

HANDBOOK for MESSIAH LAMBS

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



**Start children off on the way they should go, and even
when they are old they will not turn from it.**

~ Proverbs 22:6

Rev. 6/2023

**A MINISTRY OF
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
1801 West Plano Parkway
Plano, Texas 75075
Phone: (972)398-7560 Fax: (972)398-7598
www.messiahlutheran.com/lambs**

**MESSIAH LUTHERAN LAMBS
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, INC.**

DIRECTOR..... Amy Myers
PASTOR..... Rev. Dr. Victor Kollmann
ASSOCIATE PASTOR..... Rev. James Otte
ASSOCIATE PASTOR..... Rev. Matt Lee

Schedule of Services at Messiah Lutheran Church

IN PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES
Sunday 8:30am & 11:00am
Wednesday 7pm

ON LINE LIVE-STREAM WORSHIP
messiahlutheran.com/live-stream/

IN PERSON SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT BIBLE CLASSES
9:45am - 10:45am (for ages 2 and above)

Nursery care is available for children under four years old
during both worship services and Bible classes.

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Licensing inspection reports and a copy of the Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers is kept in the school office. Please see the Director if you would like to review either of these or for a copy of either you can go on-line (see link below).

DFPS Child Abuse Hotline – (800)252-5400
Child Care Licensing Local Office – (800)582-6036
DFPS web-site: www.dfps.state.tx.us
Health & Human Services web-site: www.hhs.texas.gov

WELCOME

What a joy it is for us to be able to offer these educational opportunities for your children! It is very important that our children learn to know and feel the love of Jesus Christ, as well as to develop Christian morals and values, while they are young. This is what we plan to provide for you through our Early Childhood Development programs, in addition to learning the principles of reading, writing, and math.

Our Heavenly Father says to us in Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he or she should go, and when they are old, they will not depart from it.” You as parents are very wise in placing your children in our program. Our teachers, aides, and helpers are well-trained and capable of teaching your children in their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development. We are all dedicated to helping your children to make a positive difference for God and for others in this world.

Again, we are glad and feel honored to have you with us. I pray that the love of Jesus Christ may fill the heart of your child and make a real difference in the life of your family. You are welcome to attend any of our worship celebrations, as well as any of our activities or events. We will be praying for you.

Pastor Kollmann

MISSION STATEMENT

Messiah Lutheran Lambs strives to meet the spiritual, social, cognitive, physical, and emotional needs of each child in our program. It is our intention to assist families in the nurturing and education of each child entrusted to our care.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe each child is a gift from God, each is unique and special. We believe children should enjoy learning. We are committed to providing each child with the opportunity to learn while participating in developmentally appropriate activities. We believe we are an extension of your family and are here to assist you in the development of your child.

SCHOOL YEAR INFORMATION

We are not a year-round facility. We follow a traditional school calendar and we are in session from August through May, Monday through Friday, 8am-3pm. Our school calendar closely resembles the calendars of the school districts of Plano (PISD) and Richardson (RISD). In case of inclement weather, we will closely monitor the conditions and make a determination of closure or delay by 6 a.m. In the event we delay the opening of school, our doors will open at 10am. If we call a delayed opening and conditions worsen before 10 a.m. we will change to a closure. A message will be sent via the Remind service. Staff members will email their classes as well. School closure (for any reason) days WILL NOT be made up and tuition fees will not be refunded.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Our Early Childhood Development Program is licensed by the State of Texas and the City of Plano Environmental Health Department. Staff members hold memberships in the National and the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Department of Early Childhood Lutheran Education Association. Messiah Lutheran Lambs Early Childhood Development Center enrolls children on a non-discriminatory basis.

CLASS INFORMATION and HOURS

Parents' Day Out (P.D.O.) Program

Infants

AGES: Children 12 months and younger by September 1. Children must be at least 6 weeks old to start the program.

CLASS SIZE: 4:1 (Maximum 9:3)

TIMES: 9AM - 2PM

DAYS: Pick your days Monday - Friday

Toddlers/2's

AGES: Children 13 months up to 35 months by September 1.

CLASS SIZES:

Toddler Classes: 5:1 (Maximum 10:2)

2's Classes: 7:1 (Maximum 14:2)

TIMES: 9AM - 2PM

DAYS: Pick your days Monday - Friday

DROP-INS: Currently registered Infants and Toddlers/2's are eligible for drop-ins based on availability. If a reservation is made, and notice of cancellation is not given prior to 8am on the scheduled day, payment is still due.

Preschool / Kindergarten Prep / Kindergarten

Preschool

AGES: Children 3yrs and 4yrs by September 1

CLASS SIZES:

3yr Classes: 9:1

4yr Classes: 10:1

TIMES: 9AM - 12PM OR 9AM - 2PM

DAYS:

5 day class* - Monday - Friday

3 day class - Monday / Wednesday / Friday

3 day class - Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday

2 day class* - Tuesday / Thursday

* 3yr olds only

Afternoon Hours: Preschool students who are enrolled in the 9AM - 12PM class can register for intermittent afternoon drop-ins which cover 12PM - 2PM. Only a certain number of these drop-in spots are available for intra-month use. These will be given out on a first come first serve basis.

