



# Family Handbook

**200 West Orange Street**

**Lititz, Pa 17543**

**627-0900**



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Welcome to St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center, an outreach program of the St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church.

St. Paul CELC is licensed by the State of Pennsylvania, accredited by NAEYC (National Association of the Education of Young Children). Our teachers hold Bachelor and Associate Degrees in Elementary and/or Early Childhood Education and Child Development Associate Certifications. Each teacher is dedicated to the field of early childhood education and to the children and families in our care.

St. Paul CELC provides an environment that is fun, loving and educational. The teachers create weekly lesson plans that revolve around all aspects of the curriculum such as art, music, science, language, reading, writing, small and large motor skills. We encourage each child to learn and grow at a pace that is right for him/her. Our teachers document learning through portfolios and observations and complete assessments on the children three times per year. St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center meets or exceeds all state guidelines and by providing high quality care and education to young children, our experienced educated staff received recognition through NAEYC and the Keystone Star Program.

We have an open-door policy and welcome parents/guardians into our center. We strive to work with families in a partnership as we care for their children. Communication is extremely important, and we are always available to talk with parents/guardians.

Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:30am – 6:00pm. If you have any questions regarding the center, please feel free to contact us anytime through our e-mail address [info@stpaulcelc.org](mailto:info@stpaulcelc.org) or by calling 627-0900.

Karen Schaeffer – Executive Director

Cynthia Kreider-Assistant Director

Lisa Tully- Assistant Director

## **All About St. Paul CELC's Program**

### **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center team of Professional Educators is:

- To partner with each family to develop character and instill a love of learning in every child.

### **Our Philosophy**

St. Paul CELC philosophy of education is based on the individual needs of each child and his/her family. We believe in creating a hands-on, child centered environment where each child will learn and grow at a pace that is right for him/her. In doing this, we provide developmentally appropriate activities for all children in areas of intellectual, social, emotional and physical development. We offer a balanced variety of teacher-directed activities, child-directed discovery activities, quiet and active times. Each child's sense of security is supported by a stable classroom routine and a nurturing environment.

Family engagement is encouraged through communication of family beliefs and experiences, classroom and program activities and development of mutual goals for children's learning.

## St. Paul CELC Values

Values: *To Honor God in All that We Do*

1. **Positive Attitude**- towards job, children as individuals
2. **Creativity**- engaging children in learning, foster in children and staff
3. **Commitment**- longevity and commitment to program, perseverance through change, the commitment to the advancement of each child and each staff member
4. **Teamwork**-committed to each other, work with family for good of child
5. **Excellence**-creating a culture of best efforts in all we do, how we should treat co-workers, families and children
6. **Passion**-what drives us to do our best, enthusiasm for our work
7. **Compassion**-empathy and sympathy towards parents, children and co-workers
8. **Integrity**- openness, stand by NAEYC Code of Ethics, highest ethical standards

We are licensed by the State of Pennsylvania, Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and is a Keystone STARS 4 star program. St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center meets or exceeds all state guidelines and by providing high quality care and education to young children, our experienced, educated staff received recognition through NAEYC and Keystone STARS.

## **Curriculum**

St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center develops a curriculum that encourages children to discover and explore the world around them with a hands-on, child centered environment.

The projects or units that the teachers incorporate are developmentally appropriate for the age group, build on children's interests, individual child goals, and provide hands-on activities that revolve around math, science, language, social studies, art, music and large and small motor skills in small and large group settings. The day is balanced with outside play and activities and indoor free-choice and centers. The children are encouraged to ask questions and to learn problem-solving skills. Each teacher works with children on these skills and is actively involved in each activity of the day.

## **Portfolios**

The St. Paul CELC teachers implement a portfolio for each child who attends our center. The purpose of the portfolios is to track the child's growth and development. This is done during the child's regular day, in the child's comfortable environment with his/her classroom teacher. Parents/guardians are always welcome to review portfolios. Please talk with either your child's teacher or the Director if you would like to review your child's portfolio.

The portfolios are for the teachers use and parents/guardians review only. Child portfolios are not shared with people outside of teachers and parents/guardians unless written permission is given by the parent/guardian. These portfolios are confidential and for the use of communicating development and assisting in creating goals for the child and the lesson plans for the classroom. After your child has moved to the next classroom and their new teacher has time to review their portfolio, it will be sent home for you to share with other early education programs, outside services, and elementary schools.

### **Child Assessments**

From the portfolios, the teachers will complete assessments on each child. These assessments will be done three times per year in October, February and May. We will be using Teaching Strategies Gold. This assessment tools have been issued to us by the State of Pennsylvania and are designed to document growth and development and to assess children's skills, knowledge and behavior. The assessments are on-going. The teachers have participated in trainings on how to use the Teaching Strategies Gold. The teachers will use the information from the portfolios (observations, and photographs) to help complete the assessment. We will use the information found on the assessments to create our curriculum and provide activities that will encourage each individual child in his/her developmental needs. Upon the completion of the assessments, a copy will be sent home to you for your review. Conferences will then be available for anyone wanting to sit down with



their child's teacher to talk about progress, goals you have for your child, or address any concerns.

Assessment results will also be used to assist CELC in referring children and their families to other professionals who may be able to help the child with their social, emotional or cognitive development.

Every February, May and October, the results of the assessments will be reported to the State of Pennsylvania. Your child's name will not be used; he/she will be assigned a number for reporting purposes. The State will then be able to track how well the Early Childhood field is doing in preparing children for kindergarten and assisting children in their developmental growth.

