



ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Educating for Eternity.

Celebrating, Living and
Sharing the Abundant
Life of Jesus.

John 10:10



PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised May 2018

St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center
15237 Huffmeister Road
Cypress, Texas 77429
Phone: 281-304-5546
Fax: 281-256-2708
www.stjohn.tv
tbunker@stjohn.tv

A word from our Senior Pastor...

Thank you for giving us the privilege and awesome responsibility for the spiritual, emotional and intellectual growth of your child through the ministry of St. John Early Childhood Center! We realize that your child is precious and that you want the very best for him or her. And we do not take this trust lightly. We have long been committed to excellence in our early education programs. This is seen in not only the beautiful and state of the art building that the people of St. John built, but also in the commitment to excellence of staff and staff training and support.

That long-standing commitment is a dim reflection, however, of the commitment that our God has for children. When mothers were bringing their children to Jesus for his blessing some wanted to scurry them away. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Luke 18:16). God has a huge heart for children! Jesus showed that when he blessed the children and when he died for the sins of the World, so we are very serious about fulfilling God's mission to bless the children and all people by living and sharing the abundant life of Jesus Christ.

It is our great delight to lead people to a deeper experience of life—abundant and eternal—through faith in Jesus Christ. You are certainly welcome to join us for worship each Sunday at 8:30 and 11:00. We also have various Bible Studies each Sunday to help you grow in your faith—as your children also grow in the faith through our Sunday School program.

If you need spiritual support, advice, encouragements, or direction, please call on us. It is our great joy to share the abundant life of Jesus with all people. Please give us the privilege of sharing it with you. In Jesus...

Abundant Blessings!



Dr. David Bahn, Senior Pastor
John 10:10

A word from the Director...

I am very pleased to welcome you to St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. We feel honored and blessed to be chosen.

Our philosophy is rooted in the belief that young children need the opportunity to explore, play, create, learn, grow and develop in a Christ centered, nurturing environment. We strive to instill a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

Parents and visitors are welcome to visit our campus. We ask that you check in at the office first. Communication between the parent, school and teacher is important for your child's success. We welcome your questions and feedback.

The St. John handbook is prepared for each school family to provide you with our policies and procedures. Please take time to read through it as it is updated yearly. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know. Again, thank you for choosing St. John.

In Christ,

Tiffany Bunker,
Early Childhood Director

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ORGANIZATION

St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center is a non-profit Lutheran preschool which is a ministry of St. John Lutheran Church. The school has been in existence since 1982 as a ministry of St. John Lutheran Church, governed by the Church's Mission and Ministry Council and is licensed by The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. The Early Childhood Center is accredited with the National Lutheran Schools Accreditation.

The program is operated by St. John Lutheran Church as part of its program of service to God and to the children and parents of our Cypress and Houston communities.

St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center of Cypress, Texas, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin or religion.

PHILOSOPHY

[Jesus] took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them. "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me, but the one who sent me."

Mark 9:36-37

We believe that each child is precious to God; therefore, we consider the children entrusted to our care an important responsibility. Children need to feel safe, secure, nurtured, and loved.

We also believe that God's desire is to give us abundant eternal life. We seek to share that gift with children and their families through all we do.

[Jesus says,] The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:10

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Young children are filled with nearly unlimited energy, exuberance, and curiosity. This is a time of great intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. This foundation, which is formed in the early years of a child's life, proves important in the development of their values and attitudes. Since the Bible also describes us as body, soul and spirit, we believe in nurturing the "whole child".

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

Based on this knowledge, our program provides a well-balanced day of learning and play. Our curriculum is designed to teach children through challenging instructional methods (mind and spirit), stimulating physical activities (body), Bible memory and singing, and interesting and engaging learning experiences. The curriculum includes, but is not limited to, experiences in Bible teaching, language arts, math, science, social studies, music and motor skills, Spanish and art. These guided activities are structured to meet the developmental stage of each child,

as well as to encourage individual responsibility while providing a sense of success and accomplishment. We believe learning should be enjoyable using “hands-on” experiences, which help develop a positive self-concept.