Kindergarten Prep

AGES: Children 4yrs by September 1

CLASS SIZE: 10:1

TIMES: 9AM - 2PM

DAYS: Monday - Friday

Kindergarten

AGES: Children 5yrs by September 1

CLASS SIZE: 12:1

TIMES: 9AM - 2PM

DAYS: Monday - Friday

Additional Hours: The longest day we offer for any age group is 8AM to 3PM. Extra morning (8AM - 9AM) or afternoon (2PM - 3PM) hours can be added fully to a schedule or individual days can be chosen. Only a certain number of spots are available for intra-month use. These will be given out on a first come first serve basis.

Additional Information: The availability of classes varies from year to year and is subject to enrollment numbers. Please call the office to inquire about openings.

PRICING

Tuition rates, registration fees, additional hour rates, etc. all vary from school year to school year. Please call the office for current rates or consult our current fee sheets on-line for the latest pricing information.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS FOR ALL PROGRAMS

2 Children - 10% off regular monthly tuition of second child

3 Children - 15% off regular monthly tuition of third child

REGISTRATION

- 1) Before a spot will be held for a child, a family **MUST**:
 - a) Remit the registration fee. **This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.**
 - b) Complete an Enrollment Application.
- 2) **Health Statements** for all children must be signed by a physician stating that the child is physically able to take part in school activities. If a signed Health Record is not available before your child's first day, we have an alternate form that can be submitted which requires only a parent signature.
- 3) **Immunizations Records** for all children must have a signature from the doctor's office. These records must be complete and on file in the office BEFORE the child can attend class. State Law requires that all children in school must have immunizations kept up to date. Failure to do so will keep the child from attending class.

TUITION POLICY

- Tuition is due the first of each month and is late after the 10th calendar day. A fee is assessed for late tuition (unless arrangements are made with the Director in advance).
- **A per-minute charge will be assessed for each minute outside of regular drop-off / pick-up time.** It is your responsibility to make sure the office is aware of your intended drop-off and pick-up schedules.
- Tuition not received by the end of the month will be considered delinquent. Arrangements for a pay schedule can be made through the Director. Evaluation of the delinquent payee by the preschool staff, Director, and church financial administrator may result in child's immediate dismissal from the school by the Director.
- Monthly base tuition rates for each program remain the same no matter the number of school days in the month. **We do not prorate base tuition amounts for months that contain school holidays. The base tuition amount takes the holidays into account and evenly spreads tuition over ten months.**
- Charges for Early Drop and Late Stay will, however, change monthly. These are based on the number of school days in the month.
- We follow a traditional school calendar with our first day of school mid to late August. Because tuition is spread over ten months the first full monthly payment is due August 1st. Payment ten is due May 1st.
- Children who start school in September or later do not owe the full ten payments. Tuition for his/her first month of attendance is one full monthly payment plus a pro-rated amount taking into account the time he/she has missed. The formula for the tuition credit is as follows: Monthly Base Tuition x 10 x Child's Total School Days Missed / Child's Total School Days in the Year.
- A \$35 fee will be charged for all returned checks. If the bank returns two of your checks you will have to pay tuition by cash or money order for the next six months.
- A re-enrollment fee of \$25 will be charged if a child is taken out of the program and then re-enrolled. The re-enrollment fee also applies for children who are not registered for the next school year by the last day of the current year.

TESTING FOR 4's AND OLDER

Visual acuity and hearing sensitivity screening are required for children who are at least four years old by September 1st of the current school year. If your child has already been screened (after their fourth birthday), we need a copy of the doctor's report on file otherwise we will complete this testing at Messiah. If you would like your three year old tested, please let us know and we will work them into the schedule. If your child enrolls in our program after we have conducted our testing for the year, you will have to provide the office with vision and hearing screening results. If these results are not in the office within two months of the child's first day of class, the child will not be able to return to school.

GENERAL POLICIES

(1) Arrival and Dismissal

- If your child will not be attending school or will be arriving late, please call the office no later than 9:30am and let us know. Otherwise your child will be marked absent and their spot for the day given to another child or dissolved.
- Your child should not arrive earlier than his/her scheduled time (i.e. 8am or 8:50am for a 9am schedule) unless arranged with the Director and should be picked up promptly at the end of his/her scheduled day. A charge of \$1 for each minute will be assessed for early drop-offs / late pick-ups. **Since the school closes at 3pm an additional \$25 per 15 minute increment will be assessed for pick-ups after 3pm. This additional amount is due in cash when picking up your child or the next day before they can be dropped off.**
- All children's arrivals and departures must be logged into the Time Clock system on a computer in the lobby. Your child must be with you when you log him/her in and out. Children should not be allowed to touch computer or keyboard at any time. If you need help with the system or need an extra PIN, please stop by the office. PINs chosen by parents should only be used by the parents and not anyone else. If additional individuals will be assisting with drop off or pick up they should be assigned their own PIN. Please DO NOT share your PIN.
- **Children need to remain with adults at all times while in the school building and on the premises. Children are not to run ahead to their classrooms in the morning or run ahead to the exit in the afternoons.**
- Upon arrival in the morning, please let the teacher know of any change in your child's medical condition—runny nose due to allergies, non-contagious rash, recent illness, etc. so that we do not have to make unnecessary calls home.
- As per licensing a health check must be conducted of each child upon his/her arrival at school. A health check is a visual assessment of a child by the child's caregiver/teacher to identify potential concerns about a child's health, including signs or symptoms of illness or injury. These potential concerns include but are not limited to: breathing trouble, severe coughing, fever, discharge from nose or eyes, bruising, cuts, sores or rashes. The caregiver and parent will discuss and make notes of any changes in the child's sleep, eating/drinking, and mood/behavior at this time. If a child appears to be ill or becomes ill (refer to