An initial observation of your child will be done within 45 days of enrolling. This will give our teachers an understanding of your child's development and information on how we can best care for your child and encourage his/her growth. A copy of the observation will be sent home to you. If you have any questions regarding assessments, please feel free to speak with the Director.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held three times a year. A signup sheet will be posted outside your child's classroom at the time of the conferences. Conferences can also be held upon request by the teacher, parent/guardian, or the Director. We encourage you to make time

regularly to speak with your child's teacher upon drop-off or pick up time. We do understand that it is very difficult to talk with children listening. If you ever would like to speak with your child's teacher privately, please let us know and we will set up a meeting. You also are free to call anytime to check on your child or talk with the teacher if you have concerns or questions.

If there are any changes in your child's routine, please inform the teachers of the change. Notify us of any major changes (moving, parental separation, death in the family etc.) that are happening in your child's life. This will enable us to better understand the needs of your child at that time. If you would like to sit down and talk about any of these issues, please feel free to request a conference.

### **Confidentiality**

As a team of professionals, the St. Paul CELC staff understands and respects your families' right to confidentiality. It is our goal to have open communication and work with you and your family to assist your child in his/her growth and development. For us to reach this goal, we need to learn about your child and your family. The Director and Assistant Director will have access to all information in your child's file, health information, assessment results and family situations. The lead teacher and assistant teacher for each class will assess the children in their group, keeping observations on the children and developing each child's portfolio. Therefore, they will have access to each child's assessment results and developmental progress in their group. All child care teachers

employed at St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center have access to the health status of each child attending the childcare program. With this information the teachers will then have the knowledge needed to care for your child. The children's files are securely kept in the childcare office.

All information of your child and family is highly confidential. St. Paul CELC will not release any information to any other party without your knowledge or consent. If we receive a request for release of confidential information about your child, or when release of confidential information is necessary for participation in regulatory agencies such as NAEYC, OCDEL, STARS, and ELN. These agencies will access files to verify documentation of requirements needed for maintaining our status with each agency. St. Paul CELC will obtain informed written authorization from the parent or legal guardian and child prior to releasing the information requested. A copy of the signed authorization form will be given to the parent or legal guardian and the original will be kept in the child's permanent file.

### **Infant Care**

Infants can begin our program at 6 weeks of age. As families prepare for their infant, and themselves, to join our program, we strongly encourage parents to come to the center for visits before the first day. This will allow you to get to know the teachers, other babies and the Cuddly Bear Room. We can answer any questions you may have and hopefully make that first day go a bit easier for you.

All parents and children entering the infant room must remove their shoes or put on shoe coverings. There are coverings located directly outside the infant classroom. The teachers will also be wearing slippers in the classroom throughout the day. This procedure will help minimize any dirt that could be tracked into the room where the infants are crawling.

We ask that all bottles, food, formula, clothing, blankets etc. are clearly labeled with your child's name.

St. Paul CELC teachers keep a record of each time an infant is fed. These daily papers also include nap times, diaper changes, special activities and a brief message on how the child was that day.

St. Paul CELC teachers will work with each individual family to ensure that their infant's feeding schedule is based on the individual needs of the infant. Each day the teachers will document the type and quantity of food that the infant has consumed and provide families with that information on the daily report. Infants who are unable to sit will be held for bottle-feeding. All others sit or are held to be fed. Infants do not have bottles while in a crib and do not eat from propped up bottles at any time. Toddlers/twos do not carry bottles, sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling or walking. Teachers offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. The teachers will serve only formula

and infant food that comes to the facility in a factory-sealed container and will prepare according to the manufacturer's instructions. Formula, breast milk and infant food will not be warmed in a microwave. Teachers will use commercial bottle warmer to warm formula or breast milk to no more than 120 degrees. Bottle feedings may not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. The teachers will discard any formula or breast milk after one hour of serving if the infant has not finished it. We do not offer solid foods or fruit juices to infants younger than 6 months of age unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by the family. If fruit juices are served to older infants, the amount will be limited to 4 ounces per day. We will not feed infants cow milk if they are younger than 12 months and will serve children whole milk to children 12 months to 24 months.

### **Breastfeeding**

St. Paul CELC supports mothers who are breastfeeding. You are welcome at any time to come into the center and breastfeed your child. You are welcome to stay in the infant room or we have a private room (Church Lounge) where you can go for quiet bonding time with your baby. We also accept breast milk for feedings in ready to feed sanitary containers labeled with your child's name and date. We can store breast milk in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (and no more than 24 hours if breast milk is previously frozen). We can also store breast milk in the freezer for no longer than 3 months. Frozen breast milk will be thawed in

the refrigerator. Staff will gently mix (not shake) breast milk to preserve the nutritional components.

### **Sids Policy**

Medical science has not yet discovered what causes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) but research shows how to reduce the risks. Here at CELC we follow the policy listed below:

- Infants under one year of age will be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm, tight fitting mattress. Babies who roll over on their tummies while sleeping will be allowed to assume whatever position they chose.
- No waterbeds, fluffy/soft infant bedding or shared bedding will be used for babies. (Including pillows, quilts, comforters or stuffed toys) less than 8 months of age.
- If a blanket is used, the infant (over 8 months of age) will be placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest. The infant's head will remain uncovered during sleep.
- The temperature will be maintained between 65 and 85 degrees in each room where the babies receive care.
- Babies will be kept lightly clothed while sleeping.
- Babies will have supervised "tummy time" while awake
- If a baby has a health condition for which back sleeping is a problem, a note from a pediatrician that states the alternative position and an

explanation of the infant's condition that makes this position necessary.

Death from SIDS has significantly been reduced since people caring for infants are placing them to sleep in their backs and followed temperature and bedding recommendations. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with the Director.

