

ST. LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



PARENT HANDBOOK

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Dear St. Luke Early Childhood Center Families,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new school year at St. Luke Early Childhood Center. We hope this handbook will be useful in answering some of the questions you may have concerning our center. Your involvement is very important to us and we welcome your ideas, concerns, and continued support.

Please read both the Parent Handbook and Volunteer Handbook we have prepared for you and sign the Statement of Acceptance form, which assures us that you have read both documents. We look forward to working with you and your child throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Kathie Mitchell
Director, St Luke Early Childhood Center

Fr. Paul Kochu
Pastor, St. Luke Catholic Church

PARENT HANDBOOK FOR ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Policy No.
Welcome	
Mission Statement	1
Program Philosophy	2
Licensing Information	3
Available Programs	4
Enrollment	5
Tuition	6
Confidentiality	7
Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect	8
Parent Code of Conduct	9
Parents Right to Immediate Access	10
Arrival/Dismissal Procedures	11
Pick Up Procedures	12
Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information	13
Curriculum	14
Behavioral Expectations and Discipline	15
Dismissal/Expulsion Policy	16
Withdraw	17
Toys from Home	18
Dress Code	19
Parent Participation/Volunteering	20
Health, Safety, and Nutrition	21
Staff Employment by Clients	22
Agency Contact Information	23

The mission of St. Luke Early Childhood Center is to provide the foundation for a lifelong love of learning by nurturing the whole child through exploration and creativity in a Catholic spirit.

GOALS OF ST. LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

1. To provide a Catholic early childhood environment where spiritual values are nurtured: Spiritual values are nurtured through daily prayers, bible stories and church visits. In addition, pictures of Jesus, the Holy Family, and crosses are displayed in the classrooms.
2. To provide a physical environment that is safe, clean, healthy, and child-oriented: A safe, clean, healthy and child-oriented physical environment is provided through daily cleaning and disinfecting of the classrooms and manipulatives. The children and staff wash their hands upon arriving at school, as well as after using the rest room, before eating, after touching their nose or mouth, and after playing with play dough. The classrooms are well-organized with age appropriate materials and the manipulatives and playground equipment are well-maintained. The doors to the school are locked and admittance to the school is through a buzz-in system. There is also video surveillance of the school premises.
3. To encourage the unique qualities of each child and to be sensitive to his/her individual needs: Through the use of in-service training the teachers are encouraged to be responsive to each child's needs through encouragement and recognition of their accomplishments. Assessments are used to allow teachers to design individual goals for each child. Specific skills are developed through small group and one-on-one activities and children's different learning styles are recognized. The children's work is displayed in the classroom as well as photos of the children and their families.
4. To cultivate in each child a healthy respect for self and others: Our Peacemakers Program, Safe Environment Program and Character Development Programs as well as the teacher's modeling of appropriate behavior and interactions are used to cultivate the children's respect for themselves and others.
5. To maintain a positive classroom atmosphere which encourages successful experiences and a love of learning: A positive classroom atmosphere is maintained through positive reinforcement and encouragement. Daily schedules and routines are maintained and class rules, which are child developed, are posted and reinforced.
6. To assist the children in exploring the world around them as they broaden their sense of discovery and develop their scope of learning: activities are planned to promote problem solving skills. Activities are designed to allow children to investigate, ask questions, and predict outcomes.
7. To create a caring and nurturing atmosphere that fosters creativity and a positive self-image: *Fostering creativity and a positive self-image is implemented in the classroom by allowing children to explore a variety of art materials and encourage individual creativity. The children's artwork is displayed in the classroom. Additionally, the children are encouraged to be creative within all of the centers, and to work in buddy teams to problem solve, thus building their self esteem.*
8. To develop the child's understanding of receptive and expressive language: *Developing the children's receptive and expressive language is done through asking them open-ended questions and having a language-rich classroom. Teachers are responsive to children's questions and encourage language skills to express feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and problem solve.*

9. *To foster the children's enjoyment of children's literature and music, books are read each day and music and movement activities are included in the daily activities. Each classroom has a library center which includes fiction and non-fiction books and the children utilize musical instruments. We have a theater company visit our school to perform for the children.*
10. *To provide a multitude of hands-on activities designed to encourage the child's understanding of mathematical and scientific concepts: Many hands-on Math and Science activities are provided to encourage the understanding of math and science concepts. Math activities include manipulatives to encourage problem solving and reasoning skills, as well as counting, measuring and comparing. Our Science Program includes a monthly Science Lab, which explores scientific exploration and investigation and the children actively participate in the care and growth of our School Garden.*
11. *To provide hands-on opportunities with current technology and computers: The children are provided hands-on technology opportunities through the use of classroom computers and iPads.*
12. *To develop physical coordination and skills: Physical coordination and skills are developed through daily playground activities. Climbing, bike riding and sand play are available each day. Additionally, each class plays a large motor skill building game at the beginning of their playground time to encourage large motor development. In the event of inclement weather, gross motor activities are implemented in the classroom or children's library or Assembly Room. Fine motor skills and coordination are developed through manipulating scissors, using writing tools, and utilizing small motor manipulatives, such as stringing beads and building with Legos.*
13. *To cultivate in each child compassion, tolerance, and acceptance of other people, in an effort to eliminate prejudice and discrimination of all kinds: These skills are developed through our Religion Curriculum, Peacemakers, Safe Environment, and Character Development Programs as well as books, posters, puzzles and dolls from various cultures and physical abilities.*
14. *To broaden each child's knowledge of his/her community and the many diverse cultures and peoples within it: We are blessed to be in a culturally diverse area and we invite families in our school to share their heritage with the children. Additionally, we also invite local community helpers, such as the fire department, the sheriff's office and our local library to visit with us throughout the year. We also encourage engagement in the community through our community outreach programs, providing necessary donations for charities within our community.*
15. *To support teachers with training, resources and the freedom to create a unique learning experience for children: Teacher training is supported through many in-service opportunities. A Teacher Resource Area is also available, which includes resource books and manipulatives for the teachers and their classrooms. St. Luke ECC also financially supports teacher continuing education in partnership with the TEACH Program.*
16. *To create an atmosphere of mutual respect between parents and teachers and support frequent communication to ensure a quality program for each child: This atmosphere of mutual respect between parents and teachers is created through Parent Orientations, Parent Conferences, weekly class newsletters, monthly school newsletters, and parent meetings. Additionally, a Communication Folder is sent home daily to each family, to include information pertaining to their child.*

