



Emmanuel
LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL



Parent Handbook

2025-2026



2-Year-Old Program
3-Year-Old Program
4/5-Year-Old PreK Program



9:00am-12Noon

After School Lunch Program
T/Th 12Noon-1:30pm

2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna, Virginia 22181-5577
703-938-6187

emmanuelpreschool2@gmail.com
elcviennapreschool.org



Office Hours: 8:45am-12:30pm
School Hours: 9:00am-12:00pm
Monday through Friday

Preschool Director
Alison Morgan



Serving the Community for 65 Years!

Welcome to Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool!

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is a developmental learning center offering a quality preschool program. This handbook should answer many of your questions and help to make our year together a positive experience for all. We suggest you read through this handbook and keep it as a handy resource to refer to information as the year progresses. Please contact the school office or your child's teacher for additional information or clarification. We welcome you and your child to our preschool family!

Celebrating our 65th year, Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool was established in 1960 as a Christian outreach to our community. It is an integral part of Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

The purpose of Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum in a Christian context that will give the preschool child a strong foundation for his/her future social, physical, emotional, spiritual and educational needs. Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool admits students of any 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 based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

Our staff works with parents to nurture the growth, development, and well-being of their children. We believe that each child is a "unique" child of God, made by Him in love and therefore we strive to cultivate the individuality of each child. At the same time, students learn to contribute to their class and to respect and help others.

Our staff endeavors to provide a Christian atmosphere and environment that is child-centered and as hands-on as possible--allowing children, through many rich experiences, to be as competent as they are developmentally able to be at this time in their lives.

Our goal for each student is to instill a love of God, love of learning, and love of self and others.

We take great pride in our parent-teacher partnerships, and we encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with our teachers and staff.

We look forward to a fantastic school year!

Sincerely,

Alison Morgan
Preschool Director
amorganelp@gmail.com

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool

2025-2026 Preschool Staff

Director	<i>Alison Morgan</i>
Registrar	<i>Maureen Barrett</i>
Treasurer	<i>Terri Hillaert</i>

<i>Program</i>	<i>Lead Teacher</i>	<i>Assistant Teacher</i>
<i>Room 4- 2s Class (T- F)</i>	<i>Tara Irvine (T-F)</i>	<i>Kate Weizel (T-Tr)</i>
<i>(T-Tr)</i>		<i>Rachel Peck (T-F)</i>
<i>Room 12- 3s Class (M-Tr)</i>	<i>Sabine Guerrero (M-Tr)</i>	<i>Kate Chiller (T-Tr)</i>
<i>(T-Tr)</i>		
<i>Room 3- 3s Class (M-F)</i>	<i>Andrea Aufderheide (M-F)</i>	<i>Kristin Heath (T-F)</i>
<i>(T-F)</i>	<i>Sabine Guerrero (M)</i>	
<i>4s PreK (T-F)</i>	<i>Julie Drake (T-F)</i>	<i>Jennifer Washburn (T-F)</i>
<i>4s PreK (M-F)</i>	<i>Melissa Montgomery (M-F)</i>	<i>Tara Irvine (M)</i>
<i>(T-F)</i>		<i>Denise Zinzi (T-F)</i>
<i>Creative Movement</i>	<i>Alison Morgan (T/Th)</i>	
<i>& Music</i>		
<i>Floating Assistants/Subs</i>	<i>Jennifer Miller, Connie O'Connor, Katie Carrier</i>	
	<i>Stefanie Petrucelli, Jennifer Gant</i>	

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool Organizational Chart

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Council	Nicholas Bohn, President
Emmanuel Preschool Advisory Team^	Co-Chairs and 3 Team Members
Emanuel Lutheran Church Pastor^	Pastor Tony Prinsen
Emmanuel Preschool Director^	Alison Morgan, Director
Emmanuel Preschool Back-Up Program Directors^	J. Drake, Lead, M. Barrett, Asst., J. Miller, Asst.
Emmanuel Preschool Staff Members^	

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ABSENCES

If your child will not be attending school, or if an absence is anticipated, please use **Brightwheel**, email (emmanuelpreschool2@gmail.com) or call **(703) 938-6187** to let us know. **If your child is sick, please inform us of the exact symptoms your child is experiencing.** If your child or someone in your household is diagnosed with a communicable illness, we must be informed as per our Virginia Department of Education Licensing requirements. Please see the section titled *Health and Wellness*, page 13, for more details.

ALLERGIES

If your child has a doctor diagnosed allergy that requires an Epi-pen, we require you to submit the Epi-Pen Authorization form, FARE Plan form, and complete the Snack Approval List. Please see the Snack Policy (page 19) for how Epi-pen allergies are handled with snacks.

If your child has a doctor diagnosed allergy that doesn't require an Epi-pen, but requires other accommodation, please note the allergy on your Admission Form and discuss the allergy with the Administration.

Staff are Epi-Pen trained and certified. A staff member who is Epi-Pen trained and certified will always be present with an Epi-Pen child while they are on the ELP campus.