### **Diaper Service**

To continuously provide our families with the best value-added services & care for your children, St. Paul CELC announces our new Cuties Care All Inclusive Diapering Product Supply Program for all our infants & young toddlers while at school. Cuties Care School Supply Program is a value-added service that will be charged at a daily rate. The rate will be charged regardless of # hours spent in childcare each day. The program includes all baby diapers, wipes, while at school only.

### **Preschool**

Our preschool program is a fun, educational program where the children are learning social and cognitive skills to prepare them for kindergarten. The teachers create weekly lesson plans that incorporate the PA Early Learning Standards which are also used in the school districts. Each lesson plan incorporates activities for math, science, language, music, art, dramatic play, large and small motor skills and outdoor play. The teachers observe and assess each child's progress and are actively involved in the children's play.

A calendar of events is provided to families at the beginning of the school year.

### **School Age Care**

St. Paul CELC provides after school care for children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. We only provide after school care; we do not provide before school care. Warwick School District students will get a priority when enrolling in the after-school program. Children from other school districts will be enrolled only if there is space available.

Bussing is also available (Warwick School District only) to our students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. There is no bussing fee for these families. The busses drop the children off in front of the church building where the teachers will meet each of them.

Students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade can complete their homework while at St. Paul CELC. Parents must inform the teachers of their preference regarding homework. In addition, our program offers many hands-on fun-filled activities which are geared toward each child's individual needs, goals and interests. Children are given the opportunity to explore and manipulate their environments and learn through real experiences and discovery.

Full day care will be provided for school-age children when the Warwick School District is closed (unless the closure coincides with St. Paul CELC's Holiday closings; see Calendar). It is the parent's responsibility to submit



a schedule to the child care office if full day care is needed on days that the school is closed. Care will also be provided on days that school is closed due to snow. Please call the office on the morning of a snow closing to inform the center of whether your child will be attending.

If your child is sick and sent home from school or does not attend school on a day that he or she is scheduled to be at St. Paul CELC, please call the office. If a child does not get off the bus, we will call the school and the child's parents.

During the summer months, St. Paul CELC provides a School-Age Summer Camp program for children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. A child must be enrolled for a minimum of 8 weeks to participate in the Summer Camp. Children will spend the summer going on field trips, having visitors that will help their understanding of the summer camp's project and participating in many fun-filled activities.

## **Parent/ Family Involvement**

\*\*Parents/guardians are welcome at the center at any time to visit with their child. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to be involved! We also have many opportunities for families to get to know each other. For our childcare families, we have our Annual Family Picnic, Mother's, Father's and Grandparent's Day Lunch weeks, Family Fun Nights, Family Night and Spring Festival. Look for these family events and come join the fun!

## **Guidance Committee**

The St. Paul CELC Guidance Committee exists to oversee and guide the center and to create and review policies set forth in our Family and Staff Handbooks. The committee consists of up to 12 voting members including church representatives, parent representatives and professionals from the community. We are always searching for input and advice from those within an area of expertise. Please speak to the Director if you have access to these resources and would be interested in serving on the Guidance Committee. The Committee meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every other month in the evening.

Committee member will abstain from voting if there is a conflict of interest. Examples to this are, but are not limited to:

- a) If a committee member is a relative of an employee of St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center, that voting member will abstain

from all votes regarding that employee (e.g. yearly evaluation, raises etc).

- b) If St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center does renovations or repairs of the center, three estimates must be obtained/secured for major equipment or repairs over \$3,000. Voting members will abstain from the vote if they are one of the bidders.

### **Grievance Procedure**

During your child's enrollment at St. Paul CELC there may be occasions when you have a disagreement with the way a center policy or procedure is carried out. While part of the Center's mission is to be supportive of families through meeting the needs of the individual children, it must do so in a way that is feasible in a group care setting. The center is also under legal obligation to follow our state's health and safety, fire and licensing regulations that pertain to the operation of a child care facility. Your child's teachers are responsible for following these policies and regulations within their own classroom. The Director and Assistant Director are responsible for the day to day operation of the center and the supervision of all staff members. The Director reports to the Guidance Committee.

If you or your child has a disagreement about a policy, procedure or a question about the application of a center policy or state regulation, please speak to the classroom teacher, so that she/he can work the problem out with you or clarify the policy or regulation. Please follow these steps when addressing a question or concern.

- If the problem cannot be resolved with the teacher, speak to the Director.
- The last avenue for a grievance is to meet with the Guidance Committee.

Of course, any time you feel uncomfortable speaking to the teacher involved, you can come directly to the Director or Assistant Director to voice your concerns.

### **PTO**

The PTO organizes fundraisers and Teacher Appreciation week for the program. The PTO will send out notices throughout the year asking for volunteers and donations.

### **How Parents/Guardians Can Volunteer**

In addition to becoming a member of our Guidance Committee and PTO, parents/guardians can volunteer with CELC by:

- Becoming a classroom reader
- Being a career day visitor
- Supplying their child's classroom with items needed for special events or parties
- Assisting teachers during seasonal parties
- Assisting the office with fundraisers
- Joining your child's class on walking field trips

- Or by sharing any talents, resources or ideas you may have. We encourage input from our families!

CELC does have volunteers that come into the center. These volunteers must submit two written references, a health assessment and criminal, child abuse and FBI background checks. The volunteers are always supervised by a St. Paul CELC teacher and are under the direction of the Director.

### **Parenting Resources**

A variety of resources are available for families. There are pamphlets and information on special services for children located on the wall in the office. This includes, but may not be limited to, IU13 Services, S. June Smith Services and WIC information. Also, available for parents is the United Way's Link book which includes information on health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, early intervention and child care subsidies. In addition, we periodically will post parenting seminars that are available in the community. Please feel free to speak with the Director if you are interested in any of this information or would like to inquire about available community services.