POLICY: LICENSING INFORMATION

POLICY NO. 3

St. Luke Early Childhood Center is licensed through Pinellas County License Board. The current license is posted in the Early Childhood office for parents to review.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center is APPLE Accredited.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: AVAILABLE PROGRAMS -

POLICY NO. 4

EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSES-

The following early childhood programs are offered at St. Luke ECC.

EC 2 classes	Tuesday/Thursday	9-12
	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	9-12
	Monday – Friday	9-12
EC 3 classes	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	9-12
	Monday – Friday	9-12
EC4 classes	Monday - Friday	9-12
	Monday - Friday	9-2

ABC CLUB-

Our ABC program or After and Before Care is available Monday thru Friday. Before Care is available from 7:30am-9am M-F; children will then transition with a teacher to their regular classroom. Our After-Care program is from 12:00 – 6:00 M-F and is available for all of our students. You may choose to have your child attend our aftercare program on a day when your child is not scheduled to attend our morning program (they may arrive at noon.) Rest time will be included. **FAMILIES MUST NOTIFY THE OFFICE PRIOR TO THE DAY NEEDED.** (If we are full, other arrangements will need to be made.) Information and prices are available in the center office. Parents must pick up the children promptly at or before 6:00. A \$15 late fee will be assessed after 6:00 and an additional \$5 per 5 minutes after that. Families must be current on their tuition in order to attend ABC Club.

LUNCH BUNCH

We offer a two-hour extended care program (Lunch Bunch) from 12:00-2:00, Monday through Friday. You may choose to have your child attend Lunch Bunch either on his/her regularly scheduled day or on a day when your child is not scheduled to attend our morning program (they may arrive at noon.) **FAMILIES MUST NOTIFY THE OFFICE PRIOR TO THE DAY NEEDED.** If we are full, other arrangements will need to be made). Under no circumstances should you send your child to Lunch Bunch unless you have signed up in the office ahead of time. If your child is sick and cannot attend, please notify us as soon as possible. Families must be current on their tuition in order to attend Lunch Bunch.

On the day of Lunch Bunch, your child will need to bring a labeled lunch box. Please see our nutrition statement for appropriate lunch ideas. Lunches will not be refrigerated so please put an ice pack in their lunch box. Lunch Bunch is a multi-age-level program. We strive, when possible, to provide activities during LB that support your child’s learning.

KID'S MORNING OUT

Kid's Morning Out is a drop-in program for children 15 months-3years and will be held on Monday- Wednesday-Friday from 9:15-12:00 in the Bresee Room. Space in KMO is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call the ECC office for more information.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: ENROLLMENT

POLICY NO. 5

Enrollment at St. Luke Early Childhood Center is open to children from two to five years old. They must be two, three, and four, on or before September 1st of the school year for which they are registering. Registration for the upcoming year will begin in January. Registration dates and procedures will be published in the Church bulletin. Currently enrolled students will receive registration information through school communications. A non-refundable application fee will be due when you submit your application. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, disability, marital or veteran status.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in St. Luke Early Childhood Center by completing the Enrollment Application and paying the \$130.00 Application Fee. The Application Fee is NON-REFUNDABLE. Once your application has been approved you will receive a complete Enrollment Packet, which must be completed and returned by July 1st. Please note, licensing requires each line to be completed, marking N/A if not applicable.

The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment at St. Luke Early Childhood Center is contingent upon the parent's, emergency contact person's and child's adherence to the policies and procedures of St. Luke Early Childhood Center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify St. Luke Early Childhood Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS-

St. Luke ECC includes children with special needs and makes accommodations as required by the American Disabilities Act. All children are on a 90-day probationary period pending evaluation of the child's needs. St. Luke Early Childhood Center attempts to meet the educational needs of all children; however, we may not be equipped to care for children with certain special needs; therefore, any such care is conditional upon the consent of the center administrator. Parents of children with special needs are required to be forthcoming and share all educational evaluation information, disabling conditions, prior specialized placements/identification, and familial issues, which may require special educational programming. In all cases, the child must be

able to participate and substantially benefit from our program without risk to himself/herself or to the other children. We make every attempt to work with children on an individual basis and it is important for us to know their strengths and weaknesses. If there is anything special we need to know about your child (i.e. hearing or speech difficulties, changes in family structure, history of any behavioral problems), please let your child's teacher know before school starts so he or she can meet with you. The more we know about your child, the better we will be able to meet his/her needs.

PARENT NIGHT AND STUDENT OPEN HOUSE-

As research shows, there is a strong link between family involvement and a child's educational success. In an effort to develop a strong home/school connection we have a parent meeting at the beginning of each school year. During this meeting we will share our school philosophy, curriculum goals, parent group information, safety protocols, as well as give you an opportunity to meet your child's teacher. This teacher/parent partnership is crucial for scaffolding and reinforcing your child's development.