Jesus’ Great Commission is to “make disciples” of all nations. We also seek to help children learn to follow Jesus, nurturing a strong relationship with the heavenly Father (*celebrate*), encouraging children to love and respect each other (*live*), and providing opportunities for the children to support mission projects and provide for the needs of the community (*share*).

Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Christian principles are integrated through weekly chapel, stories, songs, the example of loving adults, and happy school experiences. Through these activities, the children discover spirituality and values, which they share with their families, and which will serve them throughout their lives. We believe that spiritual growth also plays an important role in the child’s total development.

Hear, Oh Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord our God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about it with them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.

Joel 1:3

GOAL

Our goal is to provide a quality program in a Christian environment. Each child is provided with learning experiences based on the knowledge of their own physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs. This is so they can learn and grow at their own rate under the guidance of a Christian teacher.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOUR CHILD

It is important that the parents communicate to the teacher any significant changes in the child’s life or the life of the family that might affect the child’s behavior at school. It will help the teacher to understand the reasons behind a change in behavior and help the child cope with the changes. These might include illness or death of a family member or pet, separation or divorce of the parents, other changes in the family structure, an impending move, etc. Please be assured that whatever information you relay will be confidential.

If you have a concern with your child and you need to speak with the teacher, please feel free to call the school during the day and leave a message for your child's teacher to contact you after the students are dismissed. If you need to speak with the Director, you may call the school during operating hours or contact by e-mail at tbunker@stjohn.tv. For emergencies after hours, the director can be reached by cell phone at 281-728-0259.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

All of our registration is done from a waiting list. In order to be added to our waiting list, we ask that you participate in one of our scheduled tours. If you are interested in touring our school, please the school at 281-304-5546. Children are welcome to accompany you on the tour. During the tour, you will be asked to fill out a waiting list form. The form will be used to enter your child(ren) on the waiting list.

Pre-registration begins at the end of January for our current students and their siblings. After our current students and their siblings pre-register, calls will be made to offer the remaining spots. Calls will be made from the waiting list in the following order: church members, previous fall (school year) families, and the remaining names on the list. Parents are given two days to respond. If there is no response, your child's name will be removed from the waiting list. Registration is an ongoing process that can take from a few weeks to months.

The waiting list rolls over from year to year. Every December we mail out a questionnaire to update information. By mailing this back to us, families are letting us know they want to remain on the waiting list. If we do not get a response, your child's name will be dropped from the list. If the questionnaire is not received by mail, parents may update information by phone or fax. Changes and updates to the enrollment procedures can be found on our website at www.stjohn.tv.

Necessary paperwork required by the State of Texas must be completed before the first day of care.

OPERATING SCHEDULE

St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or religion to all rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies or programs. St. John Lutheran ECC is a GANG FREE ZONE. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas Law. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of our child care center as defined by the Texas Penal Code. The purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather while enforcing tougher state penalties.

Classes will be held Monday through Friday of each normal week that school is in session. A parent may choose one of the following for the preschool program:

- 2 day – Tuesdays and Thursdays
- 3 day – Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
- 5 day – Monday through Friday

Class placements for current school year are per the following criteria:

18 month old class	18 months old by September 1
2 year old class	2 years old by September 1
3 year old class	3 years old by September 1
4 year old class	4 years old by September 1
Bridge class	5 years old by October 31 (Director Approval)
Summer Program	18 months old by May 1 - entering 3 rd Grade

Placement of children in the ECC is done on a waiting list basis: however, students with siblings at St. John ECC or members of St. John Lutheran Church will have priority. If classes are full, names will be put on a waiting list. As spaces open up during the year, they will be filled with children from the waiting list. Children must be **re-enrolled each fall term. All accounts must be current in order to re-enroll.** Children currently enrolled will be given the opportunity to re-enroll before new students are admitted. **You will not automatically be re-enrolled for the previous year's program days.**

For the school day, doors will open at 9:00 a.m. At that time, parents will escort their children to the classrooms and sign them in. Doors will open for dismissal at 2:00 p.m. and parents should signed child(ren) out. An intercom system/doorbell is located at the front door for admittance. This door will be locked at all times for the safety of the children. In addition, students arriving at other hours will be escorted to and from classrooms by St. John staff. Lobby doors are locked during the day for security measures.