## **Enrollment**

CELC is open to all children ages six weeks through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, serving the community of Lititz and the surrounding areas. Admissions, the provisions of services and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age or sex. Program services shall be made accessible to eligible disabled persons through the most practical and economically feasible methods available in accordance with all applicable Federal and State civil rights laws and regulatory requirements and guidelines. (However, priority will be given to fulltime children when enrollment openings occur).

## **Children's Files**

Before enrollment to CELC each family receives a handbook and children's registration papers. Each child enrolled in the center has a file, which must be kept current. Bi-annually we will request that you review your emergency contact information to ensure that we have the most up to date information. However, you must immediately notify us of any changes that may occur at different times of the year in emergency contact information. The Director, Assistant Director, office personnel and your child's teacher will have access to your child's file. OCDEL, our regulatory agency will also have access to these files to verify that we are appropriately maintaining our records. Parents/guardians may review their child's file at any time.

Included in this file are:

- Registration Form
- "Getting to Know You" enrollment form

- Emergency contact information form
- Financial agreement
- Copy of child's birth certificate
- Signed parental consent for:
  - Administration of minor first aid
  - Emergency medical care
  - Walking excursions
  - Transportation by the facility
  - Release of child to anyone other than a parent
  - Administration of medication (as described in the medication policy)
- Photo/video permission
- Signed physician's consent for prescription medication
- Initial and subsequent health assessments
- All developmental assessments made by the teachers
- All reports of accidents, bumps or bruises which occur at the center

### **Transfer of Records Policy**

All requests to transfer records must be done in writing and handed into the childcare office.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up Procedure**

Please use the door located on the side of the building by the child care's wooden playground. After entering the building, please sign your child "in" at the office and check their file folder.

The Church building is locked. The families will each have an access card for entering the building. There is a one-time key card deposit. (See Key Card User Agreement) Please do not give your access card to anyone else. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, they can buzz into the office and we will let them into the building.

Each child at CELC has an identification tag. This tag is used by the teachers to keep an accurate account of the children in their care. Upon drop off, you will pick up your child's identification tag outside your child's classroom on the metal strip around the door. You will take your child and the tag to your child's drop off location (ie. classroom, social hall, play yard) and give it to one of their teachers. The teachers will keep the tag until the end of the day and give it back to parents when the child is picked up. Please return the tag to your child's classroom so it can be used the next day. This procedure will apply to anyone picking up or dropping off a child. Please be sure to relay information to other persons designated to pick up your children.

**The center must receive written notification of anyone other than a parent is to pick up a child.** Children will be released only to persons authorized by the parents and whose names are on file in the office and



only after the proper identification has been made. Photo identification will be required.

Parents may pick up or visit with their child at any time. In the case of divorce, separated or unmarried parents, either parent is welcome and can pick up his or her child at any time. The exception to this is if there is a court order in the child's file stating when a parent can or cannot pickup or visit the child. If your family is experiencing one of these situations, please submit a copy of your court order to the office. If there is not a court order on file, please understand that St. Paul CELC cannot prevent a parent from visiting or picking up his/her child.

**\*\*\*\*\*Parents must personally accompany all children to and from the classroom. Children of any age must not be out of teacher or parent supervision at any time. Children of any age must not be out of teacher or parent supervision at any time.**

### **Your Child's Adjustment**

All children experience some anxiety about being away from family and home. The adjustment period will be much more positive as you talk to your child about his/her new school, friends, teachers and activities. As you show excitement and enjoyment for the day's activities, your child will have the same enthusiasm. **We suggest and welcome you to visit the program with your child the weeks before starting.** Together you can explore the classroom, meet new friends and get to know the teachers. Please let us know if you are interested in pre-enrollment

visits. Also, conferences with your child's new teacher can be arranged. This may help you feel more comfortable as you get to know your child's teacher and the routine of the classroom.

Drop off times are best eased by a cheerful smile and a goodbye kiss. Reassure your child that you will return at the end of the day. Please do not leave when your child is not looking. He/she will feel more secure saying goodbye and finding comfort with a teacher.

We hope you and your child enjoy being a part of our early learning family. Feel free to ask any questions that you may have. Never hesitate to call during the day to check on your child. You are always welcome to stop in anytime to visit with your child or to just spend some time in the classroom playing with your child and his/her friends.

### **Schedules**

A child enrolled in the childcare center may have a varying schedule. However, schedules are computed Thursday for the following week. **All schedule changes MUST be turned in by 12:00 noon on Thursday.** Payments will be based on the schedule given.

### **Late Schedule Policy**

St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center offers flexible scheduling for the families of the childcare program. For this flexibility to occur, **families need to hand in a schedule to the childcare office by NOON on Thursday, the week before care is needed (unless another request has**

**been issued for Holiday).** CELC can then properly schedule teachers to ensure that ratios are sustained. If a schedule is not handed in, the schedule will remain the same as the previous week. If your schedule normally remains the same every week and you submit a schedule change for one week, you will need to re-submit your typical schedule the following week. This is so the CELC office can clearly be aware of your needs. There will be a \$10.00 for schedules submitted after 12:00 noon on Thursdays and a \$25.00 fee for changes made after 12:00 noon on Fridays. \*If the schedule change can be accommodated.

The St. Paul CELC Late Schedule Policy and fee has been put into effect due to the many consistent late schedules that are turned in each week. When these late schedules are handed in, it is causing the schedules to be completed again, taking time away from other administrative duties. Even one child can make a difference in the ratios that are set forth by the state. We strictly follow our ratios and when late schedules are handed in, it does make a difference in our scheduling. **It is extremely important for you to hand in your child's schedule on time each week.**

The Late Schedule Policy Fee will not apply when picking your child up early or calling off for the day.