We also look forward to our Student Open House. Open House is a great way to start your child's school year because it gives them the opportunity to meet their teachers, classmates, and piques their interest in our learning centers while you are with them. This interaction supports their transition on the first day of school.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center

POLICY: TUITION

POLICY NO. 6

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in St. Luke Early Childhood Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

TUITION

Tuition is computed on a yearly basis. Tuition payment options are annually, quarterly, or in 10 equal monthly installments. If paid monthly, all payments are due on the 1st day of each month. Payment # 1 of 10 is due July 1st. A payment book will be given to you to help facilitate prompt payment. A late charge of \$25.00 will be added if the tuition is not received by the 5th day of the month. Checks should be made out to ST. LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER. Parents should bring payments of any kind directly to the center office or mail them in. Please do not send any money or forms in with your child. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for any returned checks. If payment is not received by the last day of the month that the payment is due, your child/children will be dismissed from our program. **PLEASE NOTE NO CASH PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR TUITION OR AFTER CARE.** Check, money order, or bill pay may be used to pay tuition.

Tuition DOES NOT include fees for extra curricular activities such as Lunch Bunch, ABC, KMO, dance, etc.

LB and ABC payments that are not paid by the 5th of the following month will be charged a \$25 late fee and your child will not be able to attend that program until paid in full.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God.

Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at St. Luke Early Childhood Center; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Center Director immediately.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: CONFIDENTIALITY

POLICY NO. 7

Within St. Luke Early Childhood Center, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of St. Luke Early Childhood Center who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as St. Luke Early Childhood Center strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with St. Luke Early Childhood Center.

Outside of St. Luke Early Childhood Center, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of St. Luke Early Childhood Center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of St. Luke early Childhood Center are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media is a very popular way of sharing information and pictures with family and friends. However, by its very nature we cannot totally control whom has access to things posted within this format. For this reason, it is very important that you, if you choose, **post only pictures of your own child**. No other students may be shown in the background or with your child on Facebook, or other social media.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED
CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT-

POLICY NO. 8

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of St. Luke Early Childhood Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of St. Luke Early Childhood Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at St. Luke Early Childhood Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of St. Luke Early Childhood Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Continually not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child. Refer to the Nutrition link on our website and our policy on Health, Safety, and Nutrition.
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- ◆ Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

"The school will reasonably cooperate with regard to any investigation by the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") pertaining to allegations of child abuse. Since the school is on private property, DCF will be precluded from reasonable access to students at school unless consent of a parent or guardian is obtained. Absent such consent, the school will cooperate in allowing DCF to have access to students if DCF obtains, according to law, an appropriate court order or other legal authority, such as the presence of a police officer or deputy sheriff."

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

POLICY NO. 9

Please see the complete Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Parent Code of Contact found as a separate link on this web page.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center always requires the parents of enrolled children, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of St. Luke Early Childhood Center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of St. Luke Early Childhood Center but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment.

SWEARING/CURSING:

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH St. Luke Early Childhood Center:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society St. Luke Early Childhood Center cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT St. Luke Early Childhood Center

St Luke Early Childhood Center does not support corporal punishment of children. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may

physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

SMOKING:

For the health of all St. Luke Early Childhood Center employees, children and associates, smoking and the use of e-cigarettes are prohibited anywhere on center property. Parents are prohibited from smoking and using e-cigarettes in the buildings and on the grounds.

VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY:

Parents are required to follow safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of St. Luke Early Childhood Center. Please be particularly mindful of St. Luke Early Childhood entrance procedures. We welcome all parents on to our campus unless we are in observance of Government social distancing guidelines. However, to ensure the safety and security of all children we insist that all visitors buzz in at the main entrance to the Ministries Building and sign in at the office to receive a visitor's pass. **Please do not hold the door for anyone.** Anyone seen on campus without a visitor's badge will be asked to report immediately to the office or leave the campus. Teachers have been instructed that any parents visiting classrooms without visitor's badges are to be sent immediately to the office. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Director.

CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, OTHER PARENTS OR ASSOCIATES OF St. Luke Early Childhood Center:

While it is understood that parents may not always agree with the employees of St. Luke Early Childhood Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate and are strictly prohibited.

VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:

St. Luke Early Childhood Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with St. Luke Early Childhood Center. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

POLICY NO. 10

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Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, to their child whenever they are in care at St. Luke Early Childhood Center, as provided by law. If we are under social distancing guidelines, we may need to limit your access to their classroom, but we are happy to bring your child to you.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) St. Luke Early Childhood Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with St Luke Early Childhood Center, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. St. Luke Early Childhood Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, St. Luke Early Childhood Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. St. Luke Early Childhood Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

POLICY NO. 11

Children will be signed-in at time of arrival and signed-out at time of dismissal by their teachers. Additionally, as the children transition from each program, IE Lunch Bunch, their classroom teachers will sign them out and the Lunch Bunch Teachers will sign them in.

Please arrive promptly at 9am. The following procedures have been established for arrival and dismissal. It is imperative that ALL parents read and follow the policies outlined below:

We ask **all** parents to use carline for drop off and pick up. The car line forms on the northeast side of the church as indicated on the map included in the Communication Folder. Do not park on the east side of the church and walk across car line to get your child/grandchild; children will not be released in this manner. If it is raining, please pull your car up to the overhang on the east side of the church (the teachers will be there to direct you).