School Year Extended Hours:

Start at 6:00 a.m. and continue until class begins at 9:00 a.m. School dismissal will occur at 2:00 p.m. with extended care until 6:00 p.m. Please see "Stay 'n' Play Program" section.

Summer Program Hours:

Start at 6:30 a.m. and continue until class begins at 9:00 a.m. School dismissal will occur at 2:00 p.m. with extended care until 6:00 p.m. Please see "Stay 'n' Play Program" section.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

St. John ECC has a yearly calendar, indicating school holidays and special events. This will be posted on our website (www.stjohn.tv) at the beginning of each school year. Monthly calendars with specific events will be sent home at the beginning of each month. Individual teachers will send home weekly information.

If it becomes necessary to close school, have early dismissal or late arrival due to inclement weather, the closing policies of Cy-Fair ISD will be used as a guide. Cy-Fair ISD school closings will be announced on local television (Channel 2, 11, 13, 26) and radio stations (FM Radio Stations: 93.0, 95.7, 97.9, 99.1, 100.3, 102.9, 107.9 or AM Radio Stations: 101, 740, 940) usually between 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. St. John will attempt to follow Cy-Fair ISD's make-up schedule for any days missed based on inclement weather closings. Final decision, however, will be up to the Director and the Senior Pastor of St. John Lutheran Church.

REGISTRATION, TUITION AND FEES

Registration Fee:

Registration fees **are non-refundable** and **are not transferrable**. (No exceptions).

Mat Fee:

The mat fee is \$15 per child. Mats purchased outside of St. John must: be waterproof, measure at least 1 inch thick, have two different colored sides, be labeled with child's name and meet school office approval. If mats become damaged during the school year, parents are responsible to replace at their cost. The children use these mats during their rest time in the afternoon. The mats must meet our standards if not purchased through the school, no exceptions.

Tuition Fee:

Tuition payments are due the first of every month and are considered late on the tenth of the month. If no payment is received by the tenth, a \$25.00 late fee/child will be assessed. **Late fees will be strongly enforced.** If the tuition payment plus the late fee is not received by the end of the month, your child will not be allowed to continue in our program. Your child will then be placed on our waiting list and not considered for re-admittance until all fees are paid. If payment is made, and a vacancy still exists, your child will then be re-admitted. A \$35.00 fee will be charged on all returned checks. After receiving two insufficient fund checks, you will be required to pay by cash or money order for all future payments. No refunds will be given for sickness, inclement weather days, absences, or school closings due to reasons beyond our control. Please note below, April tuition is due April 1st and May tuition is due on April 15th, please plan accordingly.

Tuition Due On:

Sep. 01
Oct. 01
Nov. 01
Dec. 01
Jan. 01
Feb. 01
Mar. 01
Apr. 01
Apr. 15 (May Tuition)

Late Fee Assessed On:

Sep. 11
Oct. 11
Nov. 11
Dec. 11
Jan. 11
Feb. 11
Mar. 11
Apr. 11
Apr. 26

For your convenience, you may contact your banking provider for automatic bill payments.

Tuition statements will be sent monthly via e-mail. Questions concerning accounts may be addressed to: dpeartree@stjohn.tv

Discounts:

- Families with more than one child registered for classes will receive a ten percent discount on each additional child's tuition. This is not transferable. The oldest child registered at St. John ECC is considered child one.
- Active members of St. John Lutheran Church and Cypress Chapel will receive a flat ten percent (10%) discount of total tuition.
- Only one discount per family will be applied to tuition.
- Discounts cannot be applied to Stay 'n' Play or registration.
- Tuition Assistance is available upon approved application.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

A staff member will be stationed at the Front Desk to greet families as they arrive each morning. At this time, the parent should inform the staff if the child is on medication or if someone other than the parent is picking up the child. They must then fill out and sign the appropriate forms. Requests for drop-in extended care may also be made at this time. Children should remain with their parents until they have been dropped off at their classroom. At no time should children be left unsupervised.

