many ways. This includes physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and most important spiritual. We will provide a program that reflects the developmental level of each child through active and quiet, individual and group, and indoor and outdoor activities. We believe in providing a program that offers a warm, nurturing environment, with varied educational experiences under the guidance of a well-trained staff.

The center will not discriminate against anyone because of sex, race, and color, etc. We will teach the Christian values and beliefs as taught by our church and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

ZLECC will provide your child with care in all of the following areas:

1. Daily opportunities both indoor and outdoors to develop small and large motor skills. (physical development)
2. Daily opportunities to learn through language arts, communication skills, science, and reading and math readiness. (intellectual development)
3. Daily opportunities to develop social skills which are based upon Christ-centered, God pleasing principles of love and concern for each other’s safety and well-being. (social development)
4. Each child will be exposed to feeling accepted as part of a group and individual, and as a redeemed child of God.
5. Most important are the daily opportunities to hear God’s Word and apply it both at home and at school. (spiritual development)

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

Listed below are the specific programs that ZLECC has to offer to your family:

Full Time Child Care:	This is a full time program in which children can attend up to 10 hours per day, Monday through Friday. Each child enrolled will receive a preschool curriculum. Children must be at least 20 months of age.
Half-day Child Care:	Children can attend this program for a half of day up to 5 hours a day. Each child must attend a minimum of 2 days. These must include morning hours.
Preschool:	We offer a preschool in each classroom from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. If you are interested in 4-year-old preschool, registration is held in February.
Before/After School Care:	Children in this program need to give the director a schedule at the beginning of the school year. You will be charged for days you do not attend, after you have used your credit. On scheduled days off from the day school, you need to let us know in advance if your child will be attending. There will be no charge if you choose for your child not to attend on non-scheduled days.

## ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENT

### REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

1. Zion Lutheran Early Learning Center is open from 6:30 AM – 6:00 PM. Please abide by these times, or you will be charged an additional fee. Doors will be opened no earlier than 6:30 AM.
2. Children must be at least 20 months old.
3. Children must be completely potty-trained to move from the toddler room into the three-year-old room.
4. Registration forms must be completed before your child's first day. We must also receive your \$25.00 (per family) non-refundable registration fee. This will guarantee your child a place in our program.
5. Children must be completely immunized, and records must be on file by the first day of enrollment. You have one month from the date of enrollment to have a physical from your doctor completed.
6. New families are enrolled on a first-come, first-served process. If you are on a waiting list, members of Zion receive first priority.
7. Parents may also want to consider bringing their children to school for a short visit to become familiar with the new environment.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE

Upon registration, you must submit a permanent schedule for the days and times your child will be attending. This will enable us to staff accordingly. If your schedule changes, you have to inform the director to see if alternate days are available. In some instances part-time families may need to add additional days, this will only be possible if there is availability. You will then pay the daily rate for that day.

## **FEES**

An enrollment fee of \$25.00 per family is due when you submit your application. This fee is non-refundable. Our price list is available from the center office.

## **ABSENCES**

If your child will be absent, please call to notify the center before 9:00 AM. Our phone number is 762-2824. You may also leave a message on the answering machine.

## **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

ZLECC will unlock the doors at 6:30 AM. Please refrain from arriving before this time. The teacher needs time to get things ready before the morning starts.

We are concerned about the safety of your child at all times while he/she is in our care. We ask parents to accompany their children into their classroom. Please do not have them enter by themselves. Please be sure the teacher recognizes that he/she has arrived. You will also need to assist them in hanging up their coats.

Upon departure, we ask that you assist your child in gathering his/her belongings.

Parents are to check their child's cubby to make sure there is one complete change of clothes. This includes shirt, pants, socks and underwear, and one extra sweater or sweatshirt is recommended.



## **ILLNESS**

Please contact our Center office to receive two copies of a health form. One is for you to keep, and the other is to be signed and returned to the center.

If your child becomes sick at school, you will be notified and expected to pick him/her up within one hour. Your child will not be able to return to school for any portion of the following day.

## **MEDICATIONS**

In order for our Center to administer any medications to your child, you must complete and sign a medical form. Forms are available on our webpage.

All medications must be in the original containers and labeled with the child's name, drug name, and directions for administering.

Prescription drugs must also be labeled with the doctor's name and the date.

Please hand medications directly to the teacher so that it can be safely stored. Children will not be allowed to keep any medications in their lunch boxes or backpacks.

## **BREAKFAST**

Children who wish to eat breakfast at the center may do so. You have two options. You can bring something in daily, or store a box of cereal labeled with your child's name in a cupboard at school. Zion childcare will provide the milk, spoons, and bowls. If your child wishes to have a beverage, parents will need to supply that also. Our structured day generally begins by 9:00 AM, so breakfast can only be served until 8:30 AM.

