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# **Parent Handbook**

**Director/Teacher: Miss Cliss Loescher**

### **Mission Statement**

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. And do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Luke 18:16). Incorporating the good news of Jesus in all it does, Building Blocks for Life Preschool exists to equip children with the essential building blocks for this life and eternity.

### **Philosophy of Education**

Building Blocks for Life Preschool has been established to assist parents in nurturing the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of their children through play, hands on learning experiences and daily “Jesus Time” lessons. We believe that each child is a special and unique gift from God and develops best when all experiences occur in an atmosphere of Christian love and respect.

### **Our Program**

Building Blocks for Life Preschool provides a Christ-centered preschool for those children between the ages of 3-5 years. We currently offer a two day program (Monday & Tuesday) for 3-4 year olds and a two (Wednesday & Thursday) and three day (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) program for 4-5 year olds. A 1:10 staff to pupil ratio will be observed at all times. Our programs run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### **Licensing**

We are licensed by the state of Minnesota Department of Human Resources License # 1076073-1-FCC

To maintain licensing the staff will complete continuing education requirements, pass inspection, and be interviewed by a County Licensur. The county may contact parents and ask them to complete an evaluation of our preschool and program. If you receive a parent evaluation form from them, please complete it and return it promptly to the county.

### **Admission Policy**

As commanded by our Lord Jesus “to make disciples of all nations,” Building Blocks for Life preschool exists to share God’s love with all people regardless of race, nationality, sex, origin, or religious affiliation. The preschool does reserve the right, however, to involve all students in religious activities. Children must be toilet trained and at least 3 years old on or before September 1 to qualify for enrollment.

### **Registration**

Registration proceeds as follows:

- Parents complete the registration packet and return it to the director prior to the child’s first day of attendance along with a non-refundable registration fee of \$40.00 made out to Building Blocks for Life Preschool.
- According to Minnesota State Immunization Law an immunization record must be on file at the preschool **within 30 days** of the child’s enrollment.

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- New families are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis. If there is a waiting list, children will be enrolled as an appropriate age opening occurs.
- If possible, parents are strongly encouraged to bring their child for a short visit before the first day of school. This will help the child ease into the program by giving him or her, an opportunity to get acquainted with the teacher and school.

The following forms must be completed and submitted to Building Blocks for Life Preschool prior to the child's first day of attendance.

- Admission and Arrangements Form
- Child Care Program Reporting Notification
- Permission to Administer Form
- 2 Emergency Cards
- Immunization Record
- Child Information Form
- Family Information Form
- Parent Agreement Form
- Form authorizing pick up by anyone other than parent/guardian
- Photography waiver
- Verification of Policies Signature (from the last page of this book)

Parents please notify the office of any changes in home or work addresses or phone numbers as well as those whom you authorize to pick up your child.

### **Tuition and Fees**

\$90.00/month – 2 days/week for 1<sup>st</sup> child

\$80.00/month – 2 days/week for 2<sup>nd</sup> child

\$110.00/month – 3 days/week for 1<sup>st</sup> child

\$100.00/month – 3 days/week for 2<sup>nd</sup> child

Note: Our fees and tuition are based on enrollment rather than attendance.

There will be a \$40.00 enrollment fee that is non-refundable. This can be made at the time of enrollment to Building Blocks for Life Preschool.

A \$10.00 discount will be given to families that have two children enrolled in the same year.

Tuition should be paid by the first school day of each month. No student will be allowed to fall more than one month behind in tuition. Because tuition goes towards covering our operational costs it is imperative that you pay your fees on time. Thank you for your cooperation.

Another option is to pay for the whole year at the time of the first payment. A 5% discount will be applied if full tuition for the year is paid in advance.

There are no refunds or credits for days that your child is absent. Tuition will also remain the same during shortened weeks.

A Non-Sufficient Funds fee, of \$25.00 will be assessed and must be paid in cash along with a cash payment for the original amount of the check, before child is allowed to attend again.

### **Our Goals**

Consistent with this mission and philosophy, Building Blocks for Life Preschool seeks to meet the following goals.

- **Spiritual:**
  - To teach the children that Jesus is our Savior from sin. This will be accomplished through prayer, songs, and stories.
  - To daily hear and apply God's Word as it is taught in its truth and purity from the Bible.
  - To respond to God's love in our life.
  