Parents have been assigned an individual ProCare code. This code will be entered by you into the classroom computer to check your child in and out of their classroom each morning and afternoon. Please do not allow your child to enter the code. For children who attend morning and afternoon extended care, this code will be entered into the designated computer located in the front lobby. A staff member will be there to assist you in this process. Friends or family on your authorized pick-up form will be issued their own ProCare code the first time they pick up your child. Please have them go to the receptionist's desk where we will make a copy of their driver's license and issue their code.

Please bring your child to school on time. Encourage independence by letting your child walk up to his/her room (not be carried). After saying "goodbye" leave the room. If your child is upset, the quicker you are out of sight, the quicker he or she can be calmed and distracted. If you need to talk to the teacher, the teacher will be glad to call you. If you wish to talk to another parent, please do so out of the classroom and out of sight of your child. We appreciate your help and cooperation. St. John Lutheran ECC is a "**cell phone free zone**". For the safety of all of our families, we respectfully ask that cell phones not be used on our campus while driving in the parking lot or when dropping off or picking up children in the school.

All children will be in their classroom at the end of the day. Enter your ProCare code into the computer and check with the teacher before leaving with your child. Parents may take a moment to discuss their child's day with the teacher. (Please keep this conversation brief due to the teacher's obligation to the other children still in the classroom as well as the teacher's after-school duties.) If you find that the necessary brevity of this exchange leaves unanswered questions and/or unaddressed concerns, a conference may be scheduled. Once a parent has spoken with the teacher and belongings are gathered, your child should say "goodbye" to their teacher and friends. This goodbye is the signal to the child, parent and teacher that the child has made the transition from teacher supervision to parental supervision

and it is time to leave. Once you have checked your child out of school the child becomes your responsibility.

*In the event that the person responsible for picking up your child is not able to fulfill that duty, please call us and let us know who will be picking up your child. Please note: this person **MUST** be listed on the emergency form you turned in at registration and be at least 16 years old. If we are not familiar with that person, we will check their identification when they arrive at the school. It is the parent's responsibility to provide appropriate safety devices for transporting children.

STAY 'N' PLAY PROGRAM

School Year Hours:

The hours for Stay 'n' Play (extended care) are **6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.** **Children must be dropped off before 8:45 a.m. or wait until 9:00 a.m.;** the staff has daily devotions and prayers at this time. Parents may bring a prepared breakfast for their child if needed. Breakfast brought from home will be served from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. **ONLY.** If you arrive after 8:00 a.m., your child should have already eaten breakfast.

Summer Program Hours:

The hours for Stay 'n' Play (extended care) are **6:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.** **Children must be dropped off before 8:45 a.m. or wait until 9:00 a.m.;** the staff has daily devotions and prayers at this time. Parents may bring a prepared breakfast for their child if needed. Breakfast brought from home will be served from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. **ONLY.** If you arrive after 8:00 a.m., your child should have already eaten breakfast.

Our Stay 'n' Play program is available on a contract basis or drop in basis for students attending St. John ECC. **Please call the receptionist to check for space availability for drop in students.** Changes to contracted days require advance notice to the Financial Administrator, who will adjust our billing system. Re-occurring changes to contracted days will be subject to a \$25.00 fee. The program provides opportunities for children to learn and play before and after school in a safe, nurturing environment. Snacks are provided for all children in afternoon Stay 'n' Play. A menu is emailed monthly and is also available at www.stjohn.tv. If your child has food allergies, a description of ingredients can be given to you upon request.