ACCIDENTS

When accidents occur at school, parents will be notified immediately if the injury is of a serious nature. If the parent(s) cannot be reached, the school will contact the person listed in the child's emergency contacts record. Should transport to Fairfax Hospital Emergency Room be necessary, Fairfax County Rescue Squad will be called. Any costs incurred are to be paid by the parent(s) of the child transported to emergency care. See the Health Policy section for further information regarding illnesses.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL POLICY/LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Our school hours are 9am-12noon. Arrive at school allowing enough time to complete the Brightwheel check-in process to drop off your child promptly. Children will hang up any outerwear, their tote bag, and always wash their hands before beginning their school day.

Children who arrive at school after 9:10am, should report directly to the office where a staff member will escort your child to their class. Parents are still required to check-in on Brightwheel even when arriving late. If no one is currently in the office, please send a Brightwheel message.

Teachers will post their weekly lesson plan and snack schedule on the gray Brightwheel QR kiosk board outside the classroom. All other reminders/updates will be sent through

Brightwheel. The morning drop-off routine should be brief and positive. Let teachers know about anything that might affect or explain your child's readiness for the day; longer discussions should be reserved for outside school hours or sent through a Brightwheel message. Once your child is inside, we encourage parents to move away from the visual range of the classroom windows. It can be distracting and/or upsetting to a child (not necessarily your own) who may be having a hard morning. Our teachers and staff are not allowed to transport children to or from school at any time.

DISMISSAL POLICY

We encourage parents who arrive early for dismissal to also wait out of class view until noon. Scanning the QR code with Brightwheel to check your child out is all that's required at dismissal time, so it is a quicker process. Children will be released one at a time by the teacher.

If a teacher sees that a parent/caregiver is engaged on a cell phone call or otherwise distracted at pickup, safe practices training instructs them to wait to dismiss the child until the adult is finished with their call and able to focus on pickup. **A child can be released only to those persons authorized on their preschool registration paperwork or Brightwheel profile.** Parents can also specify a special pickup situation with a signed written note or send a message through Brightwheel. Parents may also call the office to give permission, but it should not be the person who will be picking up the child. This permission may be taken only if a parent calling can be identified by the office staff.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

It is important to notify the preschool office of any emergency or last-minute issues which might affect picking up a child on time. The office will notify the teacher with an estimated arrival time and who might be picking up if it is not the usual person. If a teacher is not familiar with the person identified to pick up a child, she will ask for official identification such as a picture ID/driver's license. If a child is to be picked up early, the teacher should be notified as far in advance as possible so the child is ready to be dismissed to the parent outside the classroom or office door.

A late pickup is generally defined as occurring after 12:05pm. Children often feel anxious if they are the last ones to be picked up. When a child is picked up late, Brightwheel records the checkout time and the office makes a note of the occasion. Our policy is as follows:

- **1st Late Pickup:** We offer a one-time grace period; the late fee is waived.
- **2nd Late Pickup:** A late fee of \$30 may be assessed.
- **3rd Late Pickup:** A late fee of \$30 plus \$5 per minute for each minute the person is late. We do not wish to assess any late fees and understand emergency situations can affect pick up. It is important that the preschool is notified immediately if you will be late so we can let the teacher know and reassure your child that someone is coming to pick them up. School staff are not permitted to transport students to or from school.

BIRTHDAY PARTY POLICY (See also SNACK POLICY)

Children's birthdays are recognized and celebrated with their classmates during snack time. If parents would like to provide a birthday snack (cookies, cupcakes, Rice Krispie treats, ice cream cups, or Jello Jigglers), it is a fun treat for the students. Our regular snack is always available should a child not wish to partake of the birthday snack. Please consult with the teacher BEFORE bringing in any food to the classroom. **Note: Children with food allergies are never served any food brought in from outside sources.** Children with allergies are safest enjoying a treat provided by their own parent, so special accommodations by other families, no matter how well-intentioned, are not permitted. If a food allergy is a concern for your child, you may provide your child with a supply of treats that can be kept at school. We can defrost a cupcake from the school freezer or serve an individually wrapped safe treat at celebration time. No invitation to parties should be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited. **Also, no balloons, goodie bags, or favors should be brought or distributed at school.**

CHAPEL

Our chapel program is held every Wednesday at 11:35am for our students. Our Director sings interactive chapel songs with the students and ELC pastors and staff provide short messages that enhance the bible story read by the teachers each week. Parents may be invited to join us for our special Christmas Chapel in December and Easter Chapel in April. Invitations will be sent in advance.

CHILD ABUSE AND TRAUMA

NEGLECT/SHAKEN BABY/ABUSIVE HEAD

Child abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of a child. The abuse may come from many sources including parents, siblings, and caregivers outside the home. The injury or harm done to children today is of great concern to us all. Child abuse may take the form of physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse.

Abusive head trauma (AHT) is a traumatic injury that is inflicted upon the head or brain of an infant or young child. Shaken baby syndrome is a form of AHT and is a type of inflicted traumatic brain injury that happens when a baby is violently shaken. A baby has weak neck muscles and a large, heavy head. Shaking makes the fragile brain bounce back and forth inside the skull and causes bruising, swelling, and bleeding, which can lead to permanent, severe brain damage or death. Shaken baby injuries usually occur in children younger than 2 years old but may be seen in children up to the age of 5.

Our staff is trained to recognize any abuse and to help to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma. Staff will be trained to recognize the potential signs and symptoms and learning strategies for coping, including a crying or distraught child. As part of our licensing requirements, our staff are trained annually in child abuse and neglect reporting.