Parents are to remain in their cars and the teachers will help the children in and out of the cars **on the side of the car closest to the sidewalk**. The carline will be used for **ALL** classes, Two's, Three's, and Four's. The teachers will be there to bring the children into the classrooms from 8:55 – 9:10. Please be prompt when dropping off your child, this sets the pace for their morning. After 9:10, you will need to check in at the ECC office in the Ministries Building. If your child is having difficulty leaving you, please allow the teacher to help with separation, as prolonged good-byes make it difficult for everyone. The teacher will make sure your child feels comfortable. Children will be dismissed in the same manner at 12:00 and 2:00.

The carline must keep moving for a safe and timely system. During carline, teachers will not be available to meet with individual parents. **Please keep your child in his/her car seat until you come to a complete stop and your child is ready to exit the car, then you may unfasten them from their car seat. Please note ECC teachers are not allowed to fasten your child into their car seat; it is the parent or guardian's responsibility.**

A \$15 late fee will be charged for any child being picked up late as follows:

- 12:10 for the morning students
- 2:10 for Lunch Bunch and 2pm students
- After 6:00 for the aftercare students

An extra \$5 per 5 minutes for being late after the above times will also be charged.

The teachers will provide you with an identification card with your child's name to be displayed in your car window for pick up. A child will not be released to anyone other than those you have previously authorized through the ECC Office, in writing. Additionally, St. Luke ECC will not release a child to an

individual who appears intoxicated or otherwise impaired.

For your child's sake, it is very important that you arrive on time and pick up your child promptly. Children are sometimes very uneasy when they arrive late, or their parent is late picking them up. If an emergency does arise, and you will be late picking up your child, PLEASE call the office to let us know.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent must present the special instructions in the communication folder. These special instructions include but are not limited to: Early Pick Up, Alternative Pick Up Person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

St Luke Early Childhood Center does not serve or provide breakfast in the morning. Parents are required to feed their child a nutritious and filling breakfast prior to arriving at our center.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents/guardians are required to inform the center by 10:00 am if their child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. You may inform us of their absence by phone, email, or note in their communication folder about upcoming absence. Please send email to the ECC office at stlecc@gmail.com not to your child's teacher, they do not have access to their email during class. If your child does not arrive at the ECC by 10am and you have not notified us of their absence, we will call or email you for confirmation.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center director not only of the absence but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director so that the parents of the children who may have been exposed can be notified that a communicable disease was present in their child's classroom. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. St Luke Early Childhood Center will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

Parents who know in advance that a child will be late are required to notify the center by 10:00am.

AGENCY'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

St Luke Early Childhood Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: PICK UP PROCEDURES

POLICY NO. 12

If you are picking your child up early, please let the teacher know either by a note in the communication folder or by calling the ECC office. When you arrive, come to the ECC office and we will notify your child's teacher; they will bring your child to the office and sign them out on the attendance form. Once your child is signed out on the attendance form you are solely responsible for supervising your child while on the center premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground, parking lot, etc.

Please note that the person picking up your child must be a custodial parent, listed on the Child's Enrollment Record as authorized pick up person, or listed on the Emergency Release Form as an authorized pick up person. This list can be amended as needed in writing by coming into the ECC office and changing the form, sending a signed and dated note of authorization in your child's communication folder or faxing a signed letter to the ECC office at 727-786-8648. You are encouraged to provide us with a list of any and all persons that you would allow to pick up your child if you are unavailable. This person will be asked to show their driver's license until they are known by us. We will keep a copy of their photo ID on file. **WE WILL NOT RELEASE YOUR CHILD TO ANY OTHER PARTIES WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT FROM A CUSTODIAL PARENT.**

LATE PICK-UP: See Arrival and Dismissal Procedures- Policy 11

PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP

The staff of St Luke Early Childhood Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of St Luke Early Childhood Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the agency to deny a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, St Luke Early Childhood Center staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services. If another designated pick-up person is suspected to be impaired our staff will not release your child; we will contact, you to make other arrangements.

EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP FORMS-

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from St. Luke Early Childhood Center. In an emergency situation, the child's parents will

be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list.

Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT
WEATHER INFORMATION

POLICY NO. 13

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES /SEVERE WEATHER

Emergency fire and tornado drills are held once a month to acquaint your child with our emergency procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time, but they will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do. The teachers use these drills as a learning tool to teach the children about safety procedures.

In the event of a tornado warning, the children in the ministries building will proceed to the lower level of the stairwell and children in the church building will proceed to the hallways next to their classrooms.

We have a detailed emergency plan in place, which includes procedures for tornado, fire, and unauthorized person on the premises, etc. All teachers have been trained and are ready to act quickly if an emergency takes place.

In the case of severe weather our policy is to follow Pinellas County Schools regarding closing our center unless we notify you otherwise. Please listen to your local news station for this information. You will also be informed of any school closings or emergency situations via the Remind APP.

Should the center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures for any reason.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: CURRICULUM INFORMATION

POLICY NO. 14

The curriculum of St. Luke Early Childhood Center is based on The Creative Curriculum, Diocesan Standards, 2017 Florida State Standards, VPK Standards, and Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment Standards.

We use the "Understanding by Design" concept to create lesson plans that are relevant and developmentally appropriate for each age level. Additionally, we create learning centers where through self-directed play the students are encouraged to continue learning and reinforcing the presented skills. Throughout the year, your child will be assessed both formally and informally to allow their teachers to develop lesson plans that scaffold and support your child's specific goals. Please note you will be asked to sign an Authorization to Assess Form, giving us your permission to conduct these assessments.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES/STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Communication between teacher and parent is essential to your child's academic success. Teachers will be in contact with you throughout the year to keep you informed of your child's progress in the classroom, via phone calls, notes home, emails, and parent/teacher conferences. With your approval, your child will be given a developmental screening within the first 3 months of the school year and you will be provided information either verbally or in writing about your child's development and learning, with written reports at least 2 times a year. Our teachers work very diligently to use assessment results to align their curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of each child.