illness section of handbook) during the course of the school day parents will be notified and the child sent home or sent to be seen by the child's physician. Discussion with the parent on when the child may return to care will occur when the parent arrives.

- When children enter the classroom they are required to wash their hands. Children are also asked to wash their hands frequently throughout the day. Some examples include: before eating, after using the bathroom, after returning from outside and after blowing their nose.
- While quick good-byes at drop off time are ideal, please always make sure the teacher is aware your child has arrived. Teachers are responsible for knowing at all times how many children are in their care. They count heads frequently during the day including (but not limited to): before exiting the room, before entering the playground, when re-entering the building, upon re-entering the classroom. The teachers carry attendance charts with them at all times.
- Children will not be allowed to leave the premises with anyone other than the persons designated on the Enrollment Application unless we have in writing (or a telephone call in an emergency) the parent permitting someone else to pick up the child. Persons unfamiliar to staff will be requested to show their government issued picture identification.
- Children must enter and exit with accompanying adults through the main school doors on the North side of the building.
- Do not leave any child unattended in your vehicle. It is against the law. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please call the school office and we will assist you.
- Do not allow your child to play or run in the parking lot. Please keep your child close as you cross the parking lot to enter or exit the building.

(2) Illness or Injury

- If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be placed in isolation and will need to be picked up as soon as possible, **but no later than one hour after notification**. If emergency medical care is required, we will call 911 for immediate assistance.
- In non-emergency cases the school will administer first-aid, including the application of antiseptics and cleansing of wounds. All staff are required to take First Aid and CPR classes.
- If your child will not be attending school, please let us know by 9:30am.
- If a child is absent for three or more days, a doctor's note may be required before the child can return to school.
- In order to attend school, your child needs to be well enough to function in group care. Your child will be sent home or will need to stay at home if he/she shows signs of, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Fever at or above 100.0° F.
 - Has thrown-up.
 - Has had three diarrhea bowel movements or has diarrhea that is not able to be contained within a diaper.
 - Shows any signs of a communicable condition / disease (ex. lice, pink

- eye, chicken pox).
 - Has an undiagnosed rash.
 - Has discharge from the eyes, ears, and/or excessive colored nasal discharge.
- In order to return to school, your child needs to be free of all symptoms for 24 hours without the use of medication (exceptions include antibiotics or conditions for which the child has a note from the doctor stating he / she is not contagious). This is for the child's own protection as well as for the protection of other children and staff.
- Children may NOT be sent to school with fever-reducing medications in their system.
- For families with multiple children, if one child is being sent home the sibling(s) will be immediately evaluated and may also be sent home.
- If a child, adult, or staff person is confirmed with a reportable illness (including but not limited to: COVID-19, chicken pox, measles, strep throat, etc.) we will follow our reporting guidelines. In many cases only a note is needed to be posted outside affected classrooms in other cases we will immediately contact the health department and licensing.
- In the case of an illness for which further reporting is required we follow all instructions given to us by other authorities. In some cases, they may instruct us to close a classroom or the school temporarily until they have completed an investigation and we have completed a thorough disinfection. We will notify parents of immediate closure first through the Remind app and then begin calling / emailing families until we have confirmed that all families have received the message. Individuals who have been identified as possible contacts with the confirmed positive person will be notified of possible exposure. We ask that all individuals involved cooperate with requests of the school and health department. All reopening of classrooms or school after shutting down will follow the guidance and recommendation of the County Health Department.
- Medication will not be given unless it is in the original prescription bottle and the Medical Authorization Form in the office is signed. Medicine must be enclosed in a clear plastic bag. The child's name must be on the medicine itself and on the outside of the bag. The form also needs to be signed for medications that are kept on hand and only used for emergencies (epinephrine, Benadryl, etc.). For OTC medications your child must be on the recommended dosage chart or a note from a doctor is needed (ex. Benadryl for children under 6yrs old).
- For items such as over-the-counter diaper rash creams, ointments, etc. a permission form must be completed and signed by a parent. These items and forms will be kept in the classrooms. All items must be supplied by the parent in order for the teachers to apply them to a child.

(3) Withdrawal from the Program

If you wish to withdraw your child from our program before the end of the year, you need to complete an Exit Survey and return it to the office two weeks in advance of the child's last day. If the last day is less than two weeks from the completion of the form, a full two weeks of tuition is still due. A re-enrollment fee of \$25 will be charged if a child is taken out of the program and then re-enrolled.