The school staff has a moral and legal responsibility to protect children from suspected abuse. As mandated, Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool faculty and staff are legally obligated to report any instances of suspected child abuse and neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS). Parental permission is not needed for the child to be interviewed by CPS staff. Parental permission is not needed to release information that relates to, or documents concerns about abuse and neglect.

COPING WITH CRYING BABIES

2-year-olds

Common reactions when upset: Young children may become crankier.

They may cry more than usual or want to be held and cuddled more.

You can help by:

- Increase positive interactions throughout the day
- Respond to emotions in a caring and supportive manner

3-5-year-olds

Common reactions when upset: Preschool children may return to behaviors they have outgrown. For example, toileting accidents, bed-wetting, or being frightened about being separated from their parents/caregivers. They may also have tantrums or a hard time sleeping.

You can help by:

- Be patient and tolerant
- Provide reassurance (verbal and physical)
- Encourage expression through play, reenactment, story-telling
- Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements
- Plan calming, comforting activities before bedtime
- Maintain routines
- Avoid media exposure

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool abides by the Emmanuel Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy and all staff have background checks on file. Copies of the Child Protection Policy may be obtained from the Preschool Director.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME AND SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES

The Safe to Sleep® campaign (formerly known as Back to Sleep®) aims to prevent Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and educate parents, caregivers, and health care providers about ways to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. About 3,700 babies die suddenly and unexpectedly each year in the United States. These deaths are

the result of unknown causes, Accidental Suffocation and Strangulation in Bed (ASSB), and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is defined as an unidentified cause of death in a baby younger than one year. Here you will find additional information about SIDS to arm yourself with the information to keep your children safe at home and with their childcare provider. Additional Informational Links: [A Parent's Guide to Safe Sleep](#) [Safe Sleep for Babies](#)

CHURCH WELCOME

Emmanuel Lutheran Church is currently offering both virtual and in-person services and welcomes all families who attend our preschool. Please look at elcvienna.org/worship/ to see times and dates for virtual services and current guidelines for masking during church activities.

Worship Times: Please consult www.elcvienna.org

Church office: 703-938-2119

CLASS SIZE/TEACHER RATIO POLICY

Each preschool classroom is staffed by a teacher and an assistant teacher. When possible, we also have a Floater who can help throughout the preschool wherever needed. The size of the classes are as follows:

- 2-Year-Old classes - 10 students per class/ 2 Teachers, Lead and Assistant
12 students/3 Teachers, 1 Lead and 2 Assistants
- 3-Year-Old classes – 12 students per class/2 Teachers, Lead and Assistant
- 4-Year-Old Prekindergarten classes –16 students in Room 1 (our largest room)
12 students in Room 2
2 Teachers, Lead and Assistant

CLOTHING POLICY

Children should wear clothing that is casual, durable, and washable. It should also be loose fitting so it is easy to remove and put back on for independent toileting purposes. Elastic waist pants work well. Please avoid hooks, snaps, suspenders, or belts unless children can manage those themselves.

Shoes should be closed-toe, with a rubber sole, preferably sneakers; not Crocs, boots, or sandals as these are not appropriate for young children as they enjoy preschool movement activities. This allows them to explore all aspects of the preschool program from painting to playground. Children should be able to move safely and freely as they run, climb, and jump.

Children arriving with snow/rain boots must bring sneakers for the school day. During cold weather, children should wear warm coats and bring hats and mittens for outdoor play and exploration times. Gloves are allowed if the child can put them on themselves. All clothing and outerwear should be labeled with the child's last name. Hooded garments with long drawstrings should not be worn to school unless the drawstring is removed. Necklaces should

be avoided as these also can be choking hazards should they catch on equipment. Families should provide extra clothing, including socks and shoes, if possible. These are generally stored in the child's tote bag. These extra clothes should be changed seasonally.

COMMUNICATION

The preschool uses the Brightwheel app as our primary method of contact. You will receive teacher newsletters and notices and can send messages to your teachers as well. When needed, we will continue to use email, but hope to reduce emails significantly with our currently enrolled families. The preschool Google calendar is available on our web site. If you wish to have a hard copy of any item, please make a request to our office and we'll be happy to provide it. A virtual Parent Bulletin Board is also available on our ELP website at www.elcviennapreschool.org. The Calendar is available at this link: [ELP Calendar](#)

CURRICULUM

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool exists to work with parents to nurture the spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical growth of each child enrolled in the program.

We believe that each student is a unique child of God made by Him in love. We strive to provide a Christian atmosphere and environment that is child-centered and hands-on, allowing each child, through many rich experiences, to be as competent as they are able to be at this time in their lives.

Play is vital to growing children and is a major component of our class time. Classrooms are set up with a variety of activities and learning centers (art, dramatic play, reading, math, science, music, large and small muscle, etc.), permitting children to experiment with and explore their environment.