- **Physical:**
  - To model thankfulness for the gift of our bodies from God and all the talents He has blessed us with.
  - To engage students in small motor and large motor skills on a daily basis through structured and unstructured play activities.
  - To engage students in sensory activities and expose them to a variety of materials.
  - To develop muscle control and coordination.
  
- **Intellectual:**
  - To model thankfulness for all the gifts that God has blessed us with.
  - To aid students in making God-pleasing decisions.
  - To foster creativity and success through a variety of experiences and use of materials.
  - To create a caring Christian environment that provides developmentally-appropriate activities related to basic language arts, communication with adults and peers, science, reading, and math readiness.
  
- **Social:**
  - To model Christian love towards one another and reflect the love of Jesus in our hearts to all people.
  - To provide a variety of learning experiences in large group, small group and a one-on-one basis.
  - To learn responsibility, and independence while learning to share, compromise and cooperate.
  
- **Emotional:**
  - To assure all children that they are redeemed children of God.
  - To provide a safe and caring Christian environment where all children can learn and succeed.
  - To understand and cope with their own feelings and to learn appropriate ways of expressing themselves.
  
- **Academic:**
  - To expand their visual and auditory skills by exploring the world around them and trying new things.

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- To build vocabulary and communications skills through interaction between teachers, staff, and peers.
- To teach basic elements necessary for a successful school experience, such as how to listen, how to follow directions, and respect for others.

### **Parent Communication**

Here at Building Blocks for Life Preschool, we want to create an atmosphere of open communication and a partnership between parents and staff. Please feel free to express your concerns, questions, or compliments to any of our staff members. We are here to help you in raising your little children. If your concern warrants a meeting with our director, please call to set up a meeting time. Your opinions and insights can only help us to grow and improve.

Parents should also know they are welcome and encouraged to visit their children's classroom during the day. Please ask your child's classroom teacher what time would work best to schedule a visit.

### **Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting**

As mandated by the state of Minnesota, any employee or volunteer at a preschool who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately contact the county social services office.

### **Confidentiality**

Every staff member who is employed at Building Blocks for Life Preschool is expected to keep all information regarding students and their families confidential. No medical or health information concerning any child will be released to any third party without a parent's signed written authorization. A breach of confidentiality is grounds for immediate dismissal.

This does not apply to:

- The parents or persons authorized in writing by the parents/guardian to receive such information.
- Any agency assisting with growth/education for the child when informed written consent has been given.
- Staff consultation regarding the spiritual welfare of the child with the pastor of Christ Lutheran Church.

### **Supplies**

Each child will have a locker labeled with their name to store their book bag, jacket and other belongings they may bring with them.

- Each child must have a change of indoor clothing to be left at the school. Please include underwear, socks, pants, and shirt in a large labeled zip lock bag for storage.

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- A painting smock should also be kept at school to protect your child's clothes from drips, splashes, and spills.
- Please supply a large box of facial tissues at the beginning of the school year to be shared with everyone.

### **Clothing**

Following is a list of guidelines that will assist you with dressing your child properly for preschool:

1. Please label each item of clothing with the child's name or three initials. Jackets too!
2. Please allow your child to wear clothing that he/she will not be afraid to get dirty. They will naturally avoid activities if they are worried about getting their "best" clothes dirty.
3. Keep in mind that crayons, markers, and paints will be used frequently by your child. Even though we provide "washable" products, they do not always wash out completely.
4. No backless footwear. During the winter months, make sure your child brings shoes to wear. Snow boots are not permitted in the classroom.
5. Dress your child appropriately for weather conditions.

### **Snacks**

A snack time is part of the daily routine. Parents provide the juice and snack each day. A monthly snack schedule will be posted on the bulletin board and to the preschool website. Each family will be assigned a week to provide the snack. Consideration will be given to birthdays or other special occasions.

We encourage our parents to bring nutritious snacks such as: fresh fruit, cheese and crackers, vegetables, raisins, etc. Please send light colored 100% juices (red and purple stain.) We are eliminating cake, cupcakes and brownies from our snack options, they are too messy!

Please notify the teacher if there are any specific allergies that your child may have.