PM Stay 'n' Play Guidelines

Children at St. John ECC are dropped off at 9:00 a.m. and expected to be picked up by 2:00 p.m. If parents have not called to request Stay 'n' Play by 2:15 p.m. children will be placed in Stay 'n' Play. Any fraction of an hour over 15 minutes will be charged an additional flat rate of \$10.00 per hour, per child. These fees will be documented on your child's account. Parents who have their child in the Stay 'n' Play program must adhere to the same days agreed upon at registration. There are **NO MAKE-UP** days for days missed or holidays.

There will be no Stay 'n' Play on the last day before Christmas Break and last day of school in May.

Children participating in afternoon activities (i.e., Budding Engineers, Little Sluggers, Precious and Soccer Tots) should be picked up five minutes from the end of the class, or they will be placed in PM Stay 'n' Play and will be billed accordingly.

If a child is picked up after 6:00 p.m., a late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be strongly enforced. Late fees will be assessed and prompt payment required. Failure of payment will result in dismissal from the Stay 'n' Play program. The ProCare Attendance system will be used to determine time of departure. If the parents have not called by 6:15 p.m., the emergency contact listed on the enrollment form will be called to pick up the child. **If lateness is persistent, a family may be removed from the Stay 'n' Play program.** Please show consideration to our staff as the facility closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. If you know you are going to be late, please make arrangements with someone on your emergency contact list.

****Note: To be considered for extended care a written commitment must be made. Cancellations require a two-week written notice and frequent changes to contract are subject to a \$25 change fee. You must send a note addressed to St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center requesting to cancel contract.***

WITHDRAWAL

To withdraw from St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center, we request a written notice be given a minimum of two weeks in advance. **The tuition and start up fee are non-refundable and are not transferable under any circumstances.**

DRESS CODE

A uniform is not used at St. John ECC for preschool aged children. Children are permitted to wear regular play clothes. Please keep in mind that the children will be playing both indoors and outdoors, weather permitting. Play clothes should be loose and comfortable. Clothing should be free of complicated fasteners (i.e. snaps, overalls, jumpsuits, etc.) so children are able to manage them themselves. We also explore many kinds of materials in our programs, some of which are messy. We believe that children and clothing are "wash and wear".

The following shoes are not permitted: **cowboy boots, rubber boots, crocs, sandals, thongs (flip flops) or jellies**, because they are a safety hazard. Through long experience with children, we have found tennis shoes to be the safest shoes for children in our care at the center. All outer clothing such as sweaters, jackets, hats, and gloves **must be labeled** with the child's name. All personal belongings that are brought for show and tell and/or rest time should also be labeled. Should an item arrive unlabeled the teacher will label it. Girls should wear shorts under dresses.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Children will have chapel every week. Chapel begins at 9:20 a.m., and all parents are invited to attend.

An open house will be held prior to the first day of school. Parents and children are invited to come to the classroom and meet their teacher, classmates, and other parents.

Volunteer Parent meetings will be held during the first few weeks of the fall semester in order to provide parents an overview of the activities and opportunities to volunteer.

During the school year, several programs and family days will be held. Parents and family members are invited to join us.

Each school year parent/teacher conferences will be held for all age groups. Prior to conferences we provide a developmentally age appropriate evaluation of the children's progress in all areas of development.

Information gained through the evaluation process is shared with parents during the parent/teacher conferences.

CLASSROOM VISITATION POLICY

We welcome visitors and are happy to arrange conferences at your request. We encourage you to visit your child's classroom as you deem necessary.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Each week your child will take home his or her folder, which will include work done that week and an information sheet from his or her teacher. Please look through your child's folder every week. Your child has worked hard during the week and is proud of his or her work. An ECC Newsletter will be published weekly to keep parents informed of Center activities and will be sent out via email and posted on our website. In addition, e-mail reminders will be sent as needed. Please read all paperwork so you will know what is occurring each week. Parents are also encouraged to look at the announcement monitor located in the front lobby where events will be posted. Text reminders are available by texting: @stjohnecc to: 810-10. Parents may also access information on our website at www.stjohn.tv.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Each child enrolled in St. John ECC must meet applicable immunization requirements or meet the requirements for immunization exemptions specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. St. John ECC must have a copy of the child's completed age appropriate immunization record by the date of admission. All paperwork with the exception of the Health form must be completed and signed at the time of Registration. The completed Health form must be turned in **prior** to the student's first day of school. The Immunization Record and Statement of Health must be attached to the Health form if that information is not completed on the Health form.