We will use Brightwheel, an app for our families that integrates everything you need regarding checking children in and out, but also allowing teachers to share learning stories and photos, class content, etc. The app allows us to post learning stories where we can directly show *parents our learning objectives to both the Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning (Early Childhood) and Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS).*

Our program is planned to include active and quiet periods, as well as child-selected and teacher-directed activities. All activities are developmentally appropriate for the age span of the children within each classroom. **Our goal is to instill in each child a love of God, a love of learning, and a love of self and others.**

DAYS/HOURS OF OPERATION

NOTE: 2s-graduated start first month & 3s graduated start first week-9am-11am

2-Year-Old Classes:

3-day Tuesday-Thursday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

4-day Tuesday- Friday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

Room 12-3-Year-Old Class:

3-day Tuesday-Thursday program: 9:00am -12:00pm

4-day Monday- Thursday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

Room 3- 3-Year-Old Class:

4-day Tuesday-Friday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

5-day Monday-Friday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

Room 2- 4/5-Year-Old PreK Class:

4-day Tuesday-Friday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

Room 1- 4/5-Year-Old PreK Class:

5-day Monday-Friday program: 9:00am-12:00pm

DISCIPLINE/CHILD GUIDANCE

ELP does not use physical discipline in any form. Children who are in a well-supervised environment and who are provided opportunities for a variety of interesting activities respond to positive guidance. Positive guidance, including quiet words and gentle redirection of activity, is a successful way to help children make good choices. Acknowledging positive behaviors is much more effective than harsh words. Teachers work to remain positive and use "redirection" to encourage appropriate play and activities. A short time out may be used occasionally. In the belief that no real learning takes place without discipline, the school has some basic rules of good behavior: *"You may not hurt anyone. You may not destroy or damage property. You may not be disrespectful to children or adults."* Aggressive behavior (e.g., biting, hitting) is dealt with in a firm decisive manner. In the event of repeated serious behavior issues, parents may be called to pick up their child from school that day. Children will return to school on their next scheduled school day.

Every child needs to have limits set for behavior in order to develop into a well-adjusted, self-disciplined individual. Until such time as the child can develop their own inner control, and thereby set his or her own limits, he or she looks to adults to set limits for him or her and to teach appropriate behavior.

A major life change or crisis at home can affect your child's behavior at school. Let teachers know of any joyous happenings, upsetting experiences, or important changes at home. This information will be kept in confidence but will help teachers with any change in behavior. Also, let teachers know what a child has been told concerning an impending birth, serious illness, adoption, recent death, etc. so they can follow these conversations appropriately.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT POLICY

Emmanuel Preschool follows Fairfax County's guidelines for school enrollment.

Students should have all completed forms on file in the office before the 1st day of preschool.

2-Year-Old Preschool Classes:

The child must be two (24 months) years old when they begin school in the current school year. Children don't need to be toilet trained and they may be in diapers/easy open Pull-Ups.

3-Year-Old Preschool Classes:

The child must be three (3) years old on or before November 30th of the current school year. Children must be completely toilet trained and able to handle their toileting needs. They may not wear diapers or Pull-Ups.

4/5-Year-Old Pre-Kindergarten Classes:

The child must be four (4) years old on or before November 30th of the current school year. Children must be completely toilet trained and able to handle their toileting needs. They may not wear diapers or Pull-Ups.

FIELD TRIPS

The 4's PreK classes may have one walking field trip to James Madison High School for the Tiny Tots Christmas Concert this year if health and safety protocols allow. Parents will be notified well in advance, may volunteer to chaperone, and must also sign a permission slip before any off-site event. We maintain 2:1 ratio of student to adult for this field trip as well as Virginia Department of Education standards for field trip safety.

FIRE AND DISASTER EMERGENCY/SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS/LOCKDOWN DRILL

Fire/emergency drills are held monthly, shelter-in-place drills are held twice a year, and lockdown drills are held twice a year. This is required by Virginia Department of Education licensing. Each classroom has a Shelter-in-Place/Lockdown plan and Emergency Evacuation plan as well as other emergency procedures. ELP has stocked emergency GO-Bags, supplies and keeps a complete file of student records with these supplies in the event of any actual emergency. This information will allow us to contact parents if needed. If a parent wishes to see our Emergency Plan, they can find it on our preschool website on the Admissions page under Handbooks.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

In order to keep all our children healthy, please do not bring sick children to school. **If your child has been ill (fever, diarrhea, vomiting), please allow them to rest and do not return them to school until they are fever, diarrhea, or vomiting free and feeling normal again for 24 hours.** Fever is defined as 100.4 or higher. Per our licensing requirements, our staff are trained to offer a daily health screening which is conducted each morning as the children arrive at preschool. Parents are asked to remain at the door as the teacher greets your child. We rely on our parents to help us maintain a healthy preschool for our students. If a child becomes ill at school or if a child is unable to fully participate in ALL aspects of the preschool day, the child will be separated and cared for, and parents will be contacted to take their child home.

Symptoms that are cause for keeping your child home include but are not limited to:

- a persistent cold (constant flow of mucus and/or yellowish-green discharge from the nose)
- persistent coughing and/or sneezing
- red eyes/drainage/conjunctivitis (child is not readmitted to school until after 24 hours with no discharge and/or 24 hours after receiving prescription medication and no longer has drainage)
- flushed skin, unexplained rashes, or skin eruptions, especially on upper chest/torso
- earache, headache, red eyes, sore throat, chills
- diarrhea, stomach pain, vomiting (a child that has had diarrhea or vomited at any time in the last 24 hours should not be sent to school the next morning)
- fever (100.4 or higher) - child must be fever free **without medication** for 24 hours before returning to school.
- chicken pox (7 days exclusion)
- if your child has a communicable disease (i.e., Covid-19, strep throat, flu, conjunctivitis, etc.) you must report this to the school office within 24 hours.