## **LUNCH**

Please send a nutritionally balanced lunch with your child. We have a refrigerator where lunches can be stored. Milk is provided by the center. A microwave will be available, however, it is extremely difficult to heat up a large number of meals and supervise the children. If your older child is in need of a warm lunch on a daily basis you may want to utilize the hot lunch program.

The hot lunch program is available on request. You must order your child's meal by 9:00 AM through the teacher. Any time after that the lunch count is called in and you may not be able to order it.

A hot lunch calendar is available on a monthly basis. You may also download one on the webpage.

## **SNACKS**

The morning and after-nap snack and juice will be provided by the center.

The above snack policies apply only to children in our day care program.

Children enrolled only in our before-school or after-school program are to bring a snack along from home. They may also bring a beverage or purchase a soda from the machine, with parent's permission. These children are usually extremely hungry after all that hard work during school, so it is recommended that they have a snack for their time in childcare.

## **BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

We work to prevent behavior problems by arranging the classrooms so that children work in small groups and have a choice of activities. This range of activities will give your child the freedom and ability to experience success and become self-directed. Teachers are trained to establish predictable limits and help the children understand the consequences of their actions.

Effective guidance comes from careful planning and consistency. The teachers will strive to develop a positive relationship with each child and redirect unacceptable behavior. Proper guidance in our center will be maintained and exercised in a loving manner in keeping with the Gospel. Therefore our form of guidance will not be physical or emotional or demeaning in any way, but will always seek to keep before us the loving example of our Savior.

Teachers use a variety of guidance techniques and consequences, which are developed with immediate and consistent logic. A "time out" period may be used for children. It would not exceed five minutes. When positive direction and guidance are not effective, a parent/teacher/director conference will be held to determine the need for further intervention. Teachers will communicate with you, the parent, regarding any behavior concerns.

Your child may be discharged from Zion Lutheran Early Learning Center if the staff feels we cannot meet the needs of your child, or if we cannot control your child's behavioral problems. Your child may be discharged if we feel we cannot meet your family's needs or you do not follow Zion's policies and procedures. Such situations can include, but are not limited to, behavior that is deemed harmful to children and/or staff by either children or adults.

## POLICY FOR DISCHARGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN

Our hope is that all problems could be resolved in any situation that may occur within the center. However, if several attempts have been made in writing and/or verbally and efforts seem hopeless, ZLECC reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

1. Non-payment or excessive late-payment of fees.
2. Not observing the policies and procedures as outlined in the Parent Handbook.
3. Child has special need that Zion Lutheran Childcare Center can not meet. (After a trial period has been tried)
4. Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.
5. Medical or immunization records are not up-to-date.

If you wish to discontinue enrollment in ZLECC, a two-week notice is requested by Zion Lutheran Childcare Center. We will try to accommodate all involved. The administration has the right to terminate the enrollment of a child on the spot if it feels threatened, or if payments are not being made.

**REFUND POLICY:** If a monthly payment is made, a refund will be given for unused days totaling up to two weeks maximum. Weekly or bi-weekly payments will not be refunded. This is for parent or Zion Childcare initiated discharge.

Rules are located in the administrator's office and in the Parent Handbook.



## PAYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parents' fees cover 100% of our operating expenses. This includes salaries, program supplies, equipment, building maintenance, mortgage, and snacks. Therefore, it is very important that these payment policies and procedures be strictly followed. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

1. **Payment Plan:** Fees are due the week before childcare is needed and must be paid by Friday. A late fee will be charged for payments not received by Friday. If payment is not made, you will find a bill on Monday in your child's cubby with the additional \$20.00 added on. If you fall more than two weeks behind, we will suspend our services. If collection of payment becomes a habitual problem, we reserve the right to terminate our services. **THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**
2. **Registration fee:** There will be a \$25.00 enrollment fee per family upon enrollment. This will confirm a place for your child in the program. Registration fees are non-refundable and do not apply toward tuition.
3. **Returned Checks:** There will be a \$20.00 charge for any returned checks. Recurring check problems will require that the account be paid with a money order, certified check, or cash. After two incidences, no checks will be excepted.
4. **Substitution Policy:** Wisconsin state law limits the number of children per teacher. Children are assigned to classes accordingly. It is therefore necessary to make prior arrangements with the director if requesting substitute days for prearranged absences. Substitute days will be subject to availability. This also includes if you want to add additional days to your regular schedule.