Staff Immunizations:

St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center does not require employees to receive specified vaccinations before supervising children at the center.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

The Vision and Hearing Screening Program, Chapter 36 of the Health and Safety Code, requires that children enrolled in private or parochial school in Texas be provided with a vision and hearing screening. St. John ECC will provide screening for students who are four-years-old by September 1 of the current school year.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event medical care is required due to illness or injury, St. John ECC will call 911 for emergency medical treatment and transportation to the nearest hospital and parents will be notified.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Fire:

- In case of fire, the buildings must be evacuated immediately using posted evacuation routes. The teacher in each classroom takes the class list and leads the children from the building. All children are moved to a designated safe area where they are supervised at all times.
- A designated person alerts the ECC staff. In the ECC, designated staff close the hallway doors before leaving the building. The Director remains in the building until everyone is evacuated.
- The teacher must immediately check the class to determine that all children are safely out of the building. Teachers must notify the Director immediately if all children cannot be accounted for. Once children have been evacuated and taken to the indicated safe area, they should be kept calm and quiet, waiting for further instructions. After the Director meets with fire officials, the children will be transferred to another place as directed by authorities.
- A fire extinguisher is accessible from each room. Fire drills will be conducted once each month. The building needs to be evacuated in less than three minutes. If necessary, problems encountered during the drill will be noted and revisions made to procedures.
- In case of an Emergency Evacuation the following locations will be used:
 - Location 1: St. John Lutheran Church/Spring Cypress
 - Location 2: St. John Lutheran Gym
 - Location 3: Covenant Academy
11711 Telge Rd.
Cypress, Texas 77429

Severe Weather (Tornado, Flood, Hurricane):

- If possible, the Director will be responsible for listening to weather bulletins so that preparations can be made in advance. Flashlights are available in all classrooms in

case of power outage. The Director keeps a cell phone close at hand in case the phone lines are dead.

- If necessary, all children are to be moved to their classroom bathroom away from all windows. All doors to the classrooms and kitchen as well as window blinds must be closed. Children should be kept as calm as possible.

Chemical Fumes:

The event of an emergency with toxic fumes, the air conditioner will be turned off, a blanket will be placed under the door, children will be given wet paper towels to breathe into. A “walkie-talkie” and/or cell phone will be given to the staff to wait for further instructions.

Civil Defense Evacuation:

In the case that a Civil Defense Evacuation has been ordered, all staff and children are to collect their belongings and prepare to evacuate on school buses and/or cars and/or emergency vehicles to location 1 or 2 (section E,1, f) or a location designated by the Civil Defense Authority. The director or adult in charge must post a note on the front door of the center telling parents where the children have been taken.

Intruders/Security:

All Center entrances are locked during operating hours. Entrance to the Education Building during that time will be limited to authorized persons, including teachers, children, parents and church personnel. A doorbell is located at the main door to provide access and doors should be opened for authorized persons only. Additional security measures have been implemented to provide a secure campus for our students.

ILLNESSES

If your child is ill, please keep him/her home from school. We want our classes to have the healthiest environment possible. The best way to prevent illness is to prevent exposure. A child who appears ill upon arrival will not be admitted to school. Parents will be notified immediately when a child becomes ill or injured throughout the school day. Parents or designated person will be asked to pick up a sick child **within one hour of being called** by the school. If your child exhibits **any sign** of fever, discharge from eyes, ears or nose, sore throat, earache, a cold, upset stomach, diarrhea, or rash **please do not bring** him/her to school. **You must keep your child home if he/she has had any of the following symptoms 24 hours prior to class: diarrhea, vomiting, or fever.** The following requires that the child be picked up from school immediately: tympanic (ear) temperatures of 100.0°F or higher, vomiting, or uncontrolled diarrhea.