(4) Snacks and Lunches

- Parents should send a mid-morning snack with their student (including the days when they are receiving Chick-fil-A for lunch). The snack should be labeled as such unless the student can choose any item out of their lunch as the snack.
- When packing your child's lunch, **please do not send hard candy, gum, red juice or soda.**
- The Infant and Toddler rooms are nut-free environments. Please do not pack any items which contain nuts or nut butter if your child is in one of these classes. For children in the 2's classes or older, we request that you label the outside of your child's lunch box if it contains nut products so that we can arrange the children accordingly at the lunch tables.
- Please label the outside of all bottles and lunch boxes with the name of your child.
- We only heat and/or refrigerate food for children in the Infant classes.
- The staff cannot control the order in which lunch foods are eaten (e.g. sandwich before cookies). Therefore if this is a concern, it is recommended that you send more nutritious foods. If the order of foods given to your infant is of concern, please label the containers 1, 2, 3, etc.
- The school is not responsible for meeting your child's daily food or nutritional needs with food items sent from home.

(5) Clothing

- Your child should be dressed so that they can comfortably play at school—in the classroom and on the playground.
- We encourage you to put your child in shoes that enable them to participate in active play. Boots and shoes without backs can hinder movement. Open toed shoes make climbing and running difficult and can be a hazard to your child's safety.
- **Label all sweaters, coats, hats, and gloves with your child's name.**
- Please make sure your child always has a change of clothes with them - this includes not only a shirt and pants, but also, when applicable, underwear, socks and shoes.

(6) Potty Training

We believe that potty training is an important step in the development of all children. At some point during the 2s or older Toddler years, when you believe your child is ready to begin the process, discuss with your child's teacher the methods you will be using at home. The teachers will have suggestions to assist you as well. Your child will have the greatest success when parents and teachers work together toward this common goal. Once children enter three year old preschool, they should be potty trained. The teacher will be able to assist with wiping, but cannot always be available to change diapers / pull-ups.

(7) Birthdays

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please notify the teacher. Cookies or a special birthday treat may be sent from home. Teachers will recognize the birthday child at snack time and in chapel. Remember NO nut butter or nut products are to be brought in for children in the Toddler and Infant rooms.

(8) Indoor / Outdoor Physical Activity and Play

Toddlers will have a minimum of 60min of moderate to vigorous active play during the day while older children will have a minimum of 90min. This activity can take place outside, in the classrooms, and in our indoor gym. Children, Toddler classes and older, will spend a minimum of 60min playing outside at the appropriate playground when the weather permits. Infants go for walks outside when the weather is nice. Physical activity will be both structured and unstructured. It might consist of running on the playground or games in our gym. Outdoor play provides for greater freedom and flexibility, fuller expression through loud talk, and a greater range of active movement. Outdoor play also extends opportunities for large muscle development, social-emotional development, and small muscle development by offering variety, challenge, and complexity in ways that are not attainable in a confined indoor space. If you are concerned about the sun, please apply sunscreen to your child prior to school and send a hat. If your child needs insect repellent, please apply this at home as well. For cool weather, please make sure to include a jacket. For days when the weather is inclement (ex. rain, winds in excess of 25mph, wind chills below 40F, heat index above 100F, air quality alerts), the children will have play time in our indoor gym.

(9) Religious Teaching

We lovingly introduce the teaching that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, that He loves and cares for us and that He died to save us for our sins (based on the theology and teachings of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod). This is done in three main ways.

- A. Chapel (2's and up): Two days a week Messiah's ministers visit and become acquainted with the children, while leading them in Bible stories and songs. Parents are welcome to come and hear God's word at this time with their children.
- B. Curriculum: Teachers use the Voyages and The Blessing Place religious curriculum throughout the year.
- C. By Example: Children, led by the teachers, say prayers of thanksgiving before snacks and meals. Teachers are asked to pray for their students and families and they show the children the love that Jesus has for us.

(10) Calendar / Parent Notifications

Yearly and monthly calendars will be given to all parents by the teachers. Important dates will appear in our Newsletter. You can also access information via our website at www.messiahlutheran.com/lambs. Parents are also requested to join the Remind service so important news blasts may be sent out and received quickly.

(11) Conferences

Parents should feel free to talk to the teachers before or after school or by appointment or to the Director any time they feel there is a concern. Preschool and K-Prep children are screened at the end of each semester by their teacher. In the Spring, the parents or our 3yr and older classes are invited in for a conference.

(12) Music

Besides general singing of songs in the classrooms, a time is set aside each week for the music teacher to teach songs, body rhythms, and rhythm band instruments to our 2s and older classes. Songs are often dramatized as well.

(13) STEAM Lab

Preschool and kindergarten classes will attend the STEAM lab two times per week. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. Students will have instruction based on individual exploration and play based learning.

(14) Activities

The curriculum is extended through guest speakers, visits from zoo keepers, dentists, doctors, fire fighters and others. We welcome parents with special hobbies or occupations they would like to share with our students to come and give a small presentation at our school. Please speak with the director to make arrangements and schedule your visit. Older children also participate in activities such as Fall Festival, St. Jude's Trike-a-Thon, and Field Day in addition to other events and activities throughout the year.

(15) Class Coordinators

Each classroom will have one parent volunteer who assists the teacher by organizing class parties and class volunteers, and helps notify class parents of upcoming events.

