

# HOPE LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

## Introduction

Hope Lutheran Preschool is an integral part of the Christian Education program of Hope Lutheran Church. The preschool emphasizes Christian principles and teachings as children interact and participate in activities centered on living and learning. The preschool provides a Christian witness to the community in service to young children and their families.

The focus of the preschool is to provide children with age appropriate opportunities for spiritual, emotional, social, physical and intellectual growth. Children grow through play, stories, learning centers, Bible lessons, chapel, music, arts and crafts. The preschool offers a morning half-day program for ages 2, 3, 4 and 5-year-old children. The preschool hours for the 2, 2/3 and 3-year-old classes are 9:00AM to 12:00PM. The preschool hours for the 3/4, 4 and 4/5-year-old classes are 8:45AM to 12:30PM. Early Care is available from 7:00AM to 8:15AM and Extended Enrichment Afternoons are available from 12:00PM to 5:00PM. Morning Carpool runs from 8:30AM to 9:00AM.

Our program is a combination of free play and group activities guided by qualified teachers and teaching assistants. Curriculum areas include art, music and movement, gross and fine motor development, socialization, language development, number usage, and letter and sound recognition. The program includes weekly chapel services, which are supplemented by our "One in Christ" curriculum, Bible stories and songs. Christian values are not viewed as a subject apart from our daily living, but rather as the way to live and work together.

## Beliefs and Practices Policy

Hope Lutheran Preschool is an integral part of the mission and ministry of Hope Lutheran Church, a congregation affiliated with The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The preschool is a mission of the congregation, providing an opportunity for families from the church and community to enrich their children's lives with age-appropriate opportunities for spiritual, emotional, social, physical and intellectual growth.

As a faith-based, church-affiliated ministry, all families who enroll children at Hope Lutheran Preschool covenant to support the Christian atmosphere of the preschool. Christian teaching and instruction is not only carried out formally, but is integrated into every activity and lesson, supported by Christian staff who are committed to applying Biblical principles to their teaching, discipline and life.

Hope Lutheran Church and Preschool expects that staff and families of its students will not act in such a way that is contrary to or disrupts the teachings of Hope Lutheran Church in matters of religious faith and personal conduct. While staff and enrolled families are not required to be members of Hope Lutheran Church, staff and families of Hope Lutheran Preschool may not, in a way that may affect the school, promote beliefs that are contrary to the teachings of Hope Lutheran Church or which otherwise weaken the Christian atmosphere of the preschool. Staff and families who challenge the Biblical teachings of Hope Lutheran Church, or conduct

themselves in such a way that undermines the Christian atmosphere of the church and/or preschool, may be terminated, expelled, suspended or refused enrollment.

As a member congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Hope Lutheran Church and Preschool affirms the doctrine and practice of the church as derived from the Christian Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and applicable resolutions and guidance of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Parents are invited to speak with the Pastor(s) if they have questions about the beliefs and practices of Hope Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Classes are offered by the church several times during the year which enables parents to study the teaching of the Christian faith and the Lutheran Church.

For purposes of this policy, the decision of Hope Lutheran Church, communicated through the Pastor(s) and or Director after consultation with the leadership of the congregation shall be final and binding on what actions and conduct constitutes a violation of this policy.

## **Curriculum Overview**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Hope Lutheran Preschool provides high quality early childhood education, which fosters the development of each child in a Christian environment, which enables the child to feel safe and loved.

### **Philosophy**

Children learn through play, which permits growth to progress along a natural, developmental sequence. They grow and develop at different rates cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. These areas are interrelated and interdependent. Children are naturally curious, therefore, experiences that allow them to touch, hear, see, taste, and smell help children realize their full potential. These experiences are reached through creative, explorative and manipulative activities in the classroom. A loving, small group setting is the best environment to foster children's development. Children learn God's love for them by seeing that love in the teachers and assistants and through a Christian-based curriculum.

*"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well." 1 John 5:1*

### **Goals**

Hope Lutheran Preschool provides a high quality early childhood program by striving to provide a program which is:

*Developmentally Based* - Appropriate for the age and ability level of each individual child.

*Comprehensive* - Focusing on all aspects of growth and development, able to act as a resource for outside services.

*Environmentally Appropriate* - Providing rich and stimulating concrete materials for manipulation, experimentation and discovery; in a solidly constructed, well cared for, clean and safe building/campus.

*Instructionally Appropriate* - Aware that each child will differ in their interest, level of ability and knowledge, and learning styles. Methods must be used to accommodate these differences. These methods will be combined with individual, small group and whole group activities which may be directed or self-initiated.

*Structurally Appropriate* - Guaranteeing that a member of the teaching staff will be with the children at all times, providing for their safety and well-being.

*Dedicated to Parental Involvement* - Recognizing that parents are an essential partner in children's education. Parents are also a natural resource for enrichment through their various expertise and skills. Parents are encouraged to visit our facility prior to enrollment. There are also many formal and informal opportunities for parent involvement. See Communication, Conferences and Class Parties.

*Christ-Centered* - Providing children a loving Christian environment where Christ's love is experienced and taught through word and deed.

## **Discipline and Behavior Management Policy**

Effective, positive discipline is an integral part of learning. In accordance with our religious philosophy, discipline is a means by which we guide and teach our children to behave in ways which show self-respect, and which demonstrate love and care for other people and a respect for their needs. As stated in Webster's New World Dictionary, discipline is "training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness and efficiency." Any action that is taken by a parent or caregiver when disciplining a child should be for the ultimate good of the child, not as a result of anger or frustration. Internal as well as external influences on a child's behavior must be considered for any management system to be effective. Internal influences are those which are coupled with the child's skills and abilities. External influences come from the classroom environment. Praise, positive reinforcement, and redirection are tools used in behavioral management at Hope Lutheran Preschool. Specific, concrete observations are made, pointing out progress, giving the control of the situation back to the child (when possible). Children, as well as adults, find renewal and a desire to improve through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and love they receive from their fellow human beings.