Each family will receive two late schedule coupons to use throughout the year. If you need to hand in a late schedule, please attach a late schedule coupon and the late fee will be reversed.

**We must receive notification (in writing) each day your child will be picked up by anyone other than a parent.** The Child Release Form in each child's file lists names of those authorized to pick up a child but we must also have permission from the parent on that day.

### **Calendar**

The center is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday except for the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve the center closes at 4:00 pm
- Closed – New Year's Day
- Closed – President's Day
- Closed – Good Friday
- Closed - Easter Monday
- Closed - Memorial Day
- Closed - Fourth of July
- Closed - Labor Day
- Closed – Columbus Day Monday
- Closed – Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- Christmas Eve the center closes at 4:00pm
- Closed – Christmas Day

**\*\*If Christmas, New Year's or the Fourth of July falls on Saturday, the center will be closed on the preceding Friday.**

**\*\*If Christmas, New Year's or the Fourth of July falls on Sunday, the center will be closed on the following Monday.**

## **Emergency Closing/Inclement Weather**

Our closing or delay information will be aired on WGAL Channel 8 TV. Please note that we do not follow the Warwick School District's decisions about delays or closings. We will make every effort to remain open. Please watch WGAL 8 to find closing information due to emergency or inclement weather.

Tuition credit will be given only if more than the minimum 25 hours is scheduled and only if the center has changed its open hours. We will try to remain flexible in rescheduling part-time minimum hours.

## **Financial Arrangements**

### **Registration and Tuition**

A registration fee of \$75.00 (non-refundable) per child is required at the time of registration. If, for any reason, a child is unable to enter the center within 30 days of the enrollment day, the child may be dropped from the roster and assessed a re-enrollment fee when re-enrolled.

An advance tuition deposit of one week's tuition will be required upon enrollment and will be applied to the last week of care if the center is given a two-week written notice of withdrawal.

The minimum tuition is the equivalent of 25 hours per week. The only exception to this is a minimum of 10 hours for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade after school care. Summer school-age tuition will be based on a 25-hour minimum. Any child may attend less than the minimum, but

tuition will be charged at the minimum number of hours. In families with two or more children, a discount of 10% will be taken from the combined tuition of their children. Because of the lowered weekly minimum tuition, after-school students will not be included in the family discount.

Any child not picked up by 6:00 pm will be charged \$1.00 per minute after 6:00 pm. Please notify the center if you anticipate being late. Late pick-up charge after scheduled time if before 6:00 pm is \$5.00 for each 15 minutes after scheduled pick-up time.

### **Automatic Payments**

We are excited to offer automatic payments through Tuition Express. It is no longer necessary for you to write a check for tuition and fees. Your bank or credit card account will be safely and securely debited by Tuition Express. You can be emailed a receipt for each transaction. It's easy to sign up-just ask us.

If you choose not to enroll in Tuition Express, we will be charging a \$10.00 monthly "handling fee," as we will be forced to continue to process your payments by hand and make trips to the bank.

### **Credit Card Payments**

Payments made with a credit card will incur a \$25.00 per month fee.

### **Payments by Cash or Check**

Payments are due Fridays before the next week of care. If payments are not received by 6:00 pm Friday, a \$25.00 late fee will be charged. Each family will receive two late payment coupons per calendar year. These coupons may be used in the case of late payment to defer the late payment charge. The coupon must be presented on Monday by 6:00 pm and continue care for the remainder of the week. Please attach the coupon to the check to receive credit. Each family will only be able to use two coupons per year. Checks may be payable to St. Paul CELC. There is a \$20.00 fee for any check returned for non-sufficient funds.

Field Trips for the School-age Summer Camp is also an additional fee. Field Trip costs are based on the cost of bussing and entrance fees.

### **Vacation/Holiday Payments**

In the event of a holiday week, payments will be based on the actual hours scheduled for that week. However, you will be required to pay at least the minimum payment for your child's age group.

Each family will receive one full week free vacation per calendar year. For any additional time off the minimum rate for the child's age group will be charged in order to hold the child's position. Two weeks' notice must be given, in writing, for free vacation time.

## **Leave of Absence Policy**

The center allows one week of vacation each year when no fee is charged while the child is not in attendance. (See vacation/holiday policy) For any additional time off (including extended summer vacation) the minimum rate for the child's age group will be charged in order to hold the child's position. A child may not be withdrawn from the center with the intention of re-enrolling at a later date to accommodate summer schedules, unemployment, maternity leaves or any other leave of absences. If you withdraw your child with the intention of re-enrolling, the child will be placed at the end of the waiting list; we will enroll the families who are on the waiting list first and you will only be able to re-enroll if space remains after waiting list families are enrolled.

## **Scholarships**

Scholarships may be available, please check with the office for more information.

## **Sick Day Policy**

Sick day credit will not be given except in the case of an extended illness. If your child's doctor determines that your child is too sick to attend the center for more than three consecutive days, it is considered an extended illness. If you submit a doctor's note, no additional payment is required until the child returns. A limit of two weeks will be placed on extended illness time, after that the minimum rate will be charged in order to maintain the child's spot at the center. Please remember that the minimum tuition still applies to the first three days of an extended illness.



## **Change or Termination of Service**

CELC reserves the right to terminate service to any family with two weeks' prior notice. Two weeks' written notice is required by the center if parents wish to terminate service for any reason. When the center is given a two-week written notice, the advance tuition deposit will be applied to your last week of care.

Four weeks' prior notice is needed when a schedule is changed from full-time (over 32 hours) to part-time if that change is anticipated to be for more than two weeks. A two-week written notice will be required before changing from a part time schedule to a full time schedule. A family that originally contracts for full time hours and changes to part time without giving four weeks' prior notice will be required to pay the full time rate for a minimum of four weeks in order to satisfy the "four-week prior notice" policy.