(16) Items Brought to School

Please DO NOT send personal toys with your child. Blankets and stuffed animals (security items) are acceptable but must be labeled with the child's name. NEVER SEND GUNS, SWORDS, KNIVES OR OTHER FIGHTING-TYPE ITEMS.

(17) Visiting

General visits to our facility can occur at any time during our hours of operation to observe your child, our program activities, the building, the premises, and the equipment. No prior approval is needed, but please check in at the office upon arrival.

(18) Diaper Bags

Diaper bags should be labeled with the child's name on the outside of the bag. Everything inside the bag should be labeled with the child's name. In packing the diaper bag, please include the following:

- The number of bottles you think your child needs, plus one extra. Use plastic baby bottles and **put child's name on them - caps are required.**
- Enough disposable diapers for the day.
- Extra change of clothes.

(19) Excessive Crying

If a child should cry for any extended time, the parent will be notified. Sometimes children have a difficult time adjusting at first and parents may wish to initially leave them for shorter periods of time.

(20) Parental Involvement

We welcome parental involvement in our program. If you are interested in helping, please contact your child's teacher or the office staff.

(21) Toys

We do our best to ensure that no unsafe children's products are in use or accessible to children in the child-care center. Products that are deemed unsafe are removed from our classrooms immediately. You can see the government's complete list by going to www.cpsc.gov.

(22) Gang-free Zone

Under Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone where criminal offenses related to an organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

(23) Policy Changes

Parents will be informed of policy changes by a note sent home and a message through Remind.

(24) Breastfeeding Accommodations

If you should need to breastfeed your child while in our building, please let the office know and we will find you an appropriate location. You have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for your child while they are in care.

(25) Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the policies and procedures of our center, feel free to discuss them with your child's teacher. If you still have further questions, please request a meeting with the Director.

(26) Hand Hygiene

All children and staff will wash hands at the following times: after arriving at the facility, before and after preparing food or drinks, before and after eating or handling food and feeding children, before and after administering medication or medical ointment, before and after diapering, after outdoor activities, after using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom, after coming in contact with bodily fluid, after handling garbage, and anytime hands are dirty.

(27) Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting Measures

All classrooms and school areas will be cleaned often and high touch areas will be sanitized or disinfected frequently throughout the day. Along with this the building will be cleaned and disinfected nightly by a professional cleaning company. Cleaning products are EPA registered and used carefully so they do not come in contact with children. All products are used according to directions on the label. Also, some classroom materials will be rotated in and out of classrooms to assist with effective reasonable sanitization that does not interfere with classroom learning.

(28) Mask Usage

Masks are not required to be worn by staff, students, or adults in the building. However, we support those who choose to do so and ask that mutual respect is given. If you send a mask to school with your child please note the following: children who drool should be sent to school with multiple masks, all masks need to be washed daily at home, all masks should be labeled with the child's name, masks will be removed for outdoor play, during nap / rest time and when eating / drinking, and when masks are not worn they are carefully folded and stored to prevent cross-contamination or hung in the classroom from a line where they are not able to touch any other mask. Teachers are responsive to children's question regarding protective equipment using simple, developmentally appropriate language.

(29) Special Needs Students

Specifics in writing from a health care professional or local ISD should be provided for children with special needs who would like accommodations. This will help teachers safely implement plans and use any adaptive equipment that is provided by parents. Therapists or qualified service providers are allowed and encouraged to work with special needs children in our learning environment. Additional space throughout the building may be used for this purpose. Special needs children will be integrated with children without special needs in their daily activities.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR PROGRAM

OUR GOAL IS THAT EACH CHILD WILL:

1. Understand that God loves them and is with him/her in every situation of life.
2. Come to understand that God speaks to them through the Bible, especially telling of Jesus Christ as Savior of the world.
3. Grow in understandings, attitudes, and skills appropriate for their particular age.
4. Experience the loving care of adults whose own lives exemplify commitment to the Christian community.
5. Develop an ability to communicate effectively with teachers and classmates, to hear and imitate sounds used to form words, and to understand and follow simple instructions.
6. Learn more about self and others through informal role play.
7. Have opportunities for using art and craft materials and develop an increasing appreciation of form, color, and texture.

PLAY: Play is a key role in the way children develop identity, self-confidence, workable interpersonal relations, creative coping, problem solving skills, large and small muscle dexterity, cognitive and perceptual skills, intellectual interests and ideas, resourcefulness, prolonged attention span, language, understanding of reality versus fantasy, and the capability of working through developmental or situational crises in their lives. Therefore, with few exceptions during each day, children should be encouraged to play when and as they like. Creativity is encouraged in all activities.

THE STAFF

Messiah's Early Childhood program is under the auspices of the Board of Directors of Messiah Lutheran Lambs Early Childhood, Inc. Qualified teachers are carefully selected on the basis of education, experience, understanding, and the love of children.