Below is a copy of the discipline policy for Hope Lutheran Preschool:

We DO:

1. Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. Reason with and set limits for the children.
3. Model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. Listen to the children.
6. Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.

8. Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. Ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. Explain things to children on their levels.
11. Use short supervised periods of time-out sparingly.
12. Stay consistent in our behavior management program.
13. Use effective guidance and behavior management techniques that focus on a child's development.

**We DO NOT:**

1. Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. Make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. Deny food or rest as punishment.
5. Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. Place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. Allow discipline of children by children.
9. Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

### **Inappropriate Behavior Policy**

When an inappropriate behavior continues after the classroom teacher and director have tried different behavior modifications and have had discussions with the parents, the child's parent will be called to come and pick their child up for the remainder of the day.

*"Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul." -  
Proverbs 29:17*

### **Teacher Guidelines**

The role of the teacher at Hope Lutheran Preschool is that of facilitator. Parameters are set for a given time period or activity by the teacher, after which time the teacher guides and accompanies the children. This guidance takes the form of observing, supporting, clarifying, enhancing, and sharing.

### **Enrichment Programs**

**Chapel** is offered once a week for all classes. Church staff will alternate leading this informal worship time of song, story-telling and prayer. All parents and children are invited and encouraged to attend.

**Music** – The children go to music class with Elizabeth Walker each week. This is a time of music and movement catered to each age level. The children do two programs each year, the Christmas Program in December and a Spring Sing in April. These programs are held in our Sanctuary and are open to all family and friends who would like to attend.

**In House Field trips** – In house field trips are provided for the 3/4, 4 and 4/5 year old classes to enhance curriculum themes. Our community is rich with possibilities for our children to have appropriate hands-on experiences. Special guests will come visit these classes throughout the year.

**Parents as resources** - Research has proven that parent involvement can play a crucial role to a child's school success. Hope Lutheran Preschool encourages parents to share their expertise and skills in order to enhance what is happening in the classrooms, and to improve the physical appearance of the school.

## Fees - Registration and Tuition

### Enrollment Policies

Registration will be held in late January through March. Church members, staff members, and currently enrolled students and siblings are allowed to register prior to the open community date. Any remaining openings are opened up to the community on the announced date. After registration is complete for the coming year, a waiting list is made for each age class. If an opening comes available, the director will contact, in order, those on the waiting list. The waiting list is good for the current school year.

### Registration Fees

A registration fee is required upon enrollment. Registration fees are non-refundable or transferable and must be received with the registration form to secure enrollment. Registration fees are used for materials, supplies, and equipment, which enhance the preschool. The registration fee will only be refunded if there is no space available. The registration fee is an annual fee and does not count as one month's tuition. The full registration fee will be due for students enrolling before December 31. The registration fee for students enrolling for the current school year from January – March will be at 60% of the Registration Fee for the class they are enrolling and enrollment in April and May will be at 40% of the Registration Fee for the class enrolling.

### Important Facts about Tuition

- ★ **Tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month starting with the August tuition. *Payments are due each month through May.***
- ★ Tuitions payments can be made online through [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com), or by check at the preschool. There is a fee assessed by the credit card company on all online payments. If you choose to pay by check, please make them payable to *Hope Lutheran Preschool*. Most banks can also now provide automatic bank drafts, which can be mailed directly to the preschool.
- ★ We cannot take cash at this time, so please pay with check or online.
- ★ An **automatic late fee of \$15.00 will be added to your child's tuition account after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month** and **should be included with your late tuition payment.** Hardship arrangements must be made prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> with the preschool director.
- ★ A \$25.00 fee will be assessed on all returned checks. **After a second returned check all future tuition payments must be made in cash or money orders.**
- ★ **All fees past due after 30 days will result in dismissal of the student from the program.**

- ★ Checks may be mailed to the preschool, dropped off at the preschool office or handed to a staff member at carpool. **DO NOT** put your check in your child's backpack.
- ★ Tuition payments are non-refundable and non-transferable, and are not affected by holidays or absences. Tuition is a yearly amount, paid in monthly payments (1/2 payments in August and May, full payments September through April), and is not raised for 5-week months or lowered for 3-week months.

## Discounts

- **Members of Hope Lutheran Church** will receive a monthly discount of 10% on each child. Members of Hope Lutheran include families or baptized children.
- **Multiple child** tuition discounts will be given to all families based upon the following schedule:

1st child pays full tuition  
2nd child receives 15% discount

3rd child receives 20% discount  
4th child receives 25% discount

## Required Enrollment Information

### Registration Fee

The registration fee is required at the time of registration. No child will be registered without a registration fee. **Registration fees are non-refundable and non-transferable**, and no discounts (staff, church membership, sibling) are available. An exception is made if you move out of the area before the school year starts or if space is not available.

### Child's Registration Form

Registration will be done online. Links to the registration form will be available on our website when spaces are available. You must complete your child's registration form and submit it online, along with payment for the registration fee. A child's registration form contains important child and family information, including emergency medical care information. **This form has to be on file before the child can start the program.**

### Required Forms for Children

Our Handbook can be found on our website and contains important information on policies and procedures. Once you have read through the handbook you must follow the link (p. 28) and submit a Signature Page for Laws and Program Policies acknowledging that you have received and read through the following forms:

- Discipline Policy (p. 3-4)
- Prevention of Shaken Baby and Head Trauma Policy (p. 19-21)
- Documentation of NC Child Care Law (p. 22-25)
- Off Premises Authorization (p. 26)
- Nutritional Opt Out (p. 27)

Additional forms required:

- Medical Form & Immunization Records (print from our website)
- Photo Release (link on our website)

**All of these forms need to be on file on the first day the child attends school.** If your child is a *returning student*, you will only be required to fill out the Signature Page for Laws and Program Policies in addition to the Registration form. The Registration form now includes all emergency information. All other forms will carry over from the previous year.