Individual conferences will be held twice a year. You will receive an email from Sign-up Genius that will allow you to sign-up for a specific conference time. Please note, conference times have been set to be convenient for parents while still providing minimal impact to your child's class schedule. Please be on time for your conference. At the end of the year, you will receive a portfolio assessment, which is a collection of your child's work, showing their progress throughout the year. If you have any concerns, throughout the year, you are encouraged to contact your child's teachers and/or the administrator. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center uses our center-developed assessment tool, which is based on and meets all the requirements and "performance standards" for preschool education set by the State of Florida, the Diocese of St. Petersburg, and by APPLE. Our center-developed assessment enables you to see our goals for each age level and will help you see how your child is meeting those age-based goals. VPK students will also be assessed using the state VPK Assessment Tool.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

St. Luke Early Childhood Center strives to establish a Christian, professional and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty and staff, parents, and students. The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a harassment policy for its schools and centers that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school/center mission. We, at St. Luke Early Childhood Center, condemn any form of harassment and will address all credible allegations in accord with the diocesan policy. Concerns should be reported directly to the Director. We are also committed to providing a safe environment for our students. All staff, according to Diocesan policy, have participated in the safe environment training, which addresses the safety of all of our children.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM

St. Luke ECC, through an age appropriate curriculum, weaves "safe environment" training for children into daily classroom life. Through the use of games, songs, and stories we present children with important life skills that empower them to help protect themselves and encourage them to respect themselves and others. Our safe environment curriculum is distributed and explained to all parents at the beginning of the year during our parent orientation evening.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is required for children enrolled in the EC3 and EC4 classes; however, it is not required for the 2-year-olds. If your child is in one of the EC2 classes and is in the process of being toilet trained, please discuss this with the teacher so we can work with you and your child. If your child is in the two's and not yet toilet trained, please bring in a supply of disposable diapers and baby wipes. Toilet training should be a positive experience with lots of praise given for success. A child is not considered toilet trained until they are 2 weeks accident free- until this time please provide us with Easy Tab Pull-ups.

TELEVISION AND VIDEO VIEWING-

Our goal here at St. Luke ECC is to provide active hands-on educational units for our students. For this reason, TV viewing is not permitted. Additionally, videos are used only when they support learning. Videos are educational and very short.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthdays are very special days! We know your child is excited to share their "special" day with their school friends. If you are inviting your child's classmates

to attend a birthday party you may send the invitations through the class, **only if each child is receiving an invitation** otherwise please mail the invitations. You may send in a special store-bought snack for their birthday: cookie cake, cupcakes, etc., it will be shared during their regularly scheduled snack time. Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to stop in and take a picture of them with their special treat or to share a book with the class. Since children can become very overwhelmed, we do not allow clowns, magicians, balloons or other forms of entertainment to be brought into the classroom. All gifts and thank you notes should be taken care of family to family, not through the classroom.

PETS

Our accreditation criteria have strict guidelines regarding pets and/or animals, which may come in contact with children and staff members. Animals must be in good health and must have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter that show that the animals are fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Parents must contact the ECC office before planning to bring any animals into the school environment. Each classroom is checked for allergies to pets prior to allowing an animal in the classroom.

SPIRIT DAYS

Your child will receive a t-shirt upon receipt of your activity fee during the first few weeks of school. Students are encouraged to wear their St. Luke t-shirts on Spirit Days, which are published in our Little Saint's Herald and on our Snack Calendars.

ADOPT-A-CLASS

The Adopt-a-class program partners individuals, families, businesses, industry, civic and church organizations with our school in both a financial and social function. The cost to adopt a class is \$150.00. Check with your child's teacher for details.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT-

It is well documented that family involvement is a major factor in a child's educational success. At St. Luke ECC we have an open-door policy and encourage parents to participate in the school and their child's classroom activities. It is our goal to partner with you in the education of your child.

Throughout the year we will share our goals and expectations for your child with you as well as ways you can reinforce their skills at home. Since we are a family-oriented program, we have various activities throughout the year to involve our families. Family events are offered, unless social distancing protocols are in place, and there are many ways you can become involved, both in the classroom and with our parent group (PALS). Please see the attached volunteer handbook for more complete information. You will be kept updated through our monthly newsletter on all programs offered throughout the year.

The Steering Committee at St. Luke ECC was set up to address future needs of our Early Childhood Center, as it relates to resources and facilities. This group is directly responsible for raising funds which allowed us to: provide needed classroom renovations, a new KMO building, and update our playground. We are very appreciative of the members of this committee and their efforts. You will be hearing from the Steering Committee throughout the year and we welcome your involvement and support. If you would like to be a member of our Steering Committee, please contact the ECC office.

WISH LIST

Our operating budget is met by the tuition and fees that we receive from our families, and more recently by the state funded VPK program. However, each year, there are items that we feel will enhance our program, which we are not able to purchase through our budget. In the past we have been blessed with gifts from some families who graciously assisted us. If you are interested, please contact the office regarding items that will benefit the early childhood program as a whole.

For those of you participating in the VPK program or expect to participate in the VPK program in the future, our operating costs far exceed the funding we receive from the State of Florida. We encourage you to consider making a donation to assist St. Luke ECC in meeting our financial obligations so that we can continue to provide the high-quality preschool program you have come to expect. Thank you in advance for your help!