For any illness that requires an antibiotic, the child must be on the antibiotic at least a full 24 hours before returning to school. For a persistent problem (like red eyes, runny nose, rash), the preschool may require a doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious. Allergies must be documented by the child's physician.

A child that has had a fever of 100.4 or higher, vomited, or has had diarrhea as recently as the evening before school or the morning of that school day should not be sent to school. A child that has been sent home sick from school should not return until they are fever, diarrhea, or vomit free without medication and feeling normal again for 24 hours.

Licensing requires that parents must notify the school within 24 hours if a child or any other

household member has been diagnosed as having a communicable disease. We are required to report significant outbreaks to the Fairfax County Health Department.

Our preschool reserves the right to exclude any child at any time that is unable to fully participate in ALL aspects of the preschool day. For example, if a child is too sick to play outside on the playground or unable to navigate the preschool or playground because of injury, the child should be kept at home. It is necessary that the child be able to go outside everyday (as required by licensing). Your child should be able to fully participate in all aspects of the preschool day. Should your child show symptoms or become ill during class, we will make every attempt to immediately reach parents and/or emergency contacts on file. We will keep your child isolated and comfortable, but parents are expected to pick up their child in a timely manner. If a child requiring pickup is left waiting for an unusually long amount of time, you may be charged a late pick-up fee. Please be sure to keep all phone numbers and contact information up to date.

Pandemic Policy - In the event of a Pandemic Flu or other serious health outbreak, we will follow guidelines as set out by the State of Virginia, the County Health Department, and the Fairfax County Public School's response plan. As a general rule, there will be no make-up for class time lost due to illness or pandemic closures.

NOTES: We require that all our staff follow these health policies as well. ELC is a smoke and vape-free campus as approved by the church council.

INSURANCE

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is insured with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance under a policy contracted with Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Inc.

LATE FEES

Tuition received after the 6th of the month will be deemed late and will incur a \$40 late fee. Tuition received after the 10th may incur a \$80 total late fee. If you are late with payments more than two months in a row, you may be required to enroll in the Brightwheel autopayment option. If your tuition is not received by the 15th including all late fees after the second occurrence, we may dismiss your child from the program. If you need accommodation with your payment due date, please make this request to the office. Approved requests will be made on an individual basis.

LICENSING AND INSPECTIONS

Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool is licensed by the Virginia Department of Education and as such is inspected biannually by our Licensing Inspector. The current licensing inspection report and Fire Prevention Code Permit will be posted on our web site including all information generally found on the Parents Information Bulletin Board located just outside the Preschool Office.

LUNCH/AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

We offer a lunch bunch afterschool program on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Lunch Bunch offers cheese pizza, carrots, applesauce, and apple juice. The students eat lunch first, followed by playground, crafts, STEM, cooking, or game time.

Held on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school till 1:30pm. Pick-up is at Room 1.

Ages: 3 & 4s PreK- Offered Late September-May *3s students may start later dependent on how ready the students are for a lunch program and their stamina to stay till 1:30pm.

MEDICATION POLICY/CPR/FIRST AID

We have staff trained in MAT EpiPen, which allows these staff members to administer EpiPens. An EpiPen may only be administered if the preschool has a signed physicians' permission statement clearly outlining which symptoms or signs indicate when a child should receive this important medication. All other medication must be given at home. No other medications will be given to a child by any staff member. All EpiPens will be stored in the classroom in an EpiPen safe bag, out of the children's reach, but will travel with the teacher and/or assistant as they move around the school grounds.

All of our staff are trained in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid, maintaining 2-year certificates. Staff are also trained in Daily Health Observation. This enables them to perform simple health screenings. Note: If you wish for your child to have sunscreen, insect repellent, lotions, or diaper cream they should be applied at home before arriving at school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VISITATION

The opportunity to volunteer and visit our classrooms will be offered to parents this year at varied times. Invitations for these special times will be posted to parents through Brightwheel.

PARENTING INFORMATION/BULLETIN BOARD

We have posted parent information on our bulletin board outside the preschool office. We also can offer a wide variety of parenting books and resources. Please contact your teacher or the ELP office and these may be checked out free of charge.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION/CONFERENCES

Using Brightwheel, parents will see posts from their teachers with pictures, often with short write-ups or "learning stories", sharing what is happening in the classroom. These will not be a daily post, but at least weekly. They include classroom interactions, special events, learning activities, and emerging, developing, and mastered Virginia Early Learning Standards.

Parents should feel free to contact their child's teacher/Director through Brightwheel should they have any questions or concerns during the school year. Teachers are not able to have any conversations during drop off and pick up. You may stop in the office if you need immediate help. Conferences may be held on a scheduled basis throughout the year. Please allow teachers time to respond as they are unable to do so during the school day. In case of emergency, please contact the ELP office through Brightwheel, or calling (703) 938-6187.

PETS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Pets and animals are strictly prohibited on preschool property during hours of operation. This is due to allergies and health and safety concerns. Please see the Director if you have any questions.