## Preschool Scholarship Fund

A Scholarship Fund has been established to help families who experience financial hardship and need assistance with full or partial tuition. Applications are available from the Director and will remain confidential to the Director. Twenty percent of all preschool fund raisers will be automatically donated to the fund. Tax deductible donations can be made to the Preschool Scholarship fund at any time by simply writing a check to: "Hope Lutheran Preschool" earmarked for "*Scholarship Fund*."

## Late Pick-up

**Teachers do not get paid for staying beyond the class pick-up time.** If you are late picking up your child, there will be a **\$1.00 fee charged for every minute past five minutes.** This fee is added to your account at the time of pickup and will be due with your next tuition payment to the preschool. Children do not understand why their parent is not there when all the other children have been picked up. If there are special circumstances that cause you to be late, feel free to talk with the Director or the Assistant Director.

## Withdrawals

A written 30-day advance notification is required before you withdraw your child from our program. Tuition will be pro-rated for the month if we are able to fill the vacancy; otherwise the full month's tuition is due and payable.

## Termination

Enrollment of a child can be terminated by the preschool for the following reasons:

- If a child's behavior is consistently disruptive and/or becomes a threat to other children or staff.
- If the preschool staff is unable to meet the needs of a child, as well as provide a safe and progressive learning environment.
- If the registration fee and tuition fees have not been paid on time unless prior arrangements have been made with the director.

Before a child's enrollment is terminated, a parent will be informed of the specific problem and time will be given to correct the problem. Upon termination, any tuition paid in advance will be pro-rated and refunded back to the date of termination.

## **Children with Special Needs and Their Families**

Hope Lutheran Preschool is accepting of all children and enjoys serving children of all abilities. Our staff works hard to identify areas of strengths and areas that need support in all children in our program. Sometimes these observations lead to strategies that we can do in the classroom prior to looking for outside help. Once it is established by families that some form of assistance may be needed, we can support them as they secure services. These early interventions can prevent academic struggles in the future. If your child is already receiving services, please discuss this with us so we can look at ways to support your child.

We welcome the opportunity to work with any specialist who gives assistance to your child while enrolled in our preschool. Working with speech therapists, occupational therapists, social workers, psychologists and other resource teachers while enrolled in our preschool is a great help to your child, your family and our staff in making your child's preschool experience successful. If at any time the parents and/or preschool feel that your child's needs are different than what we can provide for, we would set up a meeting to discuss other options that would better serve your child. Our school uses the resources of Project Enlightenment and Preschool Services of Wake County to help us work with special needs and situations in our classrooms. They also offer free screenings/consultations in behavioral, physical, emotional and social development to parents who live in Wake County. If you do not live in Wake County, contact the Director or Assistant Director for more information on receiving support from your county's school system.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Communication**

The quickest way to reach the preschool is to call the main phone number, 919-453-0388. You may also email the Director, Regina Fisher, at [rfisher@hopelutheranwf.org](mailto:rfisher@hopelutheranwf.org), the Assistant Director, Sara Cutler, at [scutler@hopelutheranwf.org](mailto:scutler@hopelutheranwf.org) or the Administrative Assistant, Angela Baker, at [abaker@hopelutheranwf.org](mailto:abaker@hopelutheranwf.org).

Our website, [www.hopelutheranwf.org/preschool](http://www.hopelutheranwf.org/preschool), contains a lot of helpful information, including the school calendar, class options, and fees. Also on our website are all of our policies and procedures such as the Preschool Handbook, Lunch/Snack Procedures, Extended Day Procedures, and Carpool Procedures.

The Preschool sends text messages through our database software. This will be our primary way to send important updates from the preschool, including inclement weather delays or closings, information in case of a school wide emergency, and reminders of important events. We will use the cell phone numbers and carrier information provided on your child's registration form to send these text messages, so please be sure to update our information if you change your cell number or carrier.

Each class will publish a weekly newsletter with information about the class and what they are currently learning. The preschool administration will publish a monthly newsletter, which will give information about the school in general, upcoming events, important dates, etc. This newsletter will be emailed at the beginning of each month.

Primary communication between parents and staff will be done electronically, through text and email. Each classroom has access to the Procure App, which allows teachers to text, email, send photos and videos, etc.



to parents who have downloaded the app. All of our teachers also have emails that parents may use to contact teachers. Phone calls to the school are also welcome, however teachers may not be available during class time to talk on the phone. Informal conferences can be requested anytime by parents and/or teachers for larger conversations to discuss any concerns in the classroom.

## Conferences/Assessments

We will be using age appropriate developmental assessments for all classes to evaluate your child's progress in the areas of Spiritual growth, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Pre-Writing, Cognitive, Language, Self-Help and Personal/Social Skills. These will be used to assess developmental growth and readiness throughout their preschool experience. Conference dates will be scheduled in October for 4-year-old classes, and in mid-January for 2/3's, 3's, 3/4's, 4's and 4/5's. Children in the 2-year-old class will receive a written assessment, and conferences are scheduled if deemed necessary by the teacher. These dates are set aside each year for parents to review their child's assessment. Conferences other than the designated ones may be scheduled by contacting the teacher or the director. Should a child require special observation or help, the school will work with parents to obtain assistance. **We ask that you do not conference with staff during arrival, dismissal, or special event times.** Please refer to the school calendar and watch for information that will be sent home with your child for the exact conference dates. Conferences will be done through Zoom unless otherwise stated. In person conferences will be considered based on individual circumstances.

## Screenings

Free vision screenings are provided by Prevent Blindness during the school year for all students. Our staff may recommend speech and/or hearing screenings for your child. We feel that it is much better to treat small potential problem areas before your child goes off to Kindergarten. If your child cannot hear, speak or see properly they will have difficulty learning letters and their sounds and struggle to learn to read. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns about your child's speech, hearing or vision.