COMMUNICATION-

Communication with families is a vital part of our program. You will be given a Communication Folder by your child's teacher to facilitate a consistent flow of information between school and home. Parents must read all communication coming home each day in the communication folders. Additionally, teachers can be reached via email, which is listed on their weekly newsletter. If you have a more immediate concern, please feel free to call the center office at 727-787-2914 for assistance.

NEWSLETTER

At the beginning of each month you will receive the first page of our Little Saints Herald in your child's backpack, the entire newsletter will be sent to you via the Remind APP and is always available on our website at StLukeEcc.com. Please take the time to read it so you will be informed of all activities and events. Your child's teacher will also be sending home a weekly letter concerning your child's specific class. If you are interested in advertising in our monthly newsletter, please contact the office. All advertising fees go towards the cost of printing and distributing the newsletter as well as our website costs.

EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR-

Thank you for choosing to allow our staff to support your child's development. St. Luke ECC is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment conducive to learning and growth. We strive to ensure all children are set up for success regardless of their needs or developmental level. We are committed to each child's social emotional development.

COMMUNICATION: FOSTERING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

Our families...

- ❖ Communicate regularly with staff to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school.
- ❖ Partner with us and allow us time to work with all children, including those needing higher levels of support.
- ❖ Understand and acknowledge that children are learning appropriate behavior skills and the ECC strives to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of all children in our care.
- ❖ Know that to best serve children, we may need to partner with local experts to help give a child the best foundation for their social, emotional and academic success.

Teachers create a positive classroom environment and help prevent challenging behavior from occurring by providing developmentally appropriate class rules and expectations, with their students. The expectation for the children's behavior is based on their developmental level and should be observed as overall positive actions and pro-social behavior. These positive behaviors are encouraged and reinforced.

DISCIPLINE POLICY –

St. Luke Early Childhood Center strives to discourage all forms of unacceptable behavior by maintaining an appropriate classroom environment. St. Luke ECC embraces a philosophy of positive reinforcement, re-direction to appropriate behavior, addressing actions rather than children, and giving children a clear understanding of the consequences of unacceptable behavior. The teacher will handle discipline by various methods of communication and, if necessary, removal from the activity. The teacher and the director will contact the parent for a conference on any negative behavior that does not respond to this type of communication. Under no circumstances will a child be subjected to discipline, which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited by all personnel. Parents are encouraged to discuss the needs of their child with the teacher so that we can know how to best serve the needs of each child in our center.

Persistent Behavioral Issues-

After observing and reviewing the behavior in question and considering the developmental level of the child, the teacher and director will assess possible factors: classroom environment, class schedule, what precedes the behavior, class rule implementation, expectations and consequences. Books, role-playing and strategies to identify and manage feelings and emotions will also be utilized. Redirection to another activity, along with reminders of the classroom rules and expectations, will follow if a child does not demonstrate appropriate behavior.

Should a child demonstrate a dangerous behavior, the safety of the child, the other children and the teachers is the first consideration. The lead teacher will remove the child from the classroom and take him/her to the administrator and the assistant teacher will remain with the other children. The administrator will contact the child's parent, document the incident with the assistance of the teacher, and refer the family to resources for services to assist with positive behavior support. Contact information for these support agencies are in the ECC office.

This procedure is followed for all age levels and classroom settings.

INTENT & PURPOSE:

Behavior concerns tell us that children need more time, support and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health. On rare occasions, we may work with families to seek the best care for their child if our program no longer meets the needs of an individual child.

Please refer to our sections on Special Needs Accommodations- Policy 5, Behavioral Expectations and Discipline- Policy 15, and Withdrawal- Policy 17.

REASONS FOR EXPULSION, SUSPENSION, OR DISMISSAL

Every effort will be made to prevent the expulsion or dismissal of children from our program. However, St. Luke ECC reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for reasons, not limited to, but including, the following:

- ❖ Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees/tuition.
- ❖ Failure to adhere to policies and procedures as outlined in our Family/Parent Handbook.
- ❖ The parent/guardian exhibits behavior which is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children and staff in a classroom or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom and/or program. This includes but is not limited to vulgarity, intimidation, harassment, or violation of childcare licensing regulations.
- ❖ Failure of the child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time, which often signifies that the child is not developmentally ready.
- ❖ The child has needs which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns.
- ❖ The child's behavior threatens the health and safety of him/herself, the other children or program staff such as:
 - Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
 - Bullying or hurting other children (pushing, kicking, punching, cursing, etc.)
 - Threatening other children with violent words.
- ❖ Other – at the discretion of the ECC Director

STEPS TAKEN PRIOR TO EXPULSION

The ECC office will make every attempt to assist parents with financial, policy and behavioral concerns.

Positive Behavior intervention supports include:

- ❖ Classroom/environment assessments
- ❖ Screenings

- ❖ Reaching out to inclusion specialists, specialized care teams, mental health consultants where available.

Proactive Actions that will be taken to prevent expulsion:

- ❖ Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior
- ❖ Staff will teach the child appropriate skills to replace challenging behaviors
- ❖ Staff will reassess the environment, activities, and supervision
- ❖ Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children; partnering with parents to develop behavior support strategies for continuity between the home and school environment.
- ❖ Staff will celebrate appropriate behaviors
- ❖ Staff will maintain strong connections with the child at all times
- ❖ Staff will apply consistent consequences for rules
- ❖ The ECC Director will be consulted and may speak with the child
- ❖ Incident report is written and signed by parents/guardian
- ❖ Family will be notified of disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion
- ❖ With the parent's consent, a specialized care team will be formed to address how to best support the child, through observations, accommodations, and if necessary, outside agency referrals.
- ❖ If inappropriate behaviors persist the family may be called to pick up their child
- ❖ After implementation of Proactive Actions, if a resolution is not achieved, the child may be dismissed from the program.