PLAYGROUND RULES

A fenced, fully equipped playground is available to our classes and will be used 30 minutes every day, weather permitting. Please dress children appropriately, with sneakers and layered clothing in cold weather. Please do not allow children to wear sandals, boots, or Crocs (**see Clothing Policy**). There will always be staff supervision on the playground at all times. The playground equipment has been designed to help young children develop their large motor skills and climbing, jumping, and running are encouraged. For the safety of the children, there are some limitations as to how the equipment should be used. Teachers will share rules with the children that gravel must stay on the ground and throwing of gravel is not allowed. Children are not allowed to climb the fence, brick walls, or to climb on top of the playhouses at any time. They should always go down the slides on their bottoms, feet first.

The playground is open for use after school hours. Parents are required to watch their children inside the playground gates and make sure to enforce the above playground rules with their children at all times.

The following steps will be taken daily to ensure playground safety:

- Students are reminded daily of our playground rules prior to using, particularly the first week of school, and are continually reminded thereafter.
- A staff member inspects the playground for any possible safety hazards before use.
- If equipment is wet, the playground equipment is wiped down before use.
- If the gravel surface is wet, children are reminded to be careful on the climbing equipment.
- No throwing of rocks is allowed.
- Children may not climb fences.
- Teachers are positioned to one side of the major playground piece between the slide and step climber when in use. Second staff member is positioned opposite side of playground.
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RECORD/RECOMMENDATION REQUESTS

All children's student records are treated confidentially. Parents seeking records or school recommendations should contact the office to receive a permission slip for their request. Whether it is to have records sent to another school or if you are requesting a teacher complete a school recommendation form, you must first have completed and submitted a signed permission/release form. Records/school recommendation forms are always forwarded directly to the school requesting any information and will not be given directly to parents. Please allow a minimum of one week for processing these requests.

REGISTRATION/ENROLLMENT

Application for admission shall be made by completing the admission form provided by the preschool. The application should be emailed or delivered back to the preschool. A non-refundable registration fee, activity fee, and tuition deposit must be approved through Brightwheel and accompany each application. Each child must apply each year (including returning children) and pay our registration and activity fee. The Director is authorized to place children in classes according to which best serves their developmental interests. Accordingly, the school is unable to guarantee requests for specific teachers or classes but encourage families to talk to the Director with any specific concerns.

Parents will be asked to verify student information on file including emergency contacts and health information/immunizations at the beginning of each school year. A Brightwheel link will be sent to parents by the first week of school to verify this information and provide a digital signature of its current accuracy.

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS

To request a religious exemption for school immunization in Virginia, you must submit a Certificate of Religious Exemption (form CRE-1) or a similar affidavit to the school, stating that the administration of immunizing agents conflicts with your religious tenets or practices. You can obtain this form from the following link: [Commonwealth of Virginia Certificate of Religious Exemption \(Form CRE-1\)](#) The affidavit must be signed by the parent or guardian and may need to be notarized. Submit the completed and signed (and possibly notarized) affidavit to the school's admitting official or the superintendent's office.

- **[Virginia Code](#) Reference:** This process is based on § 22.1-271.2(C) of the Virginia Code.
- **Outbreak Situations:** Be aware that in the event of an outbreak or epidemic of a vaccine-preventable disease, the State Health Commissioner may order that students with religious exemptions still be excluded from school to prevent the spread of the disease.

SUPPORT/ACCOMODATIONS

When a child who may need extra attention and support can be accommodated at Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool, then the child may be considered for enrollment. As with any enrollment there is a 60-day probationary period. Parents of children at ELP are informed that our staff is not specifically trained in Special Education and often is not able to make significant special provisions within the classroom to accommodate only one child. Any changes that might be made must be done with the consideration of every child in the classroom.

If a large portion of any staff member's time is spent dealing only with the needs of any one child, the teacher will notify the Director. It is the policy of Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool that all children shall receive equitable amounts of time from the teaching staff. If the needs of a child are preventing this balance of staff and child interaction, the parents of that child will be asked to meet with the Director to discuss these concerns and possible solutions. If ELP cannot meet the needs of the child using these guidelines, then the parents may be asked to remove the child from the program to find a different program that better meets the needs of their child. In this event, the preschool will collaborate with the parents to attempt to help them and refer them to a program that may meet their child's needs.

If a child is withdrawn from school by their parents within the school term, without continuing to pay their next scheduled monthly tuition fee, their spot in that class is forfeited. If a family desires re-admission for their child, they must wait until space is available and will then re-register as a new student. This means paying all the accompanying fees for a new student.

When enrollment is at full capacity, a waiting list will be established and maintained for the current school year. Children on the waiting list must re-apply for the following school year. A new waiting list will be established each school year. Currently enrolled students always receive preference. Registration information will be distributed to currently enrolled families detailing the procedure to register for the following school year. We offer registration first to currently enrolled students and their siblings, then Emmanuel Lutheran Church members, and then to alumni families before registration is opened to the general public. This year will be a rolling admission process using the same guidelines, but currently enrolled children will be enrolled as their paperwork is received. A Virginia School Entrance Health form must be completed and signed by a physician before a child enters the preschool program. A record of immunizations is also required. Student records are confidential and will not be released to anyone without written parental permission.