## Hours of Operation

Our day will start with carpool at 8:30am, and all classes will begin by 9:00am. Pick-up for 2's, 2/3's and 3's is at 12:00pm. For our 3/4's, 4's and 4/5's, lunch will remain part of their day and pick up is at 12:30pm. Early Care will be offered from 7:00am to 8:15am, and Extended Care will be offered from 12:00pm to 5:00pm. Carpool for all children runs 8:30AM – 9:00AM. Drop off and pick up for Early and Extended Care will be done in the front circle. Please see the Carpool Instructions below and on our website for more information.

The Director, Assistant Director and/or Administrative Assistant are available in the front office during Preschool hours. You can reach us by phone at 919-453-0388 or email at [preschool@hopelutheranwf.org](mailto:preschool@hopelutheranwf.org). If you need to talk with a teacher, please make arrangements for a conference at the convenience of both parent and teacher. Teachers and assistants have responsibilities at the beginning and end of each school day, and during school hours they are responsible for class supervision. Ask for a few minutes for a conference at another time. Your teacher will let you know of a possible time by the end of the day.

## Arrival and Departure

It is important that your child arrives at the appropriate time in order to have free play and transition time before their class routine begins. It is also important that your child is picked up on time. Children do not understand why their parent is not there when all the other children have been picked up. **Reminder: a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged after the first five minutes of being late to pick up your child.**

## Drop-Off & Pick-Up Carpool Procedures

We use a Carpool System to drop off and pick up children. We will send out color coded carpool tags and a detailed diagram with instructions near the beginning of the school year. This information is also available on our website. You will need to follow the traffic pattern when dropping off and picking up your child. Be sure to pass the information on to anyone else who may drop off or pick up your child from preschool.

Families with **GREEN** carpool tags will drop off in the circle drive at the front of the school, and families with **YELLOW** carpool tags will drop off in the back of the school. Please make sure you follow the carpool directions for your color tag. If you have siblings and have both Green and Yellow tags, you will drop off in the back of the school. Carpool will begin at 8:30am. Please **do not arrive for carpool prior to 8:15am**. Parents will come in the front entrance (Rogers Road), veer right, and follow the carpool signs. Please familiarize yourself with the Carpool Diagram and Instructions prior to the first day of school.

For everyone's safety the following carpool rules will need to be followed by everyone:

1. Cell phone use is not permitted. We will not load or unload your child if you are on the phone.
2. Passing and/or going around another car is not allowed. Once you enter the carpool lane you will have to follow the traffic pattern until you can safely exit the parking lot.
3. Please enter and exit from Rogers Road as this helps with traffic flow.
4. Traffic is single file, following the pattern through the parking lot until you reach the sign to split.

At drop off, parents are required to stay in their vehicles, and they must **hang their carpool tag from the rear view mirror or attach to the passenger side visor**, so their child's name and number is clearly visible to the outside. If you have two tags, please hang on one the mirror and one on the visor. A staff member will come to the passenger side window and go through a health check with the parent about the child (please see the Health and Safety section).

Circumstances in which a child may not stay at school: 1) If you answer yes to any of the questions regarding the health status of your family, 2) we take a temperature and it is 100 or higher, and/or 3) the child is exhibiting any signs of not feeling well (flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, chills, shivering, sweating, achiness, headache, not eating or drinking, or not engaging in play when they normally do). It will be discussed how long your child will need to be home before coming back to school. This will be dependent upon the reasons why they are not allowed to attend.

Once it is assessed that your child is well enough to attend, a staff member will open the car door and help your child exit the vehicle with any items that need to come into the school (backpack, sleep items, lunch, etc.). Your child will be escorted to a waiting area where one of their teachers will be waiting with a few other classmates. Children's hands will be sanitized at this time. Once we have a small group gathered for the

same class, their teacher will escort them into the preschool building to the classroom. Once children arrive in their classroom, they will put their items away and wash their hands.

Pick-up procedures will be similar to drop-off. Carpool for 2's, 2/3's and 3's will be at 12:00pm (**please do not arrive before 11:45am**). Carpool for 3/4's, 4's and 4/5's will begin at 12:30pm (**please do not arrive before 12:15pm**). Please follow the same carpool traffic patterns and have your carpool tag visible. Children will be brought out as vehicles enter the Drop Off/Pick Up Zone. Staff will walk your child to the vehicle, open the door for them, and help them into the car. Due to liability issues, staff are not allowed to buckle children into their car seats. For the safety of your child, please pull forward to the designated **Buckle-Up Zone** (per map) and properly buckle them into their car seat.

## Early Drop Off

Early Drop Off is from 7:00AM to 8:15AM and is available Monday through Friday. Register for as few or as many days as you need. Children will be taken to their preschool classes at the appropriate start time. If you arrive after 8:15AM you must go through the carpool line and wait until 8:30 to drop off your child.

## Extended Enrichment

Extended Enrichment Hours are available Monday through Friday from 12:00PM to 5:00PM. Register for as few or as many afternoons as you need. Extended Enrichment includes lunch, outdoor play, rest time, centers and special activities.

All children who stay for Extended Enrichment will need to bring a healthy lunch from home (see below for lunch information) and a crib sheet for rest time. A small blanket or other comfort item may also be brought in for rest time, but is not necessary. Please do not bring pillows. The crib sheet and any other rest time items **must fit inside a 2 gallon sized ziplock bag**, sealed and labeled with your child's name. Please do not use any other bags for these items. Due to the number of children who stay in the afternoon and space constraints, all items must be brought in one 2 gallon size ziplock bag. Due to licensing, the bags must be sealed, with no items hanging out of the top of the bag. These bags can be purchased at Walmart or Target, as well as other local retailers.

