



GLORIA DEI
LUTHERAN ACADEMY
HANDBOOK

2019 – 2020

7601 SW 39th Street ♦ Davie, FL 33328 ♦ 954-475-8584

INTRODUCTION

The teachers and staff at Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy are looking forward to the school year ahead. We request your cooperation and partnership in the training of your child. Under the guidance and blessing of our Lord much can and will be accomplished to His glory and for the benefit of all the children under our care. We ask for your prayers and support for a successful school year.

The focus of Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy is to serve students by “educating for today, tomorrow and eternity.” This handbook serves as a guideline for all policies and procedures. It is expected that all parents read this handbook, familiarize themselves with the contents, and adhere to the policies and procedures. Sometimes new situations or circumstances occur that are not covered specifically by this handbook. The administration reserves the right to exercise its prerogative in responding to these new situations and the right to modify this handbook throughout the school year. In order for the staff of our school to provide the appropriate educational atmosphere, we need the support of every parent in a spirit of cooperation and partnership.

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy, which is operated by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, is one of a system of 2,200 schools operated throughout the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The church voters’ assembly and the church council of Gloria Dei are responsible for the day to day operation and ministry of the church, including the academy. The church council is responsible for establishing school policies and overseeing the operation of the academy. The early childhood director is responsible for enacting the policies and overseeing the daily operation of the school. The pastor, as spiritual leader of the congregation, is responsible for ensuring that the functions of the school and church support the mission, the philosophy statement and goals of the church and academy.

Gloria Dei depends on volunteers from both the school and the church to support the staff and promote the mission of the academy. Specialized training and background checks are required for regular classroom volunteers. Volunteers are assigned by the administration and staff as needed. There is no assurance that a volunteer will work directly with their own child or their child’s class.

Accreditation

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy is accredited by the National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA), an accrediting agency that is accepted in the state of Florida as well as nationally.

In addition we are eligible, through our NLSA Accreditation to be a Gold Seal Child Care Provider by the Florida Department of Children and Families.

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PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

Vision Statement

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy is dedicated to providing academic excellence and Christ-centered spiritual growth in a safe, loving and supportive atmosphere which encourages students and staff to develop their God-given abilities.

Mission Statement

"Gloria Dei Academy is a ministry of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. Our ministry is to bring people into the family of believers. Our purpose is to provide a Christ-centered education based on the Inspired Word of God, the authority for faith and life. We believe that an education without Christ is an education without foundation. Gloria Dei Lutheran Church operates this school for the education of our congregation's children and for reaching the community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Families without a church home are invited to attend and join Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and participate in the life of our congregation."

Philosophy of Education

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy offers a comprehensive and balanced curriculum that is taught from a distinctly Christian perspective. This curriculum is designed with flexibility to meet the needs of each student as it encourages exploration, cooperation, and problem solving. The goal is to develop and maximize each student's unique talents and abilities – all to God's glory.

Our teachers and staff are committed to assist parents to whom is given the responsibility for the Christian upbringing of their children. By bringing Christian values into the academic program, we will not only educate the mind but also the heart. Faith, confidence, perseverance, joy, and strength of character are all inner qualities that that we strive to develop in our young students.

The uniqueness of Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy lies in the following:

- ❖ Instruction from a Christian Perspective
- ❖ The impact of professionally trained Christian Educators
- ❖ The goal of meeting the child's spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional and aesthetic needs in a Christian environment.
- ❖ The opportunity and motivation to witness for Christ through worship, living and service.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy admits students of any race, color, sex, or national and ethnic origin. All the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded are made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and any other school-administered programs.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Student Enrollment: All new and returning students.

- A. Complete registration packet
- B. Provide copy of child's Birth Certificate
- C. Provide current health forms obtained from your doctor:
 - 1) Documentation of childhood immunizations must be made on the Florida Certificate of Immunization HRS form 680. Available only through local county public health units or doctor's offices.
 - 2) Documentation of a student's wellness exam on the Florida Student Health Examination HRS form 3040. Available only through local county public health units or doctor's offices. Evidence of all immunizations must be presented prior to the first day of school.
- D. Pay Registration Fee

Re-Registration

Students may not register for the new school year unless all tuition and fees are paid.

Enrollment at Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy does not mean automatic enrollment for successive years. Each year you must go through the re-registration process.

Non-Custodial Parents

In the event there is a signed court order prohibiting a non-custodial parent from having access to a student or his or her records, parents must submit a copy of this court order to the office, where it will be kept on file. Without this documentation, it is impossible for the school to carry out the wishes of the court.

Withdrawal Policy

Should circumstances require the withdrawal of a child from Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy the parents must provide a "30-Day Notice of Intent to Withdraw" to the Early Childhood office in writing.

A charge of \$100.00 will be levied if a 30-day notice is not given.