## **Tuition Credit**

A \$20.00 tuition credit will be given to any parent with a child enrolled in the program when he/she refers another child to St. Paul CELC. The referred child must enroll and remain at the center for at least four weeks for this credit to apply. Only one tuition credit can be given for each newly enrolled child no matter how many parents recommend the center. This policy applies only when the referred child is not the child of the referring parent. The tuition credit will be applied to the referring

parent's account following the referred child's fourth week of attendance.

### **United Way Donations**

Many of our parents have the opportunity to contribute through payroll deductions to the United Way. St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center is a recipient of those funds from the United Way, you need to specifically designate to "St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center".

Your donations will help us purchase new toys and equipment for the classrooms and help us provide our teachers with worthy wages. Thank you! Your help is greatly appreciated!

## **Health and Safety Policies**

### **Health Assessment Policy**

All children must have current health assessments and immunization records on file. Children shall have health assessments completed upon enrollment (within four weeks of the start date) and at 6, 12, 18 months, two years and annually thereafter until the child enters first grade. The Administrative Coordinator will remind you when your child is due for an exam and supply you with a health assessment form to be completed by your doctor. The dates of service must be present on the form and it needs to show that the child is current for routine screenings and immunizations according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Documentation from the child's pediatrician is needed if the child is under immunized due to a medical condition or family beliefs. If a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program the under immunized child's parents will be called and the child will be excluded. In addition, instructions for the special needs of any child need to be documented on the health assessment form. This includes allergies, chronic illness, hearing or visual impairment, feeding needs, seizures, medications. etc. In the case of a child with special needs, the Director and the child's family will meet to discuss the child's needs and develop a plan to assist the child. St. Paul CELC will make reasonable accommodations to assist your child if he/she has any allergies or special needs. You will be reminded of when forms are due, however, we understand that sometimes when scheduling an appointment; it may come past the due date. When a child is overdue, the parent will need to provide evidence

of an appointment. If a health assessment is not returned within two weeks of the child's appointment, St. Paul CELC has the right to terminate service until the current health assessment is submitted.

Please inform CELC if your child has special health care needs. This includes allergies or any other special environmental health needs. We will need an individualized care plan for your child from your child's doctor. St Paul CELC staff will then maintain the classroom based on the needs provided by your child's doctor.

All teachers employed at St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center have access to the health status of each child attending the center. This important health information will allow each staff member to properly care for the children of CELC. Enrolling your child at St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center gives us the authorization to share health issues with all teachers at St. Paul CELC. All health information is kept confidential from other families, volunteers and visitors.

### **Child Abuse**

All the teachers at St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center are mandated reporters of Child Abuse. If it is suspected that a child is being abused, we are required to report our observations to the proper authorities.

### **Illness Policy**

Any child having the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees or greater

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Upper respiratory symptoms

must be taken home when the parent/guardian is called by the center.

If the parent/guardian is unable to come, the parent/guardian is responsible for making alternate arrangements for pick up.

Arrangements should be made so the child is removed from the program within an hour of the phone call. The child will be waiting in the office, where he or she can rest comfortably until picked up. St. Paul CELC does not provide sick childcare for children.

A child who has three bouts of diarrhea will be sent home. Exception to this may be diarrhea associated with teething, intake of medicine or change in diet. The center may request a doctor's note confirming that the child does not have a contagious illness.

If a child is too ill to go outside or participate in regular activities, he is too ill to be at the center. We will not be able to keep a child inside while the group goes outside. The children are taken outside daily, weather permitting.

A child may return to the St. Paul CELC when ONE of the following conditions is met:

- ❖ Child is symptom free for 24 hours and fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducing medication.
- ❖ Child has received antibiotic medication for a minimum 24 hours

- ❖ Child has obtained a physician's note stating that the child **does not have a contagious illness** and is well enough to be at the center.

St. Paul CELC will provide information to the families when any contagious illness is at the center. The information will be posted in the office and preschool entrance. It will inform you of what classroom the illness occurred and when the last day of attendance was for that child. The fact sheet on the illness that will be posted will inform you of signs and symptoms, mode of transmission and the period of communicability.

### **Medication**

In order for medications to be administered at CELC, very specific guidelines must be met. A medication request form must be signed and completed each day that the child requires a dosage while in our care. Medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the name of the medication, your child's first and last name, physician's name (for prescriptions), amount of dosage, time to be given and the expiration date of the medication. **It is our policy that the first dosage of any medication is given at home by the parent/guardian.** All prescriptions and over-the-counter medications are stored in a locked medicine cabinet in the childcare office. This includes cough drops, Chap Stick and any other over-the-counter lotions to be applied. Please do not send any medications into the center in your child's lunch box or backpack.

Please read the label of all over-the-counter medication which is sent to CELC. We cannot administer medication to children less than two years of age without written permission from a doctor. Also, there are many medications (such as cough syrup) which require a doctor's prescription to administer to children under six years of age. Please check all labels.

Because of possible side effects, please do not ask us to administer your child's first dose of a new medication. Parents/guardians need to administer a first dose at home.

\*\*\*\*Please note that we do not apply insect repellent to the children.