## Optional Programs When Available

At certain times, we may offer Lunch Bunch for 2's, 2/3's and 3's, or Stay and Play for all ages. We will let you know if these programs become available.

### Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch is an extension of your child's Preschool day, and is a time for the children to come together to eat and engage in play as time permits. Lunch Bunch is available for all 2's, 2/3's and 3's from 12:00 to 12:30 daily for an additional fee of \$5.00 per day. Sign-up sheets go home monthly.

### Stay & Play

Stay & Play is available for all age groups on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, twice a month. Children stay until 2:30 on Stay & Play days and enjoy extra playground time, story time, and centers for a fee of \$15 per child

per day. If your child's day ends at 12:00, you must also sign them up for Lunch Bunch on the days they do Stay & Play. Sign-up sheets go home monthly.

## Lunches

If your child will be eating lunch as part of their preschool day, they are responsible for bringing a lunch from home. Please send a healthy lunch with your child to school each day. **If your child's lunch includes items that require refrigeration, please place these items in a ziplock bag, clearly labeled with your child's name, date, and room number and place the bag in your child's backpack.** These items will be placed in the lunch bin at school and kept refrigerated until lunch time. Items that must be refrigerated include, but are not limited to, yogurt, cheese, fresh fruit, lunch meat, chicken nuggets, pizza, milk, etc. Please note that hot foods in thermoses will still have to be refrigerated, and we cannot heat up lunches. **All non-refrigerated items should be placed in your child's lunchbox.**

## Food Allergies

Due to the food allergies of some children, Hope Lutheran Preschool is a ***nut free environment***. **No nut products are allowed in the preschool.** Some examples are; peanut butter sandwiches, Reece's Cup candy, Ritz Bits with peanut butter, Nutella, almond butter or any other products containing nuts. The staff of Hope Lutheran Preschool is committed to a nut free environment, however some foods and/or candy contents are beyond our control. Hope Lutheran Preschool has an allergy policy and **if your child has food allergies please discuss them with your child's teacher.** If your child has an allergy plan, please go to the Preschool Office and pick up an allergy form to complete and return. All allergy forms must be completed and signed by your child's physician. Return completed forms, along with any listed medications, to the Assistant Director in the Preschool Office before the first day of Preschool. Please be sure all medication is in the original container, and if it is prescription medication, the label from the pharmacy must be on the container. If you have any questions about allergy forms or our policies regarding allergies, please contact our Assistant Director, Sara Cutler.

## Snacks

Children are required to bring a snack from home each day. If a child stays for Extended Care, they must bring two snacks each day. Snacks should be nut-free and non-refrigerated. Examples include Goldfish, Honey Maid Graham Crackers, squeezable fruit pouches, individual fruit cups, Cheerios, etc. Please do not bring grapes, berries, or cut fruit, as these items must be refrigerated. **Snacks should be individually wrapped or in small ziplock bags, and labeled with your child's name, date and room number.** If your child has two snacks, please label one "AM" and one "PM". Snacks should be placed in your child's backpack.

## Children's Personal Belongings

Occasionally a child may need to bring a special blanket or toy from home to help with the initial school adjustment. Children 3 and older will not be allowed to have pacifiers in the classroom. **Please talk to his or her teacher about appropriate things to "share"-- favorite books, pictures or nature items.** It is great to have items that enhance the theme being studied. We also welcome parent talents that can be shared. We follow the county guidelines of not allowing the children to bring any sort of weapons to school (**guns, knives, bow and arrows, missiles, swords, etc.**).

Proper dress attire is clothing that is neat and clean. We do lots of fun and messy activities; so please dress your child in clothes that you do not mind being messed up. The child should feel comfortable about joining in all activities and can handle going to the bathroom without too much help from the teachers. We ask that all children bring a change of clothes in case of accidents, paint or juice spills.

All newly enrolled children will receive a new backpack and you will see a one-time charge on your account for \$5 to help cover the cost of these backpacks. These backpacks are sized small for children and will fit into our cubbies. A change of clothes and extra diapers/pull-ups are the only items that should be put in your child's backpack. Due to their smaller size, the backpacks are not suitable for holding lunch boxes or extended care items. These should be carried in separately. These backpacks will be used by your child as long as they are at Hope Lutheran Preschool. If a replacement backpack is needed please contact the front office and a \$5 charge will be added to your account. All personal items that come to school (change of clothes, jackets, etc.) **need to be labeled with your child's name.**

## **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are special for children. Simple refreshments may be served with the class (this is not the time for your child's party). Let your child's teacher know if you wish to bring in special treats for birthdays. *No party favors, balloons or paper products, please.* Birthday treats must be prepackaged and store bought, made in a nut-free facility. Summer birthdays may be celebrated anytime--a good time would be their half birthday. **We thank you in advance for being kind, compassionate and sensitive when it comes to passing out birthday party invitations. If you are not able to invite the entire class, please mail your invitations.** This is most important.

## **Class Parties**

Parents are asked to help out with class parties during the year, mostly by providing food, paper products and activities. Parents may or may not be allowed to attend the parties in person, depending on current licensing rules. Your teacher will let you know what is currently allowed. Parties are usually during the holidays of Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day and Easter. No classes will have a graduation ceremony. Our staff feels that preschool is a wonderful experience for all children; however, it is not a requirement in order to move ahead in their learning.

## **Toilet Training**

We prefer that your child be potty trained (manipulating clothing, wiping, flushing) prior to enrollment in the 3-year-old class. We will be working on potty training with 2 and 3 year olds. **Teachers of children 3 years of age or older will not have a diaper changing time in their daily schedule.** Therefore, it is important for your child to be potty trained at age 3. Please bring in an adequate number of diapers for your child. Each item must be labeled with your child's name and kept each day in their backpack in his/her cubbie. We encourage parents to take their children to the restroom prior to the beginning of school. **If toileting problems arise for children over age 3, parents may be called to either come and change their child or pick them up.** Please see your child's teacher for more detailed guidelines.