The Lambs' staff includes both full and part time workers. We have staff members with Masters degrees, Bachelors degrees, and Child Development certification. All staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR. Employees of Messiah Lambs are not required to have extra immunizations as per the Collin County health department, however, employees who become ill while working will be sent home and will not be allowed to return to work until they are free from all contagions. Employees receive a minimum of 24 hours in child development classes each school year. Background checks on all personnel follow the Texas State Licensing standards. Our staff is dedicated to providing a great experience for the children in their care.

ALLERGY POLICY

We do the following to make sure children with allergies stay safe here at school:

- Our Toddler and Infant rooms are nut free environments.
- Posted in every room is a list of children with allergies and their corresponding allergens. Please make sure you keep this information up to date in your child's file.
- For all diagnosed food allergies, we require parents/physicians to fill out an allergy action plan that is kept in the child's file plus in classroom and food preparation areas and used in case of accidental exposure.
- In the office parents may sign our Medication Authorization Form and then be able to keep medication at school in case of a reaction.
- Emergency medication travels with the children as they move from room to room and in and out of the building during the day.
- Teachers do their best to seat children with allergies away from those eating allergen containing foods during snack and lunch times.
- Tables are cleaned and sanitized thoroughly after snack, lunch, and general table use.
- Children are not allowed to share food.
- Whenever possible, teachers use materials that are safe for the entire class for projects and lessons.
- Parents may choose to send alternative, safe food to school for times when treats arrive that contain allergens.
- Parents are encouraged to work in a partnership with their child's teacher to meet the specific needs of each child.
- Regular hand washing is a part of the daily schedule.

DISCIPLINE

Procedures:

We, the staff of Messiah Lutheran Lambs, are concerned about the growth and development of each of the children in our care. Children have the right to feel loved, to feel safe, and to be treated with respect by parents, teachers and their peers. We are concerned about the well being of the class, the school, individual students, teachers and other adults.

If inappropriate behavior occurs – such as: hitting, kicking, biting, temper tantrums, foul language, disrespectful attitude towards teachers and other adults, the following steps will be taken.

1. Teacher will talk to the student.
2. Student will be placed in a “chill-out” spot in the room.
3. Student will have time out in director’s office.
4. Parent will be notified of the behavior on the second visit to the director’s office and be followed by a parent conference (set up by appointment).
5. Parent will be called to pick up their child for the remainder of the day.
6. Parent will be called to pick up their child for removal from school for three consecutive days. A parent conference will be held (by appointment) before the child is allowed to return to school.
7. Parent will be called to pick up their child for removal from school permanently.

However, if a child does physical harm with serious bodily injury to others, this will warrant immediate dismissal from school.

The teacher or director will inform parents of each step. Action taken will depend on consultation with the Pastor, plus the Director of Early Childhood.

Policy:

- ❖ 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) Grabbing or pulling a child;
 - (4) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - (5) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - (6) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 - (7) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet;
 - (8) Placing the child in a restrictive device for time out;
 - (9) Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out; and
 - (10) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We take the issue of Child Abuse and Neglect seriously as does the state of Texas. As a staff we are required to take a minimum of one hour of training credit every year on this topic. We would love to educate others as well, so this training is open to our parents. There are also some good on-line training options. Please contact the office if you are interested in learning more.

Anyone (parents, staff members, etc.) who suspects a child has been abused or neglected is required by law to report it. This report must be made within 48 hours of the suspected occurrence.

What is Abuse? Abuse is mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child.

What is Neglect? Neglect includes (1) failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care; and /or (2) leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm.

How do I make a report?

By Phone: Call the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400

By Internet: Go to <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

Will the person know I've reported him or her? Your report is confidential and is not subject to public release under the Open Records Act. The law provides for immunity from civil or criminal liability for innocent persons who report even unfounded suspicions, as long as your report is made in good faith. *Your identity is kept confidential.*

INFANT SAFE SLEEP POLICY

In compliance with Licensing and in order to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death syndrome, the staff, substitute staff, and volunteers of Messiah Lambs will follow these recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) the Consumer Product Safety Commission(CPSC):

- Infants will be put to sleep on their backs unless an Infant Sleep Exception form signed by the child's doctor is on file stating otherwise.
- Infants will be placed on firm mattress, with tight fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements.
- Infants younger than 12 months of age will be placed in a bare crib with a tight fitting sheet. Blankets, quilts, pillows, stuffed toys, soft objects, bumper pads or sleep positioning devices ARE NOT allowed in the cribs. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time.
- Sleep areas will be ventilated and kept at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- If an infant needs extra warmth, the following may be sent from home: sleepers or footed pajamas and approved sleep sacks. These will be used as an alternative to blankets.
- Only one infant will be placed in a crib.
- Infants will not be swaddled for sleep or rest unless an Infant Sleep Exception Form is on file stating otherwise.
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, however the pacifier must NOT be attached to a stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that could be a suffocation or strangulation risk.
- If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing) or arrives to care asleep in a car seat, the child will be moved to a crib immediately, unless an Infant Sleep Exemption Form is on file stating otherwise.
- Messiah Lambs is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers).
- Sleeping infants will be actively observed by sight and sound.
- If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, the child will be placed in the crib on his/her back for sleep and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position on his/her own.
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times a day.
- All parents of infants need to sign a Safe Sleep Policy form before enrollment is considered complete.