TRANSITION TO ANOTHER PROVIDER

On the rare occasion that our program can no longer meet a child's needs, we may work with families to seek the best care for their child.

Any past due balances must be paid within two weeks after the dismissal of a child. Parents will be refunded any unused tuition after all bills are paid to the center. Any unpaid bills remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

ST. LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: WITHDRAW

POLICY NO. 17

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any unused tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal, providing there is no unpaid balance. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks and will not have their money refunded.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: TOYS FROM HOME

POLICY NO. 18

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Any toys brought to school without teacher permission will remain in the child's backpack and returned home.

Children in ABC Club are permitted to include with their bedding supplies, one plush/non-musical toy with which to nap/rest. This toy is to be placed with the bedding supplies and use of it will only be allowed at nap/rest time. All napping supplies for ABC Club must fit inside a Publix style green wise bag.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: DRESS CODE

POLICY NO. 19

Clothing:

Children are engaged in various activities during the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

Parents are encouraged to NOT dress their children in overalls, tight fitting, or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Children ages 2 through 5 are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, and socks. All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and placed in a labeled Ziploc bag. St. Luke Early Childhood Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at St. Luke Early Childhood Center or involved in any St. Luke Early Childhood Center sponsored events. Inappropriate clothing would include, revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

Jewelry/Accessories:

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, St. Luke Early Childhood Center will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children. If a child does wear jewelry the teacher will place item in a bag and return home.

When choosing hair accessories for your children be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for the other children attending St. Luke Early Childhood Center.

St. Luke Early Childhood Center is not responsible for damage to or loss of any jewelry or accessory.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: PARENT PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS

POLICY NO. 20

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the childcare center. Parents may volunteer to read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will have posted in their classrooms any volunteer opportunities available.

All parents are required to sign a Volunteer Affidavit from Pinellas County License Board. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements), will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent.

St Luke Early Childhood Center reserves the right to make volunteer assignments. St. Luke Early Childhood Center does not guarantee the volunteering parents will be assigned to locations where their child(ren) is present.

Sibling Visitors

We are always thrilled to have alumni of St. Luke ECC come back to read to their sibling's class, please arrange with your child's teacher in advance. Please accompany your child, the reader, to the office to receive a guest pass and go with them to the classroom. It is our school policy that you stay with your "reader" during their visit. We ask that you keep your visit brief, so the class may return to its regular schedule and the teachers can give their attention to their students.

PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Parents are required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center’s office prior to the child’s first day of attendance, along with the \$130.00 application fee. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at St. Luke Early Childhood Center. This is per our licensing regulations. **We accept Medical Waivers only, as mandated by the Diocese of St. Petersburg- no Religious Waivers are accepted.** - Parents are required to have a Medical Wavier on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Please note, since we allow Medical Waivers, some children at the center may not have current immunizations.

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend St. Luke Early Childhood Center. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child’s fitness to attend must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the center by the first day of school. St Luke Early Childhood Center must remain in compliance at all times with the Pinellas County License Board. If at any time we do not have current required forms on your child, your child will not be allowed to attend until the appropriate forms are received.

CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the Emergency Release Form and complete a Student Support plan with the center director and teachers listing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which your child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be accompanied by a letter from the child’s doctor confirming this allergy with instructions for treatment should your child have an allergic reaction. If the child needs any medication, even over the counter medications, a written prescription must be provided by the physician to be kept with the medication. Rescue medications such as Epi-pens will be kept in the child’s classroom, out of reach of the students but easily accessible to the teachers.

Parents must also execute a “Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies” form. This form releases St. Luke Early Childhood Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the “Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies” form, provided St. Luke Early Childhood Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES- Sick Child Policy

St. Luke Early Childhood Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in Pinellas County License Board Manual. A copy of this manual is on file with the Center Director and is available upon request for review.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. St Luke Early Childhood Center reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the center director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, nasal discharge, etc. may not return to the program until they are symptom free, without medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home sick, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm. If your child has been diagnosed with the flu or the adenovirus, they must be symptom free for 48 hours prior to returning to school. If they show symptoms of Covid19 they will need to be picked up immediately and if they test positive, they may only return with a doctor's note or after a minimum of 2 weeks.

BITING

St Luke Early Childhood Center recognizes that biting is a "typical" behavior seen in toddlers and twos. We understand that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. Please know, that

although biting is considered developmentally acceptable, our staff is working very hard to identify situations which, provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. Additionally, we work with the child/children to promote the verbal skills, self-control, and problem-solving skills that will facilitate outgrowing this behavior. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior.

Children 3 and up may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. If your child is involved in multiple biting incidents you may be called to pick them up after the incident to impress upon them appropriate school behaviors.

MEDICATIONS

St Luke Early Childhood Center will not administer any over the counter medications or prescription medications without a signed medication authorization form from the child's parents. Additionally, all medications prescribed and over the counter must be in the original packaging and have a prescription attached. The form must clearly state the child's full name, medications, dosage, and clear description when the medication is to be administered. ("As needed" is not a clear description of need.)