## Outdoor Play

Please dress your child comfortably for play and appropriately for the weather. All classes go outside everyday unless it is raining, or below 32 degrees or above 99 degrees. Children need fresh air and exercise especially during the winter season to stay healthy. **Please send hats, coats, gloves or mittens.** On warmer days send a light jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt that can be layered if the afternoon temperature drops or increases. All items should be labeled with your child's name and left in your child's cubbie.

## Inclement Weather Policy

**We do not follow Wake County's (or any other county's) school schedule for opening/closing or delays.**



If we experience inclement weather, we will let you know about closings or delays through text messages sent from our Procare database software. If you are not currently receiving text messages from us, please be sure to call us with your updated cell phone and cell carrier information. Text messages are the most effective way for us to communicate with you, and we will not be posting closings or delays in any other formats.

We **will not** be posting to any of the television stations, so please be sure to check your text messages to see if we are closed or delayed. Please use your best judgment when bringing or picking up your child when weather is hazardous in your area. Always remember safety first.

## Safety and Health Policies

### Safety Drills

Fire drills are conducted monthly, and Lockdown and Shelter-in-place drills are practiced quarterly at preschool, in accordance with North Carolina Licensing requirements. During these drills your children are taught where their safe location is, how to get there quickly and appropriate behavior while remaining in the designated location.

### Safe Arrival and Departure

Children will be dropped off and picked up in carpool daily. Carpool tags need to be hung from the rearview mirror, visible to staff. To ensure the safety of all children, Hope Lutheran Preschool requires that you sign your child in and out each day on our ProCare app. Teachers will check that children are signed in as well as document attendance daily on paper. If there are any changes to who will be picking up, please inform the school via email or phone. Please be sure whoever is picking up your child has the appropriate carpool tag. We will not release your child to anyone who does not have a tag. Please list the names of those who may pick up your child, on the emergency section of the registration form. A carpool diagram and instructions are available on our website.

### Front and Back Entrances

**For the safety of the children and staff all entrances to the preschool will remain locked, except during carpool drop off and pick up.**

## Health and Safety Measures throughout the day

Daily Health Screening for staff and children will include questions and a health check.

Health Questions (please review at home prior to coming):

1. Does anyone in your family have:  
**a fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, new loss of taste or smell, or (vomiting or diarrhea, children only)?**
2. Has anyone in your family been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 or has any health provider advised you to quarantine?
3. Since your child was here last, has anyone in your family been diagnosed with COVID-19?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, please keep your child at home.

Health check:

1. Temperature will be checked before the child exits the car.
2. Visual inspection for signs of infection such as flushed cheeks, fatigue, or extreme irritability.

Administrative staff and teachers will be conducting formal and informal health checks throughout the day. If your child becomes ill or shows signs of not feeling well during the day, you will be contacted by the administration of the preschool. You will be notified of what has been observed and whether your child is being sent home. If your child is being sent home, administrative staff will retrieve your child with their belongings and they will be waiting in the office until picked up. An illness report will be completed with information about why they are being sent home and when they may return. An administrator will sign this as well as the parent upon pick-up. This form is in duplicate so a copy will be given immediately to the parent and a copy will be at school. In our current situation, children may need to be out longer for things like fever to ensure that they and their families know they are healthy enough to return to school. We may ask you to have a doctor's note to return to school to ensure the safety of all children and staff. The health of staff will be monitored as well and subs will be called if needed.

Masks are required for staff if they are unable to social distance themselves from everyone. Staff are not required to wear masks for circle time or when addressing the whole group with instructions, as they are at least 6 feet from the children. All children 5 years old and up are required by the state to wear a mask while at school. 3 and 4 year olds are encouraged but not required to use a mask. If your child has never used a mask, please begin to work with your child on this so their comfort level is increased. If your child is 5 years old, please send an extra mask to school with them in their backpack.

## Staff Health and Facility Cleanliness

Every effort is made to promote the physical well-being of all persons involved in our program. A health form provided by the program is required for each child in the program. All staff persons are required to have a health assessment and TB test. Every child and staff member that enters the building has their temperature

checked and hands sanitized. Hands are washed throughout the day and masks are worn by all staff members as required by licensing.

All classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected daily. Throughout the school day tables are cleaned before and after eating snack or lunch. Staff and children's hands are washed upon arrival, after toileting, before/after eating, before/after playing in water tables, and after playing on the playground. Toys are sanitized daily in all classrooms. We have a cleaning company that comes each night to thoroughly clean our facility.

## **No Smoking Policy**

By law, children are required to be in a smoke free and tobacco free environment. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco is not allowed on our campus. This includes all buildings, grounds and parking lots.

## **Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

Any parent or staff member who suspects a child has been abused or neglected must notify the proper authorities. This requirement applies regardless of where the abuse may have occurred, be it at the child's home or the child care center.

NC law requires any person who has reason to suspect child abuse or neglect to report the case to the local county Department of Social Services (DSS). In addition, the Division of Child Development must be called at (919) 662-4499 or (800) 859-0829 to make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a child care program.

Reports may be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith.

## **Sick Child Policy**

**Please do not bring your children to school if they are sick. If a child exhibits such symptoms as fever, pink eyes, earache, headache, flu, stomach virus, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours, please keep him or her at home. This is for your child's welfare as well as that of other class members. Children should be free of fever and other symptoms for at least 24 hours (possibly longer depending on symptoms) before returning to school.**

If a child becomes sick while at school a parent will be contacted to take the child home. **Parents are expected to pick up their child ASAP.** If a parent cannot be reached the emergency contact will be called. If neither parent nor emergency contact person can be reached and the director feels it necessary, the child will be removed from the room and cared for in the director's office area until either a parent or emergency contact person is available to pick up the child. An Illness Report will be filled out by Preschool Administration. This report will inform you as to why your child is being sent home and when they may return.