Infant Sleep Exception forms are available in the Lambs office or can be found on the dfps website at:

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Information_for_Providers/cclforms.asp

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Natural and Human-Caused Events

Personnel need to make sure their room and any room in which they take children has an Emergency Relocation and Evacuation Diagram. This diagram should be posted in a prominent place near one of the entrances / exits. Personnel should inform themselves ahead of time of the safe areas / escape routes for every room in which they take children. In the event of any relocation / evacuation, teachers are required to carry with them: roster of children who are in attendance, flashlight, writing utensil, and parent and emergency contact information (names / phone numbers) of the children in attendance. As the relocation / evacuation is taking place, children should be counted often to make sure the group is all together. Once the safe area is reached, the teachers are responsible for making sure that all children in attendance are in the designated area by marking them on the attendance grid. Teachers should then have calm and quiet activities for the children (these activities will continue until each child has been released). The office personnel are responsible for bringing from the office: the Medical Release Book (containing authorization for emergency care for every enrolled child), a cell phone, writing utensil, attendance grid, and a flashlight. After gathering these items, the office personnel will assist teachers as they move children into safe areas. After everyone has reached the safe area it is the responsibility of the office staff to call the local authorities and licensing agency. Any extra staff members present in the building should immediately assist in the evacuation of children, especially children with limited mobility including infants, toddlers and any other children with compromised mobility or who otherwise need assistance. Evacuation of children 24 months or younger or children with limited mobility or who otherwise need assistance may include being carried out by staff members or placed in strollers or evacuation cribs.

Fire: When the fire alarm sounds, the teachers' first responsibility is to calmly gather the children and proceed outdoors to the pre-planned area (see attached diagram). Within every classroom, the door(s) to the bathroom should always be left open and the door(s) to the hallway should be closed. In the event of an actual fire, teachers will proceed from the pre-planned area to Messiah's most western building (Gym / Chapel). The address of this building is 1805 West Plano Parkway, Plano, TX 75075. Once the alternate shelter is reached, the teachers are responsible for calling the parents of the children in their care. They will inform parents where and when they can retrieve their children. Teachers will only release children to their parents or a person designated by the parents. Fire drills will be performed once a month.

Tornado / Disaster: In this case, when the whistle sounds, the teachers' first responsibility is to calmly gather the children and proceed to the pre-planned safe area (see attached diagram). All classroom doors to the hallways should be closed. In the event of an actual disaster, once the danger has passed, the teachers are responsible for calling the parents of the children in their care. They will inform parents where and when they can retrieve their children. Teachers will only release children to their parents or a person designated by the parents. Tornado / Disaster drills need to be practiced four times per year.

Lock-Down: Personnel will be notified of a lock-down situation by either an announcement over the building's speaker system or a quick run through of the building by the director or staff member in charge. During a lock-down the teachers' first responsibility is to calmly gather the children and proceed to the pre-planned safe area. All classroom doors to the hallways and bathrooms should be closed. All lights should be turned off and children should be kept as quiet as possible. Personnel will be notified that the lock-down is over by the director or staff member in charge. If the Lock-Down has extended past the end of the school day, teachers will inform parents where and when they can retrieve their children. Teachers will only release children to their parents or a person designated by the parents. Lock-Down situations are practiced as well.

In the case of a larger event which requires evacuation of a distance of over 100 yards, we will evacuate the children in the most expedient manner to The Hope Center located at 2001 West Plano Parkway, Plano, TX 75075 (972-212-9191).

In the case of a catastrophic event which requires evacuation of a distance of more than a half mile radius, we will evacuate the children in the most expedient manner to either: Faith Lutheran (to the East) located at 1701 East Park Blvd, Plano, TX 75074 (972-423-7448) or Prince of Peace (to the West) located at 4000 Midway Road, Carrollton, TX 75007 (972-447-9887) unless otherwise directed by the city of Plano Emergency Management officials. Our destination will be posted on the Messiah Lutheran Church Administration and Lambs School doors and a message will be sent out via the Remind messaging service.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Injury: In the event that a student is injured at school, it is the responsibility of the teacher to determine severity of the injury. If the injury is not severe, teachers should provide basic first aid (cleaning wounds, band-aids, etc.). If the injury is severe the teacher should call 911 and inform the director. While waiting for emergency personnel to arrive: the parents' (or emergency contact) should be notified, the child's immediate medical needs should be met, he/she should be kept comfortable, and the child's medical release form should be brought to him/her.

Illness: If a child becomes ill at school, the child should be put in isolation and the parents' should be notified. If the illness is severe enough, 911 should be contacted. If it is reported to the school that a child who had been in care has a communicable disease, a note will be posted outside of the child's classroom to inform the parents of other students what symptoms to watch for. If the number of students affected continues to grow, notes will be posted in the front lobby informing all school parents. Severe illnesses will be reported to licensing and to the County Health Department if necessary.