### **Attendance**

Daily attendance is tracked by parents signing their child in and out each day. No child is allowed to be left in our care without first signing them in to document the time of their arrival each day. Parents must sign their child out so we can have a record showing departure time. Staff will keep a daily record of attendance in the classroom, which will be kept on file.

## **Arrival and Departure**

In order to comply with state mandated teacher/child ratios and out of courtesy to our teachers, we ask that you call us before school starts at 9:00 am if your child will not be in attendance. Drop off begins at 8:50 am. When dropping off your child, please remember to escort your child into the classroom and sign him/her in there.

Pick up is at 12:00 pm. When picking up your child, please clean out his/her locker, and then sign your child out. If you are not able to pick up your child, you need to notify the teacher of who will be picking him/her up. This authorized person will be asked to show photo identification in order to pick up your child. This is only for the safety of your child.

If you or a loved one would like to visit your child during the day, please check with your child's teacher. This is to ensure the safety of all our students.

## **Daily Schedule**

9:00-9:15	Greeting – Story and Show & Tell
9:15-9:55	Planning/Work Time/Recall
9:55-10:15	Circle Time – Show & Tell, Weather, Calendar
10:15-10:30	Bathroom/Snack
10:30-10:50	Jesus Time
10:50-11:45	Large Group Time – Literacy, Math, Theme Study
11:45-12:00	Large Motor – Playground/Inside Play Area

## **Schedule of School Closing**

Building Blocks for Life Preschool gives praise and thanks to our good and gracious Heavenly Father for the gift of family and for the opportunity to spend time with them. Holidays were intended to be spent with our loved ones in thanksgiving and joy. With that in mind, we will be closed at the following times:

- Thanksgiving Holiday
- Christmas Holiday
- Spring Break
- Easter Holiday

The preschool reserves the right to close the day following or preceding holidays and will notify parents in advance of these closings.

As each child enrolls in our preschool program, they will receive a school calendar noting the special days off due to teacher conferences or parent-teacher conferences.

We will close the school for inclement weather when Cambridge school district 911 does. Listen or look for their closing. We will not follow 2 hour delays, only closings.

## Termination and Dismissal Policy

While it is our goal here at Building Blocks for Life to nurture all students and to foster their development through a caring Christian environment, we reserve the right to terminate enrollment as a last resort based one or more of the following reasons:

- Failure of parents to observe the policies outlined in this manual.
- Inability of the school to provide for the increased care of special-needs students.
- Physical or verbal abuse by a child or parent toward another student or staff member.
- Chronic disruptive behavior that impedes the learning or safety of others or impedes the management of the classroom for the teacher.
- If a parent cannot be to the school by closing or is excessively abusing the scheduled pick-up time.
- If a parent fails to pay tuition or is consistently receiving late fees.
- Excessive absenteeism without proper notification and/or merit.
- If a parent defies, mocks, or consistently discourages the Word of God and His truths to students, staff, or other parents through actions or any other form.
- Other actions, omissions, or conditions which, in the opinion of the Director, are disruptive or adverse to goals of the program.

The staff of Building Blocks for Life works to provide families with the best possible care for their children. However, dismissal of an enrolled child will occur under the following conditions.

### 1. Mutual Decision between Parent and School:

Mutual decisions where by both parties agree that placement of the child is inappropriate, and the child would better profit from another placement. A two weeks written notice must be given or parents will be responsible for payment for the next month's tuition.

### 2. Parents Initiated-Voluntary Dismissal:

Circumstances may arise when parents voluntarily choose to withdraw their child from the program. A two-week written notice must be given to the Director stating the child's last date of attendance at the school.

### 3. School Initiated-Involuntary Dismissal:

Building Bocks for Life Preschool may initiate discharge of a child for the following reasons:

- *Failure to pay fees.* If payment of fees is delinquent for a month or more, a child may be dismissed.
- *Failure to observe or cooperate with the policies of the school.* The policies of Building Blocks for Life Preschool have been established to provide quality care for the children. Any parent or child who fails to follow the policies may put the children in jeopardy.
- *Uncontrolled behavior endangering staff or children at the school.* Immediate discharge will be administered by the director if the behavior causes severe verbal or physical harm to another child or staff member.