Children may not attend class if the illness or unusual behavior prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities including outdoor play. Please do not ask a teacher to keep a child inside as we are not adequately staffed to meet individual requests. If a doctor recommends staying in, please bring written instructions from the doctor to the office and Director will make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Playground and outside time is an important part of daily activities.

Notify the school when your child is ill regardless of how minor the illness may be. State law requires information pertaining to the incidence and incubation of contagious diseases be passed on to other parents. Confidentiality is assured. Children must be fever free (without use of fever reducing medicines) for a full 24 hours before returning to school. **THE CHILD IS NOT TO RETURN TO THE CENTER UNTIL THEY ARE FREE OF SUCH SYMPTOMS FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS. At the least, this means the child cannot return the following day.**

MEDICATION

If a child must receive medication while at the center, the Medical Authorization Form must be completed in the office. **The form must be signed EACH DAY the medication is to be given.** Please give medication to an **office** staff member. **Do not leave medication in your child's bag as this creates a health hazard for all the children in the classroom.**

All medications prescribed for a specific child must be in the original container bearing the pharmacy label showing prescription number, date filled, physician's name, directions for use and the **child's name**. **Action Plans** are required to be on file for Epi Pens and must be signed by your physician.

Any over-the-counter medication must also be age appropriate, in the original container, dated and labeled with the child's full name **and must be provided by the parent**. **This includes all over the counter medication such as cough drops, chap stick, fever reducing medicine, etc.**

Note: No vitamins or herbal supplements will be given.

No medicines are kept in the office for general use.

Bug spray and sunscreen must be applied to children by parents prior to the school day and our staff will re-apply before children attend afternoon Stay 'n' Play. Bug spray and sunscreen must be signed into our school office.

TOILET TRAINING

18 months and 2-year olds:

Please furnish an adequate supply of diapers (Two-year olds and 18 months only) for each day that your child is at school. The class will make several bathroom trips during the day and we will positively promote children's toilet training successes. Children often model other children, and we find this is an incentive for them. During toilet training, we request your child be sent to school in "tear away pull-ups" rather than training pants due to sanitary conditions that can occur with the training pants.

Children over the age of 3 years old:

Children **must** be fully toilet trained **before** they enter the 3-year-old classes. Expectations for children who are fully potty trained include: **ability to communicate their needs, be independent in the bathroom, pulling up and down their own clothing and ability to clean them self and wash their hands.** We do understand that accidents may occur but if we find that your

child is having frequent accidents then a plan will be implemented between the parents and teacher. We reserve the right to remove the child and place him/her at the top of the “waiting list” until your child is completely trained. **Start Up and Tuition Fees will not be refunded.**

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

Discipline and Guidance Practices:

- All discipline is based on Biblical guidance, so children are not demeaned or made to feel embarrassed; the action is addressed without crushing the spirit of the child.
- Redirection guidance is used to help the child make good choices.
In the event a child displays uncontrolled and continuous inappropriate behavior that threatens the wellbeing of classmates/staff, disrupts the classroom excessively or puts his/her own safety at risk, a meeting will be held with the parents, Director, and teacher.
- Discipline must be:
 - (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - (2) Appropriate to the child’s level of understanding; and
 - (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child’s age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child’s age.
- There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
 - (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
 - (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - (5) Putting anything in or on a child’s mouth;
 - (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 - (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
 - (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child’s age.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Should the program director determine that a child can not adjust to the program or the center is not meeting the child's needs, the center reserves the right to dismiss the child from the program.

PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Our policy includes frequent staff educational opportunities to provide awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child might be a victim of neglect or abuse.

In the event of suspected child abuse or neglect you may contact the ECC Director who has community resources available. The staff fully understands their professional responsibilities to report suspected abuse and neglect.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips enrich the school program by extending the learning and discovery process outside of the classroom. Locations of some recent field trips include local restaurants, parks, the bowling alley, Main Street Theater and Fall Field trip. Field trip destinations and the number of trips are determined by the appropriateness for each age group. Parents will be notified of field trips in advance and will be asked to sign a permission slip for their child. Children **must wear** a school T-shirt to participate. Each child will be given one T-shirt at the beginning of the school year. Field trips and school t-shirt costs are included in your start up fee. Permission slips for field trips will be turned in at your child's classroom.