SAFETY/EMERGENCY PLAN

We have created a comprehensive safety & emergency plan created with the Fairfax County Public Schools Emergency Plan as a guideline. There are pull shades or blinds on all classroom windows as well as quick set door locks. There are cameras on the front parking lots, the

preschool office entry way, the entry way by the playground, and the front of the church building. These cameras are monitored by the church office upstairs. We also have a Ring doorbell on the preschool office door to verify visitors to the school. An intercom system is used in all classrooms, the choir room, and playground, to notify teachers and or request assistance.

All staff members will adhere to safety procedures as established in our emergency plan. We consider the safety of every child entrusted to our care to be our highest priority. If a parent wishes to see our Emergency Plan, they can find it on our preschool website.

SEPARATION PROCESS

The process of separating from parents as a child enters school is one of the most important experiences in a young child's life. Children learn to feel comfortable with others and learn to trust that their parents will come back for them. Here are some suggestions for ways to make this transition successful:

Children should arrive on time so they can enjoy their free choice/centers time with friends. Place an emphasis on what they will be doing that day. Monthly teacher newsletters as well as Brightwheel posts will tell you what will be happening in class for that month.

When you drop off your child, reassure them that you will be back soon when their preschool day is over. Children react to your tone of voice—be positive and smile. Please make this a quick goodbye and be on time for pick up.

Don't hesitate to ask the teacher for help and follow her suggestions. **Please drop off your child at the door and do not enter the classroom.** Our staff offers years of experience and please trust them to know what works best.

Feel free to Brightwheel message to ask how your child is doing in your absence. We're happy to update you and encourage you to keep in touch.

SHOW AND SHARE/TELL

3's and 4's PreK classes begin their Show and Share later in the school year as outlined by each classroom teacher.

As part of the language and social development program, children may be encouraged by their teacher to bring something special from home and our teachers will let parents know when and how these items should be brought to school. It is important that items not be items which can be considered toys of destruction/weapons, i.e., toy soldier, sword, etc. Please do not let your child bring any items from home unless it is their Show and Share item. Any toy or other item brought into the classroom will be placed in the child's tote bag immediately to return home. All items brought to school should be labeled with the child's name or placed in a labeled bag.

SNACK POLICY/ALLERGIES - WATER

A water pitcher and disposable cups are always available in the classroom for the children for water when they are thirsty. We will not use our classroom water fountains.

A mid-morning snack will be provided each day. The children are offered 100% apple juice and water along with Ritz crackers, club crackers, animal crackers, pretzels, goldfish & cheerios. At times, this snack may be supplemented with fruits and vegetables (for classes that do not have allergy prohibitions). Children are encouraged to "taste and try" new foods, giving them a "polite bite." No candy or large marshmallows are permitted. Raisins or popcorn may be offered, but only in the 4's Pre-K classes. Snacks from home for special occasions may be provided as a treat for the whole class. Please let your teachers know if you would be interested in providing a class snack PRIOR to bringing it in. If a parent wishes to send fresh fruits, vegetables, 100% fruit juice or other nutritional snacks for the whole class, the teacher should also be notified ahead of time. NOTE: If a child has a diagnosed allergy and may be allergic to any foods served at our school, we ask that the parent come into the office to review the ingredients lists and sign a snack authorization form. Parents must sign off on a list of acceptable school-provided snacks identifying those their child may eat. For the safety of children with diagnosed allergies, they are never served any food brought in from outside sources. Parents may provide their child with his/her own special snack for birthdays (no candy) and special events, but if not, they will be served our standard preschool snacks on their preapproved snack list. Any special snack must be dropped off at the classroom door at arrival time. We are happy to store special snacks for children with allergies for special event days. These can be provided by the parents and will be stored in airtight containers or in bags in our preschool freezer.

A complete list of snacks and ingredients provided by ELP is available in the office and on our classroom information boards and is logged daily for school information on Brightwheel. Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that our environment will be free of allergens at all times. Because we rely largely on the cooperation of informed parents and other adults, we cannot completely control what items come into the school. Also, other activities occur in the building outside of school hours, and although our allergy alert signs are posted, we cannot be responsible for what is brought into the building at these times. If you have any questions and/or concerns on this matter, please speak to the Director.

SNOW DAY/INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY/PANDEMIC POLICY

School Closing- Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool generally follows Fairfax County Public School's decisions concerning closings and delayed openings for snow or inclement weather days. Our goal will be to announce any delay or closing decisions via Brightwheel by 8:00am the morning of school. Please check your Brightwheel messages, sign up for FCPS alerts, and listen to your local weather reports. When we are closed, that includes all afterschool/lunch programs.

In general, our school policy dictates there will be no make-up/refunds for class or lunch time lost for a regular amount of snow days. If a significant number of school days are missed, a decision will be made by the Preschool Advisory Team of whether to offer make-up days.

Delayed-Opening- Preschool will be open from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. if your child participates in our lunch bunch program (Tues./Thurs.), pick-up will be 2:00pm on delay days.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL POLICY

One month (30 days) written notice is required in the event that parents must withdraw their child from our school.

Without exception, all Admission Fees, the Registration Fee, Activity Fee, and Tuition Deposit, are non-refundable and non-transferable. It may not be applied to another month's tuition, transferred upon re-enrollment, or used towards a sibling's future tuition payments.