- *Need for special services.* When Building Blocks for Life Preschool cannot meet the needs of a child but services are available through other agencies in the community, parents will be contacted with recommendations.

Steps prior to School initiated Dismissal:

1. The Director will notify the parents in writing of the problem and will arrange a meeting with the parents. If the parents fail to respond within five calendar days, the dismissal of the child will occur.
2. During the meeting between the parents, and teacher/Director, potential solutions to the problem will be discussed, and a time line will be set for resolving the situation. The time line will not exceed a one month time period. A follow-up meeting will be arranged if necessary.
3. In the case of behavioral problems or failure to comply with policies, the teacher/Director will monitor the situation for the length of time determined in the initial meeting and will document the information.
4. If a second meeting is arranged, the problem will be reviewed at that time. If the teacher/director has documentation that solutions are not being reached on the part of the parent or child, dismissal will occur.
5. When a center-initiated dismissal occurs, the two weeks notice normally required will be waived.

### **Right to Appeal:**

Any family who feels their child has been unfairly dismissed may submit a written appeal to the Director. The appeal should state the reason for the dismissal, what actions were done on the part of the parents to resolve the issues, and why they feel dismissal was unfair. The child who was dismissed will not be readmitted during the appeal process.

### **Grievance Policy/Procedure**

Please speak with the director/lead teacher regarding any concerns or complaints. It is encouraged that you speak directly with the person with whom you have a problem; this is not only Biblical, but also practical. Parent concerns will be addressed quickly and resolved so that all involved are satisfied. If necessary, Pastor and/or our Church President may become involved.

Church – 763-689-5333

Preschool – 763-689-2230

Email – bldgblksforlife@gmail.com

Isanti County Family Service – 763-689-1711

### **Christian Discipline**

Effective discipline stems from careful planning and consistency. The word discipline itself comes from the word disciple meaning “to teach.” Therefore we do not think of discipline as punishment but rather as teaching self-control and Christian attitudes. The staff at Building Blocks for Life Preschool will strive to develop a positive relationship with each child and continually redirect unacceptable behavior.

No child will ever be hit, spanked, pinched, shaken or verbally abused. They will not be subjected to punishment that is frightening or humiliating. No child will be punished for lapses in toilet training.

### **Health Care Policy**

The State of Minnesota mandates that all students have current immunizations on file at the school. Non-compliance with this can result in dismissal. While illness may inconvenience you in regards to your work schedule or childcare options, the child's best interests need to be a top priority for both staff and parents. That is why we ask that you do not bring your child to the school if they have any of the following symptoms.

- More than one abnormally loose stool
- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher by mouth, or 99 under the arm
- Red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Sore throat or swallowing difficulty
- Vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Severe nasal and/or chest congestion
- An infected skin patch-crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of the skin
- Usually dark, tea-colored urine
- Gray or white stool
- Contagious stage of communicable diseases
- Behavior indicating pain
- Head lice, nits or scabies
- Any unexplained rash or spots
- Discharge of green or yellow mucus from the nose
- Tears, eye redness or irritation and/or drainage

Non-compliance with this may result in a phone call requesting you to come and pick up your child. We cannot care for your sick child. The child may return to preschool after being symptom-free for 24 hours and/or fever-free without medicine for 24 hours. If an antibiotic is prescribed, the child may not return until they are on the prescribed antibiotic for 24 hours.

### **If a Child Becomes Ill at School**

If we find it necessary to take your child's temperature at school, it will be taken under the arm. If he or she becomes ill at school, they will be isolated from the other children while under the supervision of a staff member or Director until picked up. We will notify the parents first and then proceed to the emergency contact person recorded on file.

#### **First Aid:**

First aid kits will be kept in the classroom and the staff will be aware of its location and what is available for use.

**Minor Injury:**

If your child should receive a minor injury while at school, it will be washed out with soap and water and bandaged, or an ice pack will be applied. You will also be notified first by telephone, explaining the incident. Upon pick-up, parents will receive an injury report which contains information regarding the type of injury, how it occurred, and what first aid was given. It will also be signed by the person administering the first aid and the teacher/Director. A copy of this report will also be kept on file.

**Serious Injury:**

If a child becomes seriously injured while at school, 911 will be called and the child will be transported to Cambridge Medical Center, unless otherwise noted on the Emergency Medical Treatment Consent form. Following an accident, parents will be notified immediately. The child will not be left alone while waiting for treatment.