ECC administrative personnel have been trained in medication administration and will administer medication as outlined on the form signed by parents. Please come into the office and sign the form as needed. Do not leave any medication with your child or the classroom teacher. Medications at school are kept in a locked cabinet in the ECC office, with the exception of rescue medications which are kept in the child's classroom out of reach of the students. No other medications will be given to your child (note: cough drops, vitamins, insect repellents, chap stick, sunscreen, etc. are considered medications.) St. Luke Early Childhood Center will administer ONLY those medications prescribed by a physician that are in the original pharmacy container, prescribed specifically for that child (first and last name on prescription) and are within the expiration date noted on the medication. We need to retain the prescription for our records.

If your child is prescribed a rescue medication, such as an Epi-pen, for severe allergies or other medical concern, a "Red Bag" will be created for your child. This bag will be readily accessible to his/her teachers but out the of the reach of students. It will travel with them throughout the day as needed for safety. On this bag will be posted your child's name, picture, medical concern and safety protocol to ensure a quick response should an emergency occur.

ALTERNATE SAFE LOCATION

Should the administration of St Luke Early Childhood or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the child care agency to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to the St. Clare Building at the west end of the property or to the rectory, depending on the reason for the evacuation. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of Firearm, Ammunitions and/or Weapon on St. Luke Early Childhood Center's property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during their school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report must be signed, dated and include the full name of child and a description of the incident that happened.

Parents/authorized adult are required to sign any Incident/Accident Reports from the day at pick-up; therefore, if your child is picked up by another authorized adult, they will sign the Incident Report and bring a copy home. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later time because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. The teacher may choose to set up a telephone conference later in the day or for the next day if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center on the day of the incident. Parents are always welcome to call the school office if they have questions regarding an Incident Report.

FOODS

WE ARE A PEANUT SENSITIVE CENTER

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to peanuts and products containing peanuts in some children, St Luke Early Childhood Center prohibits peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products at St Luke Early Childhood Center, and/or at St Luke Early Childhood Center sponsored events. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply

touching peanut oil residue left on a countertop, not only from consuming peanuts or peanut products.

Parents are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free for their child's lunch and/or snack. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut and peanut product free in stores. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Please keep in mind that many foods, which we do not think of as containing peanuts or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label, look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts" or "manufactured on shared equipment."

Due to licensing and the possibility of cross-contamination, (this occurs when one food is prepared with items previously used to prepare foods with peanuts, or peanut products), **St Luke Early Childhood Center does not allow homemade snacks at the center.** While St Luke Early Childhood Center understands that parents enjoy providing homemade snacks for birthdays and holidays, we must be mindful of the safety of all children enrolled at St Luke Early Childhood Center.

Please read the labels of all food brought to the center to be sure that it does not contain peanuts and/or peanut products.

SNACKS

St. Luke Early Childhood Center offers children a morning snack. However, we do not serve breakfast; please provide a healthy breakfast for your child at home. Snack calendars are sent home every month from your child's teacher and children will be assigned on a rotating basis to bring in snack for the class, please note this is voluntary for VPK parents. On the classroom snack calendar, you will find a list of all food allergies for your child's class. Please avoid all allergens when purchasing snack. A healthy snack contains at least two food groups, EX- fruits, vegetables, crackers and 100% fruit juice.

St Luke Early Childhood Center will provide a healthy afternoon snack for all children in our aftercare program including water and/or 100% fruit juice.

LUNCH- (Guidelines for Meals brought from home)

If your child is attending Lunch Bunch, our 9-2 VPK class, or ABC Club they need to bring a lunch. All food items must be labeled with your child's name. St. Luke Early Childhood Center does not permit children to share or exchange food items. Please refer to the Nutrition Statement for USDA and CACFP Guidelines, the *Nutrition* link on our website, and our Nutrition Bulletin Board for appropriate lunch ideas.

St Luke Early Childhood Center curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Therefore, parents are required to provide a full, healthy lunch for their children each day they are in attendance. Lunches should include a sandwich (or main entrée item), snack(s) and milk, water or 100% fruit juice. Snack food items should be healthy, such as fruits and vegetables. When preparing your child's lunch please refer to the Peanut Sensitive Policy that follows. All uneaten food will be placed back in the child's lunch so parents can see what items and how much their child consumed during the day. Parents should limit the number of choices offered in their child's lunch, as children often become distracted by the choices. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satiated, but not so much that food is wasted.

St Luke Early Childhood Center prohibits any food item in glass containers as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff.

Lunches will not be heated for children, and parents must pack an ice pack to maintain a safe temperature for their child's lunch. All lunch boxes/bags must be labeled with the child's name.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. All children who are on campus for lunch will be encouraged to eat their main entrée first, followed by healthy snacks.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY CLIENTS POLICY

POLICY NO. 22

The staff of St Luke Early Childhood Center is prohibited from being employed by any current families. Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment.

Employment refers to any relationship outside of the agency's services which involves an employee of St Luke Early Childhood Center to interact with a current family of St. Luke Early Childhood Center. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless of whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.

ST LUKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

POLICY: AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

POLICY NO. 23

St Luke Early Childhood Center
2757 Alderman Road
Palm Harbor, Florida 34684

Phone: 727-787-2914

Fax: 727-786-8648

Email: stlecc@gmail.com

Website: StLukeECC.com

Pastor: Father Paul Kochu

Director: Mrs. Kathie Mitchell

Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Stephanie Murphy

STATE RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS:

Early Learning Coalition- 727-548-1439

Child Find- 727-793-2717

Early Steps- 1-800-218-0001, 727-374-4334, 727-767-4403

Directions for Living- 727-524-4464

St Luke ECC retains the right to amend this handbook. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Revised 5/1/2020