5. Death-in-the-Family Credit: 100% credit will be given for days not attended due to a death in the immediate family (father, mother, siblings, or grandparent). Five days maximum will be the credit allowed per death. We reserve the right to ask for substantiating paperwork.
6. Holiday and Snow Days: When ZLECC is closed for any of these reasons you will not be charged any fees. ZLECC will remain open for conferences and conventions that the elementary is closed for during the school year. ZLECC closes during the days of Christmas break, and the days during Easter break. We also close one Friday in May for Zion School's Track and Field Day. In September you will be notified of the exact dates.
7. Vacation/sick days: In order to use a sick/vacation day you will need to notify the director in writing that you are using a day. In the fall every family will receive their days. These days can only be used from the first day of our fall program (the last Monday in August) through the end of the school year (which is approximately June 1). They cannot be accumulated to the summer or next school year. Two times the weekly scheduled days are allotted as vacation/sick days per school year. For example, if your child's schedule is 2 days per week, 4 vacation/sick days will be given. A three-day-a-week schedule will be given 6 days. During the summer months your child will receive one day of vacation for every day he/she attends. Children who enroll after January 1 will only get half of the allotted vacation/sick days.

### **REST PERIODS**

There will be a quiet time in the Center each afternoon. All children are required to rest. Even if your child is not a napper at home, most children adjust quite well to our quiet time. Each child needs to bring their own sleeping bag, and a small pillow if they wish. Please do not make requests for your child not to nap or fall asleep. In order to keep a structured environment every child must abide by the same rules at naptime.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

6:30 - 8:30	Arrival and breakfast / free-choice activities
8:30 - 9:00	Free-play / clean-up / move to classrooms
9:00 - 9:30	Bible story / group-time activities, including songs and finger-plays
9:30 - 9:45	Snack time
9:45 - 10:30	Art activity / stories
10:30 - 11:00	Outdoor play or gym play
11:00 - 11:30	Quiet educational games, puzzles, and books
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch activities / preparation for nap
12:30 - 2:30	Nap
2:30 - 3:00	Wake up / afternoon snack
3:00 - 6:00	Large group activities, including outside play

## GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

The following are some general guidelines. Some of this is repeated information and some may be new.

1. Label all personal belongings.
2. Please notify the center by 9:00 AM if your child is going to be absent.
3. Encourage your child's independence, but give the necessary assistance when arriving and departing from the Center.
4. We appreciate your input into our program. Please contact the teachers or director with any questions, concerns, or compliments.
5. DO NOT leave your car running when you drop off or pick up. This is very dangerous and illegal. You also need to park in a parking stall. Only use the handicapped stall if you have the sticker.
6. You need to escort your child into the Center and TO A TEACHER. Upon pick up, please make contact with your child's teacher regarding any information about the day. We need to know that your child is safely back in your hands.
7. We need a note or a phone call if any unauthorized person is picking up your child. They will be required to show identification.
8. Regardless of the reason for late pick up (after 6:00 PM), there is a \$1.00 late charge per minute, per child. The money is due upon pick up and should be given directly to the closing teacher.
9. A parent-board is located outside the office door. It contains important information for all parents to be checked daily. Also, check your child's cubbies on a daily basis.
10. Children should not bring toys to school. Items tend to get lost or broken. Please leave them at home, unless it is a show-and-tell item for 4-year-old preschool with Mrs. Herzog. Security items are fine, if your child needs them to make an adjustment.

## HEALTH

You are the best judge of your child's health and we trust you will not bring a sick child the center. However, if in the opinion of the teaching staff/director your child is sick, we will call you to come and pick up your child. You will need to send someone within one hour after the phone call. The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- fever of 100 degrees or more
- inflammation of the eye (excessive redness, glassy, or discharge)
- vomiting
- more than one incident of diarrhea or loose stool
- communicable disease as defined by the Department of Health Services/Center for Disease Control
- unknown rash
- excessive nasal discharge, especially if yellow or greenish, since this indicates infection
- pain

If your child was sent home from school they may not return the next day. After that day, children may only attend when they are symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer. This is to allow your child ample time to recover and stop the spread of infection to other children and the staff.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school:

- Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal
- No fever for 24 hours without a fever reducer
- Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours (48 hours in the case of strep)
- Vomiting or diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved
- Pain (earache, cramps, headache, etc.) resolved

It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a communicable disease. A child may be readmitted with a form from the doctor or health department. The local health department and parents will immediately be notified of all communicable diseases. A medical log will be maintained to record injuries/accidents or medication dispensed. I understand and agree to abide by these policies and procedures in connection with my child(ren)'s enrollment.

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
( signature of parent) (date)

**ZION LUTHERAN EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

I certify that I have received the ZLECC Parent Handbook, and that I have read and understood the policies included. I have contacted the Director to clarify any questions about any policies and procedures summarized in this handbook.

I understand the information in this handbook is subject to change at any time with or without notice, and those changes in the policies may supercede, modify, or eliminate the policies in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
( signature of parent) (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director's Signature