The Preschool reserves the right to ask for the withdrawal of any child for any cause deemed advisable by the Preschool Advisory Team, or if tuition payments fall two months in arrears.

You may be asked to enroll in Brightwheel's auto-pay program if your monthly payments are consistently late.

The Preschool Team reserves the right to cancel any class and/or contracts(s) if there is not sufficient student enrollment to justify its continuance.

TOILETING POLICY

2-Year-Old Preschool Classes:

Students in our 2-year-old classes do not have to be toilet trained. They can wear diapers and will be changed during the preschool day as needed. If a family is beginning the toilet training process our staff will do their best to help a child who asks to use the toilet. Easily removable Pull-Ups are allowed for students. While our staff will help any child who asks to use the bathroom, they are not tasked with training children during the school day, as this requires a large amount of class time. Many students will ask to use the bathroom when they see other peers going. Teachers will watch for signs of needing to use bathroom when parents inform the teachers that the student is trained and wearing underwear to school. Please talk to your child's teacher if you are beginning this process or have any concerns. Please always include a full change of clothes in your child's tote bag.

3-Year-Old Preschool Classes:

Children in our 3-year-old class must be completely toilet trained and able to handle their own toileting needs *including wiping and the mechanics of dressing and undressing*. They may not wear diapers or Pull-Ups. Please dress them in comfortable clothing (no belts please) so that they are able to get them off and on as they practice being self-sufficient.

4-Year-Old PreK Classes:

Children in our 4-year-old PreK class must be completely toilet trained and able to handle their toileting needs *including wiping and the mechanics of dressing and undressing*. They may not wear diapers or Pull-Ups. Please dress them in comfortable clothing (no belts please) so that they are able to get them off and on as they practice being self-sufficient.

TOTE BAGS (Provided by ELP/No backpacks allowed)

We provide a preschool tote bag for each child for each child enrolled. These were chosen for ease of use and to meet our space needs, so please do not send in backpacks. Children are given their bags at our Sneak Peek Open House and parents may put their child's first name on their bags and decorate them as they would like. Should you need to replace your tote the cost is \$10.00. *We recommend you do not launder the bag as this fabric tends to shrink and/or wrinkle.*

TRAFFIC PATTERN/PARKING LOT – ONE WAY ONLY (10 MPH)

PRESCHOOL TRAFFIC IS ONE WAY AT ALL TIMES which means entering at the top drive of the church and coming down around the church to the preschool parking lot and exiting through the lower drive. This is required by Fairfax County for our preschool program and to protect our children and their families. Please always follow these rules:

- (1) Enter from the upper driveway (near DePaul's Urban Farm) & stay to the right. *(Some other church traffic may use this as a two-way drive, but preschool families must travel one-way during preschool hours.)*
- (2) Always exit from the lower driveway.
- (3) **NEVER** use the lower driveway to enter the preschool
- (4) **NEVER** park in the coned-off blacktop areas in front of classrooms 1-4.

DRIVE SLOWLY PLEASE! 10 mph speed limit in the entire parking lot.

DO NOT HONK HORNS. This is strictly prohibited in our Non-Residential Use Permit.

Please note: Preschool families may see others exiting from the upper entrance, this is not for preschool parents. Preschool traffic may only exit from the lower drive as part of our Fairfax County Non-Residential Use Permit.

TUITION POLICY

The Preschool Advisory Team will review registration and tuition fees yearly. Families with two or more children enrolled receive a \$30 monthly discount (per family) on tuition for the second child attending at least 3 or more days per week.

For New Families to ELP:

Upon submission of your application and acceptance to the school the following Admission Fees are due: Registration Fee (\$100), Activity Fee (\$100), Tuition Deposit (based on your monthly tuition rate). Admission to the school continues till February 2026. Admission after February is at the discretion of the Director.

For Current Enrolled Families at ELP:

Upon submission of your application, your acceptance and placement are guaranteed for the next school year if you enroll before January, 17, 2025. The Registration Fee (\$100) is due at submission of the application. The Activity Fee (\$100) and Tuition Deposit (based on your monthly tuition rate) are due May 1, 2025.

Admission Fee Policy

Without exception, all Admission Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable (to another month or sibling)

Tuition is divided into 8 equal payments due on the 1st of each month between September 1st and April 1st. Tuition is invoiced monthly through Brightwheel. If at any time you withdraw your child from the program, all Admission Fees are non-refundable. Additional tuition details can be found in the *Financial Commitment* section of our Application.

You can choose to have your tuition payment be by credit card or withdrawal from bank account. You will set up your payment choice in your Brightwheel account. Brightwheel is secure system and is PCI Level 1, which is the strongest level of certification for information encryption. Brightwheel charges a service fee for credit cards of 2.95% and an ACH fee of 0.6%, a \$0.25min or \$2 Max.

Your final payment for the year will be April 1st for April. The fees remain the same regardless of absences, holidays, and vacations. All payments must be made through Brightwheel. A late fee of \$40 will be charged for tuition received after the 6th of the month. After the 10th of the month, the late fee increases to \$80.

We welcome you to Emmanuel Lutheran Preschool and look forward to helping your child learn and grow.