Lambs Building Evacuation Map



The Hope Center
2001 West Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75075
972-212-9191

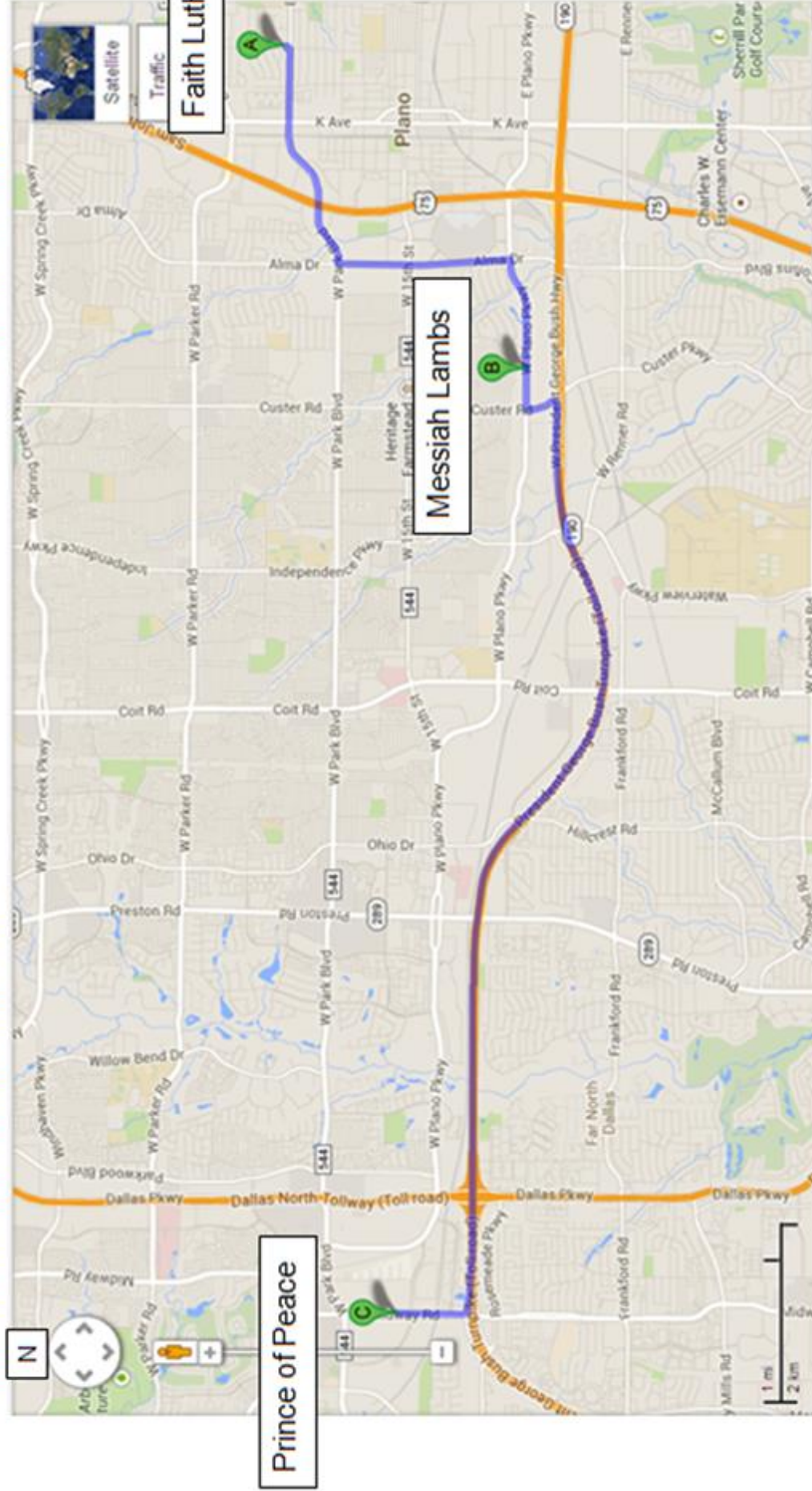
Messiah Gym / Chapel
1805 West Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75075
972-398-7536

Messiah Lambs
1801 West Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75075
972-398-7560

Catastrophic Evacuation Map

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (to the West)

Faith Lutheran Church (to the East)



Prince of Peace

Messiah Lambs

Faith Lutheran

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
4000 Midway Road
Carrollton, TX 75007
972-447-9887

Faith Lutheran Church
1701 East Park Blvd
Plano, TX 75074
972-423-7448



Jesus said, ***“PERMIT THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME: DO NOT HINDER THEM, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE”*** - Mark 10:14

In bringing your children to Messiah’s Early Childhood program you are indeed bringing them to the Lord Himself. Through love and care and capable teaching, we hope all God’s children who come through our doors will grow to know how special each of us is to our God and Lord.

If at any time you have a concern or problem, know that you can come to either our ECD Director or the Ministerial Staff.

Some of the most beautiful words in the world are words that your children will hear every week; words that should be special to us all:

***“Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world...
All are precious in His sight.”***

This we believe! This we will teach.

I AM JESUS' LITTLE LAMB

I am Jesus' little lamb,
Ever glad at heart I am;
For my Shepherd gently guides me,
Knows my need and well provides me,
Loves me every day the same,
Even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away,
Jesus be my staff and stay.
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me,
Into pleasant pastures leads me;
When I thirst, He bids me go
Where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am,
Even now the Shepherd's lamb?
And when my short life is ended,
By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast,
There within His arms to rest.