**Communicable Disease:**

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease such as RSV, Rotavirus, Chicken Pox, German Measles, Infectious Hepatitis, Measles, Mumps, Scarlet Fever or Meningitis, please alert us immediately. If there are any exposed children, they will be watched for symptoms. Parents will be notified of the exposure by the posting of signs outside their child's classroom. This information of a communicable disease exposure will also be reported to the local health department.

**Head Lice:**

When head lice is suspected, parents should notify the director as soon as possible. The child may not return to school until he/she is free from all lice and nits, and parents will be informed about recommended treatment procedures. As with cases of communicable diseases, all other families will be notified that a case of head lice has been reported.

**Allergies:**

When a child enrolls at school, all allergy and special needs information will be noted. The names of children and their special needs as to food will be posted so that all staff members are aware of this information at all times.

**Medication:**

Prescription and nonprescription medication can be administered by staff only after an authorization form has been filled out and signed by parents. These forms are available in the classroom. The medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instructions for administration, time and amount of dosage, and physician's name. Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet or lock box that is not accessible to the children. Refrigerated medication will be kept in a separate refrigerator away from food. Unused medication shall be returned to parents or disposed of after use is no longer necessary.

We will not administer the first dosage of medication due to unknown allergic reactions.

## **Fire/Tornado and Other Emergency Policies**

### **Fire Drill/Evacuation:**

Fire drills will be practiced every month by staff and children, unless the weather postpones the drill to a later date. It is the responsibility of the staff to guide the children out of the building using the closest safe exit. They DO NOT stop for coats or jackets. All children will be taken to the designated safety location. A staff member will check all rooms including the bathrooms for any children that may have been left behind. Once everyone is outside a staff member will count the children and check to see if everyone is accounted for. Everyone will stay outside until an all clear is given.

### **Tornado Drill/Evacuation:**

When a tornado warning is in effect and the designated alarm has been sounded, the following guidelines will be followed. A staff member will make sure that everyone exits the room safely. The staff and children will proceed to the designated safe area in the building. A tornado drill will be practiced every month during the tornado season.

## **Transportation**

The preschool teacher is trained to transport and restrain your child. All transportation equipment must be provided by the parent. The equipment must not have been involved in an accident and in safe condition.

No child will be permitted to remain in the vehicle unattended at any time. Each child will be securely fastened in an appropriate restraint system as described in MN statutes. Children under the age of 8 or shorter than 4'9" must be properly fastened in an approved restraint system.

Written permission must be obtained each time the child goes on a field trip.

## **Non-smoking Policy**

Due to very real health and fire hazards and factors of distaste by parents, staff and clients, smoking is both discouraged and considered a fire hazard. Therefore it is the policy of Building Blocks for Life to maintain a "smoke-free" environment. Thus, smoking is prohibited in the building or anywhere on the property.

## **Chemical Use Policy**

Building Blocks for Life Preschool prohibits its staff, volunteers, subcontractors and any persons directly in contact with children from being in any manner under the influence of alcohol or chemical substance that impairs the ability to provide care or services. This includes the abuse of prescription medication.

In occurrence of such abuse, staff will be counseled and offered assistance to deal with the offense. If reoccurrence takes place, staff will be immediately terminated.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In closing, we want you to know how very pleased and excited we are to have you and your family involved with Building Blocks for Life Preschool. We hope all the information presented here has been of benefit to you and enlightening. While it may prove overwhelming, remember that we are here to help you in any way possible in the bringing-up of your child. We know that our Lord Jesus is with us every step of the way keeping us close to his heart.

It is our prayer that we may be a blessing to you and your child and fill a need in your life. Know that while we will do our best to meet the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of your child, our primary focus will be meeting the spiritual needs of your child and family. Your eternal welfare is our main concern.

May God bless our time together.

## Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

We have read the Parent Handbook and have discussed any policies in question with the Director. We understand that policies are subject to change with a two-week notice and that notice of changes will be posted in the school and will be given to each parent in writing.

Any question, comments, or concerns should be made prior to the signing of this form.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form (along with the enrollment packet) to the school office prior to your first day of attendance.