### **Sun-Smart Policy**

St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center is committed to practicing sun-safe behavior and protecting children and staff from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation (UV). All children will be required to have sunscreen applied when playing outdoors and when going to the pool. In order for the staff of St. Paul CELC to apply sunscreen to your child, parents/guardians will need to supply the sunscreen and a signed permission slip (which will be provided to you). Parents/Guardians will need to provide a broad-spectrum SPF 15 or higher sunscreen clearly labeled with the child's name. Parents will need to apply the sunscreen to their children before coming into the center. It is recommended that sunscreen be applied 30 minutes before going outside. The staff of St. Paul CELC will then reapply every two hours. We will not apply sunscreen to infants younger than six months of age. These young infants will be

kept out of the direct sunlight whenever possible by seeking shady areas. It is encouraged however, that all children, infants included, wear hats with wide brims that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they go outside and also sunglasses to protect their eyes. St. Paul CELC will encourage children to seek shade when outside and limit the time spent in the direct sun between the hours of 10:00am -4:00pm. However, please be aware that the children will be going outside daily during these hours; we will just ensure that the children have shade to play in, are will protected and are provided plenty of water to keep hydrated. Before going outside daily, St. Paul CELC will check the local UV Index from the United States Environmental Protection Agency website or by watching the local news broadcast for the UV Index rating. The staff of St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center will review our sun safety policy each year.

If your child has any sensitivity to sunscreens or lotions, please let us.



## **Nutrition**

St. Paul CELC does not supply lunch or breakfast for the children. We will provide a morning and afternoon snack. A list of snacks that we serve is posted in the classrooms. It is very important that you inform the staff of CELC if your child is allergic or unable to have certain foods.

Breakfast, provided by the family/guardian, will be served to your child, if the child arrives before 8:00 am. Parents/guardians also need to pack a lunch for their child (including a beverage). The lunch must be brought into the center in a lunch box, clearly labeled with your child's name. Each lunch box needs to be dropped off in the refrigerator at the main entrance of our facility. The lunch boxes will be kept cold until lunch time. We have microwaves in each of the classrooms. If you pack food that will need to go in the microwave, please bring it in a microwave ready container. Also any foods that need cut or peeled need to be done so at home. These foods include; apples, oranges, grapes, and hotdogs. We provide paper plates, napkins, straws and utensils.

St. Paul CELC cares very much for the health and nutrition of the children in our center. We ask that all families send healthy lunches for the children. We suggest that you follow the Food Pyramid when packing your child's lunch. Included on the Pyramid is:

1. Bread, cereal, rice, pasta
2. Vegetables
3. Fruits
4. Milk, cheese, yogurt

## 5. Meat, fish, beans, eggs

If you want to send in a dessert for your child's lunch, we suggest plain cookies, graham crackers, pretzels, pudding, and fruit jello. Please do not send in candy or chocolate. We will not give candy or chocolate to your child. Please do not send in soda, we will substitute with water.

Children under the age of 4 years of age will not be offered hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, raisins/craisins, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks or raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

**If your child has food allergies, please inform the staff of St. Paul CELC upon enrollment.** We will work with your family to ensure the safety of your child and communicate with you on a daily basis regarding your child's eating habits and nutrition. This will be done through daily documentation of type and quantity of food your child consumes. If your child has food allergies or special nutrition needs, we will need an individualized care plan from your child's health care provider. With your consent we will post the food allergy in your child's classroom as a visual reminder for all of the teachers.

Children are never forced to finish all of their food and we will not withhold food from the children. So, please pack only what you know your child will eat and keep desserts healthy. Any food that is given to a child must be discarded when the child is finished eating. Please pack appropriate size lunches for your child. We will not be able to wrap up

uneaten portions and send them home to you. We strive to keep mealtime enjoyable and positive. Healthy eating habits begin with positive mealtime experiences and positive modeling. Our teachers will sit down with the children during mealtimes/snacks and model table manners and engage in conversations with the children to make their mealtimes pleasant.

Food that comes from home for sharing among the children (for example: a birthday treat) must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

### **Oral Hygiene**

St. Paul CELC promotes oral health care through regular brushing of teeth for young toddlers, older toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners. The school age children in 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders (who attend school during the day) and are only at CELC part time will not brush their teeth while in our care.

Each child will have a tooth brush that is for his/her use only. The toothbrush will be air dried and remain in a holder where it will not touch any other toothbrushes. Each toothbrush will be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Before the children leave the lunch table, they will brush their teeth. The children will receive their individual toothbrush and brush their teeth with a cup of water. Upon completion, the teachers will replace the

toothbrush in the correct holder for that child. St. Paul CELC also promotes oral health care with infants. When a teacher finishes feeding an infant his/her bottle or baby food, that teacher will wipe the infant's gums and teeth with a moist cloth to remove any remaining liquid or food.

### **Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Plans**

Fire Drill and emergency plans are performed monthly throughout the year. All children and teachers are involved. We also conduct annual tornado/severe weather drills. In the event that an emergency evacuation becomes necessary we will immediately escort our children to Children's Corner at Moravian Manor Retirement Community at 300 West Lemon Street, Lititz, 626-0214. From that location, we will use your child's emergency contact information to contact all parents. For this reason, it is VERY important for all families to keep Emergency Contact information up to date. If there are any changes, please contact the child care office.

### **Rest/Nap Times**

All children will be required to rest quietly at the designated naptime (excluding the 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders). Many of our older children have outgrown the need for a "sleep time". Children who attend Kindergarten begin the year having rest time. In April many of the children have begun to outgrow rest time and will begin to do activities during that time period. After a short, quiet rest, children who do not need to sleep may do quiet activities. Those who are asleep will still have the full amount of

time to rejuvenate. Parents/guardians should let their child's teacher know their wishes as to naps and amount of sleep time. We will do all we can to accommodate your child's needs.

Each child uses his own rest mat for naps. The mats are sanitized regularly to lessen chances of illnesses spreading. Infants have individual cribs that are sanitized weekly.