Transportation is provided through a reputable bus service for the four-year-old classes and Bridge classes.

For the 18 month, 2-year-old, and 3-year-old classes, all field trips are held in-house for the safety of our students.

During Summer Program, all field trips are held in-house. Sprinkler Activities are planned for all age groups with extra supervision included during the duration of each class.

LUNCH/SNACKS

Parents must provide a lunch, a water bottle/spill proof cup (labeled with child's name), and a morning snack. St. John Lutheran Early Childhood Center is not responsible for your child's nutritional value or for meeting your child's daily food needs. Parents are encouraged to provide nutritional meals and snacks with beverages for your child while attending the ECC. Children are encouraged, but never forced to eat their food.

Lunch:

When sending your child's lunch from home, please remember to make it nutritional. Try to choose from the five basic food groups when selecting food for your child's lunch. No candy or carbonated drinks. Try to avoid foods high in sugar content. If candy is sent in lunches, it will be sent home with a note reiterating our policy. Lunches from home should be able to be eaten as is. We do not have a microwave available for heating up food or refrigerator to keep items cold for the children.

If your child forgets his/her lunch, a staff member will call you to bring a lunch for your child. In case you cannot be reached, the ECC will provide a lunch from our **limited** food pantry, and **you will be billed \$3.00**. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child has a lunch.

Snack:

When sending your child's morning snack (labeled with child's name), we encourage healthy nutritional snacks. Because we cannot 100% guarantee all snacks provided will be of a healthy nature, we are required by state licensing to ensure you understand you are providing your child's snack. St. John ECC is not responsible for the nutritional value or for meeting your child's daily food needs. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child has a healthy nutritional snack.

Food Allergies:

St. John ECC takes food allergies very seriously. If a child is allergic to certain foods, the Director must be informed and a physician's **action plan** must be on file in the office.

Some severe food allergies may require classroom management to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children. We ask for your support and understanding in these circumstances.

BIRTHDAYS/PARTIES

Parents can send only **non-edible treats to be sent home** with classmates. This includes birthday parties and party days.

We enjoy remembering each child's birthday during the year with special activities. Your child's teacher will plan a day that works best for you. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate their birthday during one of our monthly "Birthday Blessing" times. It is entirely optional for a parent to provide a birthday treat for their child's class on their special day. Gifts cannot be exchanged. Parents are encouraged to bring nutritious snacks such as banana, pumpkin or zucchini bread or muffins. Fruits and cheeses are also a nutritious snack. We also have a Birthday Book Club. Special books may be purchased to be donated to our library. A notation is placed inside the cover with the child's name and date.

If you plan to have a private party with all of your child's classmates, you are invited to send invitations to school to be passed out by the teacher. If not all of your child's classmates will be invited, or if children from other classes are to be invited we ask that you please contact

the school office for available numbers and addresses that you may need. **Do not bring** the invitations to school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Each day the children will have naptime after lunch. Children will sleep on their own vinyl mat which will be kept at school. The bedding will be sent home at the end of each week to be washed and returned the following week. Due to space and storage facilities, **roll type nap mats will not be allowed**. Children are encouraged but never forced to sleep. Children may bring 1 small stuffed animal/doll to school for naptime. **No toys are allowed which promote aggressiveness**. The Director will have the final decision.

We have designated “private” areas available for nursing moms. Please contact office administration for assistance.

If you have any concerns beyond those addressed by the Director, you may contact our Senior Pastor in the church office at 281-373-0503 or Child Care Licensing at 713-940-3200 or at www.dfps.state.tx.us. Our facility number is 819924. We have a copy of minimum standards in each classroom, the library and the office. The most recent licensing inspection report is posted.