For the child's welfare as well as that of other class members and staff, please notify the director or your child's teacher if your child becomes sick or develops a communicable disease. The usual childhood diseases, as well as meningitis, scarlet fever, infectious hepatitis and head lice must be reported so that



necessary precautions can be taken immediately. If your child is taking any medication during the year, please inform the teacher. Behaviors and toilet needs often change as a result of medications.

Slight scrapes, bumps or bruises will be given first aid (washed with soap and water and a band aid or ice pack) by the school staff member present. If the child's injury requires further medical attention, the teacher and/or director will contact the child's parent. An Incident Report will be completed and must be signed by both the staff person treating the child and the child's parent. The report will be kept in the child's file and a copy given to the parent.

If a child requires medicine to be administered during the preschool day, a written permission form needs to be signed by the parent. All medications given to children by Hope Lutheran Preschool Staff must be in the original container.

### **Your Child's Behavior Changes**

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide the preschool with any family changes and illnesses that may change your child's behavior. Ex: domestic issues, family illnesses, your child being on medication, etc.

## **Playground Safety Rules**

When children are on the Playground during preschool, they are expected to follow the playground rules. They are posted on the fences around the playground as follows:

Playground Rules:

This playground is designed for younger children ONLY. **No Children over age 9** may use the playground equipment. Please provide direct supervision at all times.

1. No climbing on or over the fence.
2. Please keep gates closed.
3. Feet first/bottoms down on the slide.
4. No climbing up the slide/no going down the climbing wall.
5. Children must be seated for swinging, no jumping out of swings.
6. Only adults may push the children on the swings.
7. Shoes must be worn while on the playground.
8. No digging in the mulch.
9. Keep sand in the sandbox.
10. Please clean up all litter.

Keep in mind that we follow these "Ten Commandments" for the safety of the children! We hope you find these rules helpful and that you enjoy the playground.

## Helping Your Child Adjust to Preschool

- Do your best to be on time. Rushing means a bad day for most little ones. Please find an appropriate bedtime so that your child will awaken in time to eat breakfast and dress at a leisurely pace.
- Each child's name should be on all clothing or items which might be confused with another child's things. (Coats, sweaters, backpacks, etc.)
- TUITION PAYMENTS MUST NOT BE SENT TO SCHOOL WITH THE CHILDREN. Tuition payments should be dropped off at the preschool door, mailed to the preschool or given to a staff member at carpool. Do not put tuition payments in your child's backpack.
- Please read all newsletters and notes sent home with your child. Important information about the child and his/her activities is found in all communications.
- Please do not send toys from home. They get broken or lost and are hard to find with the toys available at school.

## Non-Discriminatory Policy

Hope Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Our school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Preference in admissions is given to members of Hope Lutheran Church.

*"Now let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality..." - 2 Chronicles 19:7*

## **Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma**

### **Belief Statement**

We, Hope Lutheran Preschool, believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

### **Background**

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to North Carolina Child Care Rule (child care centers, IOA NCAC 09 .0608, family child care homes, IOA NCAC 09 .1726), each child care facility licensed to care for children up to five years of age shall develop and adopt a policy to prevent SBS/AHT.

### **Procedure/Practice**

Recognizing:

- Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

Responding to:

- If SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will:
  - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director.
  - Call the parents/guardians.
  - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

Reporting:

- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing [webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov).
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the county Department of Social Services. Phone number: 919-250-3947.

### **Prevention strategies to assist staff\* in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child**

Staff first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
- Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy.

- Take the child for a ride in a stroller.
- Turn on music or white noise.

In addition, the facility:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children.
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

### **Prohibited behaviors**

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):

- shaking or jerking a child
- tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat
- pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

### **Strategies to assist staff members understand how to care for infants Staff reviews and discusses**

- The five goals and developmental indicators in the 2013 North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development, [ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF forms/ NC Foundations.pdf](http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF/forms/NC_Foundations.pdf)
- How to Care for Infants and Toddlers in Groups, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, [www.zerotothree.org/resourcest77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups](http://www.zerotothree.org/resourcest77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups)
- Including Relationship-Based Care Practices in Infant-Toddler Care: Implications for Practice and Policy, the Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers, pages 7-9, [www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/nitr\\_inquire\\_may\\_2016\\_070616\\_b508compliant.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/nitr_inquire_may_2016_070616_b508compliant.pdf)

### **Strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to five years of age**

All staff take training on SBS/AHT within first two weeks of employment. Training includes recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment as well as the brain development of children up to five years of age. Staff review and discuss:

- Brain Development from Birth video, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, [www.zerotothree.org/resources/1%-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1%-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth)
- The Science of Early Childhood Development, Center on the Developing Child, [developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eed/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eed/)

### **Resources**

Parent web resources

- The American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://dontshake.org/family-resources>

- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info/>

#### Facility web resources

- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma, <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm?StdNum=3.4.4.3&=4>
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kb/trprev/Preventing SBS 508-a.pdf>

Early Development & Well Being, Zero to Three, [www.zerotothree.org/early-development](http://www.zerotothree.org/early-development)

#### References

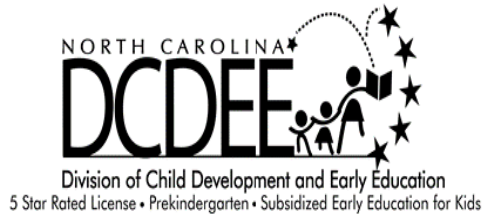
1. The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)
2. NC DCDEE, [ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb\\_ccrulespublic.asp](http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ccrulespublic.asp)
3. Shaken baby syndrome, the Mayo Clinic, [www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-baby-syndrome/basics/symptoms/con-20034461](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-baby-syndrome/basics/symptoms/con-20034461)
4. Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, American Red Cross, [www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA\\_CustomProductCatalog/m4240175 Pediatric ready reference.pdf](http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4240175_Pediatric_ready_reference.pdf)
5. Calming Techniques for a Crying Baby, Children's Hospital Colorado, [www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/calm-a-crying-baby/calming-techniques](http://www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/calm-a-crying-baby/calming-techniques)
6. Caring for Our Children, Standard 1.7.0.5: Stress <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/1.7.0.5>

#### Application

This policy applies to children up to five years of age and their families, operators, early educators, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers.