Children may have a soft toy for comfort at rest time. Each child will need a sheet or blanket to lay across his/her mat. We discourage large blankets and sleeping bags because they are so bulky and hard to store with our limited space. Parents should supply and launder weekly (or more often if needed) sheets and blankets. Please bring sheets and blankets into the center in a canvas bag or back pack (no plastic bags please) clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **Clothing**

Children should be dressed comfortably for play while at CELC. Please wear clothing on your child that is appropriate for the weather. The children will go outside daily. However, the children will not go outside on "ozone action alert days" or any other air pollution alerts. A complete change of clothes, including socks, underwear, shirts (long and short sleeved) and pants must be kept at the center. Label all clothing and place in an adult size shoebox with the child's name on it. Infants should have at least two complete change of clothing and several days' supply of

diapers at the center at all times. Children who are in the process of potty training should also have at least three changes of clothing.

**Flip-flops, clogs, sandals or other dangerous footwear are not permitted.** They are not safe for walking or play.

### **Discipline Policy**

It is the policy of St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center to work with individual children to teach management of anger, problem solving skills, social skills and strategies for negotiating differences with peers. Children learn appropriate behavior through modeling, positive reinforcement and redirection. As children hear consistent, positive responses such as praise and approval for accomplished tasks, they develop healthy feelings of self. Teachers are expected to get down on the child's eye level, talk to him/her about the problem, guide the child to discover alternate ways of handling situations and encourage the child to talk with peers regarding the situation. Time-out can be used as a last resort, after the positive measures have been tried. Teachers will never use any form of physical punishment, including spanking. Disciplinary methods shall never shame, humiliate or frighten the child. Teachers will not withhold food as a form of discipline.

Teachers will make every effort to have open, constant communication with parents regarding their children. Because it is difficult to openly discuss concerns with children present, we will always be available to meet with parents to discuss their child, the classroom routine and

structure and how the center may best meet the needs of the family. When there are challenging behavioral issues in the classroom, the teachers will make regular observations to assist in determining events, activities and interactions that may contribute to the challenging behaviors. The teachers will work together with the families to create an action plan to assist the child and the classroom in working towards a resolution for the problems. Here are some of the steps taken:

- Ages and Stages social emotional assessment is completed;
- Parents complete the Ages and Stages social emotional assessment;
- Teachers track behavior to pinpoint times of the day that may be contributing to behavior;
- The Director or Assistant Director observes in the classroom;
- Outside resources are requested for intervention.

The center will do all possible to provide consistent discipline between home and school. We can only do this through good communication. In the case that we are not able to adequately help a child manage his/her behavior through our combined efforts, the center reserves the right to refer a child to his/her family physician, the IU or S. June Smith Center for evaluation. The family, teachers and other professionals will work together to create an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for the child; when an IEP or IFSP has been created, please supply a copy of the plan for us to keep on file in the office. The family and the center would then be expected to follow

the physician/evaluator's guidance in proper behavior management for this particular child.

We provide a secure environment for all our children. We care very much for the children in our center and wish to meet each child's needs. We do reserve the right to terminate care with two weeks' notice in the event that we are unable to sufficiently meet the needs of any child.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must sign in at the child care office. If a relative wants to come to the center to visit a child, we will need permission from the parent. Please write us a note to inform us of any visitors coming to the center. Please do not give any visitors your access card, they may use the buzzer located on the keypad to call into the child care office to be admitted. The center must receive written notification of anyone other than a parent is to pick up a child on a particular day.

### **Parking**

The parking lot on the side of the church, by the wooden playground, may be used for parking. You may then use the sidewalk along the building to reach the entrance. Please do not park in the handicap spaces or leave your care running while in the building.

### **Pet Policy**

Any pet entering our building for a visit must have up to date immunizations and a recent veterinarian checkup.



## **Babysitting**

If your family seeks the service of a St. Paul CELC staff member to baby sit after work hours, note that St. Paul CELC is not liable for actions or quality of care. The agreement and arrangement is between the family and the person babysitting NOT St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited on the grounds of the St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church and St. Paul Christian Early Learning Center.

## **Summary of Parent's Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Your Rights are to:**

- Be involved in your child's education and care
- Receive information regarding your child's progress and development
- Share in decisions about the care of your child
- Have frequent contact with teachers about your child
- Have access to the classroom through visitation
- Be recognized as the "expert" when it comes to your child
- Be informed when a communicable disease or traumatic situation has arisen at the program
- Be informed by the teacher when your child has a problem
- Be informed about changes in fees, teachers or programming

## Your Responsibilities are:

- Be involved in your child' education and learning
- Share information about the child and home that may affect behavior
- Check mailboxes daily. Each family has a file folder in the office. Read all messages, newsletters and daily reports distributed by the staff.
- Label everything! Lunch boxes, blankets, bottles, clothing, medication etc. with permanent marker
- Dress your child appropriately for the weather
- Please keep your child's extra clothing box full. If there is no clothing in your child's box and your child is sent home in clothing belonging to the center, please launder and return borrowed clothing ASAP.
- Keep payments up to date at all times. Payments are due by 6:00 pm Friday before the next week of care.
- Submit schedule changes by noon Thursday for the following week.
- Inform the center if your child will be arriving or leaving at times other than scheduled and make extra fee payments if necessary. Also make sure you call the center if your child will not be attending childcare on a specific day due to illness or schedule change.
- Inform the center in writing if someone other than a parent will be picking up the child.
- Be available (or designate someone) to pick up your child if you are called by the center in case of illness. Keep your child home if they are sick

- Keep infant feeding schedules up to date, bottles clean and supplies replenished
- Keep your child's file complete and current. Submit required health assessment forms. Update all forms whenever a change has been made (such as job, address and phone number).
- Read and abide by all the policies in the handbook
- Follow the grievance procedure if you are having a problem or concern.

August 2018