6/30/17

Effective Date



**Division of Child Development and Early Education**  
**North Carolina Department of Health and Human**  
**Services**  
**820 South Boylan Avenue**  
**Raleigh, NC 27699**  
**Revised February 2018**

## **Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules**

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.

### What is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis - at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The purpose of regulation is to protect the well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

### Star Rated Licenses

Centers and homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program.

### Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, including their own preschool children, and can include three additional school-age children. The provider's own school-age children are not counted. Family child care homes will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

- Home providers must be 21 years old with at least a high school education or its equivalent, and mentally and emotionally capable of caring for children.
- He or she must undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All household members over age 15 must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All family child care home providers must have current certification in CPR and first aid, complete an ITS-SIDS training initially (if caring for infants 0 –12 months) and every three years, the Emergency

Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. They also must complete a minimum number of health and safety training and ongoing training hours annually.

All family child care homes must meet basic health and safety standards. Providers must maintain verification of children's immunization and health status. They must provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities, as well as, nutritious meals and snacks for the children in care. All children must participate in outdoor play at least one hour per daily, if weather conditions permit.

### Child Care Centers

Licensing as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Recreational programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licensed centers must meet requirements in the following areas.

### Staff

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21, and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours, including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. All staff who work directly with children must have CPR and First Aid training, and at least one person who completed the training must be present at all times when children are in care. One staff must complete the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. All staff must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.

### Staff/Child Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below and must be posted in each classroom.

Age	Teacher: Child Ratio	Max Group Size
0-12 mths	1:5	10
12-24 mths	1:6	12
2 years old	1:10	20
3 years old	1:15	25
4 years old	1:20	25
School-age	1:25	25

Centers located in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

### Space and Equipment

Centers must have at least 25 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child for ½ the total licensed capacity outdoors, if licensed over 29 children. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

### Curriculum

Four and five star programs must use an approved curriculum in their four-year-old classrooms. Other programs may choose to use an approved curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Activity plans and schedule must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore, use materials on their own and have choices.

### Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. For Centers and FCCHs, meals and snacks must be nutritious and meet the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed centers to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. They must have space and time provided for rest.

The following requirements apply to both centers and homes:

### Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratio must be maintained.

### Program Records

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's attendance, immunizations, and emergency phone numbers. A record of monthly fire drills and quarterly shelter-in-place or lockdown drills practiced must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care.

### Discipline and Behavior Management

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in the discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all centers and family child care homes. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development and Early Education that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

### Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.



- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The laws and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your community. For more information visit the Resources in Child Care website at: [www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov) . For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829 (In State Only), or visit our homepage at: [ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://ncchildcare.nc.gov)

### Reviewing Files

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every licensed center or family child care home. These files can be:

- viewed during business hours (8 a.m. -5 p.m.);
- requested via the Division's web site at [www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov); or
- requested by contacting the Division by telephone at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.

### How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development and Early Education to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be issued an administrative action, fined and may have their licenses suspended or revoked. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.

### Child Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment

Every citizen has a responsibility to report suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. This occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. It may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. It also occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, discipline, or when a child is abandoned. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child maltreatment at a child care facility to report the situation to the Intake Unit at Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any maltreatment complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect in a family to report the case to the county department of social services.

## Off Premise Activity Authorization

Off premise activities refer to any activity which takes place away from a licensed and approved space. License and approved space includes primary space, outdoor space, single use rooms, or other administrative areas that have been approved for use.

I give my permission to Hope Lutheran Preschool for my child to participate in off premise activities, including:

- Going to the Church Sanctuary for Chapel and other activities
- Going to the Church Building for Music Class
- Going to the Preschool and/or Church parking lots for Fire Drills
- Going to the CC/FH and /or Youth Center for special activities
- Going on Nature Walks around the Church Property
- Going to the field beside the upper parking lot for organized outside activities

**I understand that my child will not be leaving the Preschool/Church property at any time.**

## Nutrition Opt Out Form

Child Care Rules .0901(d) and .1706(c) state:

When children bring their own food for meals and snacks to the program, if the food does not meet the nutritional requirements specified in Paragraph (a) of this Rule, the operator must provide the additional food necessary to meet those requirements unless the child's parent or guardian opts out of the supplemental food provided by the operator as set forth in G.S. 110-91(2) h.1. A statement acknowledging the parental decision to opt out of the supplemental food provided by the operator signed by the child's parent or guardian shall be on file at the facility. Opting out means that the operator will not provide any food or drink so long as the child's parent or guardian provides all meals, snacks, and drinks scheduled to be served at the program's designated times. If the child's parent or guardian has opted out but does not provide all food and drink for the child, the program shall provide supplemental food and drink as if the child's parent or guardian had not opted out of the supplemental food program.

I plan to provide all meals, snacks and drinks for my child and do not want his/her meals, snacks or drinks supplemented to meet the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care Programs from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which are based on the recommended nutrient intake judged by the National Research Council to be adequate for maintaining good nutrition.

Since I opted out, if I do not provide all the meals, snacks or drinks for my child, I understand that the program will provide supplemental food and drink.

Thank you for reading through the Hope Lutheran Preschool Handbook. Please click the link below for the Parent Signature Page. We will need this page on file before your child can start the program.

[Hope Lutheran Preschool Signature Page](#)