A Withdrawal Form may be obtained from the Academy Office.

Termination of Enrollment

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy reserves the right to deny acceptance to school or to request the withdrawal of a child in special cases such as:

- 1. Failure to pay tuition after one month.
- 2. Illness and/or activities that endanger others.
- 3. Inability of the child to adjust resulting in impairment of learning for the class. (The administration will conference with the parents prior to asking for the withdrawal of a child.)
- 4. An uncooperative or disruptive spirit from the parents.

Student Files

We maintain a student file for every child enrolled at Gloria Dei. The file contains information about attendance records, health records, discipline records, enrollment information, etc. The file also contains information required by the DCFS. Access to a student's records is limited to the Gloria Dei staff and the DCFS. Parents may request in writing the opportunity to inspect their child's records. Where financial obligations are not current, student enrollment will be jeopardized and records will remain sealed at Gloria Dei until all financial obligations are met.

THE SCHOOL DAY

First Day

Children should arrive on time. It is best for the parent to leave the child with the teacher on the first day of school. The need for adjustment is expected. The teachers at Gloria Dei are trained and prepared to meet such situations. When the parent remains in the classroom, it makes the period of adjustment more difficult for the child and the class. Please walk your child to the classroom, sign them in, and leave. If you have any concerns, you can call the director at 954-475-8584 ext. 142.

Signing Your Child In/Out

EVERY CHILD MUST BE SIGNED IN TO THE CLASSROOM UPON ARRIVAL AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AT THE TIME OF PICK UP. Adults must escort the child. When signing your child in/out for the day, please make sure that you write your name. Do not write Mom or Dad.

School Hours

Infants	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
1 Year Olds, and 2K	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM Full Day or 7:00 AM – 12:00 Noon Half Day
3K (3 Year Pre-Kindergarten)	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM Full Day or 7:00 AM – 12:00 Noon Half Day
4K (VPK) Morning Only	8:30 AM – 11:30 AM
4K (VPK) Extended Care	7:00 AM – 8:30 AM and 11:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Office Hours	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

The 2K, 3K and 4K instructional day begins promptly at 8:45 AM. Please be sure your child is in the classroom and ready to start their day at that time.

At no time may a student be left unsupervised on the playground. When parents are speaking with a teacher or the director, children must stay with their parents.

Attendance

Research has shown that a student's academic success is related to school attendance and we urge your cooperation to ensure your child attends school on a regular and timely basis.

Regular attendance is a requirement for the VPK program. It is important that your child attends each school day to receive the maximum benefit of this educational program. The state VPK program allows a school to dismiss a child if lack of attendance becomes an issue.

Absences

Children are expected to be in school when it is in session. If a child is to be absent, parents must notify the school office and the teacher by phone call or an email message.

Doctor – Dentist Appointments

Parents should avoid making appointments during morning school hours. If the appointment is unavoidable, communication from the parents prior to the appointment would be appreciated. The school will allow students to leave only with those persons who have written authorization to remove the student from school and have signed the appropriate form.

Extended Care Program

Children enrolled in our Full Day Extended Care program must be picked up by 6:00 PM.

There is a \$2.00 per minute fee that will be billed to your account if the child is picked up after 6:00 PM If a parent is consistently late picking up a child, we reserve the right to ask the parent to make other arrangements regarding an earlier pick-up. If the lateness continues, the child will need to be withdrawn from the program.

There may be special care days available (Christmas Camp, Spring Break Camp, etc.) with a non-refundable prepayment required.

Lunch

It is imperative that your child comes to school with a nutritionally balanced lunch and drink. Any inappropriate snacks will be removed from your child's lunch and sent home that afternoon in the lunch box. Lunches will not be refrigerated. A small insulated bag, and perhaps a "Blue-Ice," is suggested if they plan on bringing food that could spoil. A good lunch will help students during their school day. Students need to bring a drink from home; soda and glass-bottled drinks are not allowed. Candy is also prohibited.

Students will be required to eat the lunch they brought. This means that they are not permitted to "trade" food with others. We respect the judgment of parents in providing an adequate and desirable meal. For safety reasons, glass containers are not allowed on campus. Please do not bring them to school. In the event a student forgets his or her lunch, parents can bring a lunch to the school office. This will cause the least disruption for the classroom.

**** WE ARE NOT A PEANUT BUTTER FREE CAMPUS ****

HEALTH POLICIES

Accidents and Emergency Care

Accidents and emergency situations will be handled according to the following procedures:

1. Minor accidents or injuries such as bumps, bruises, or cuts that seem not to require stitches or further medical care will be treated by staff who will offer comfort, wash wounds with soap and water, and apply ice and/or band aids if necessary. These incidents will be reported to parents at dismissal time.
2. Parents, guardians, or persons listed on the emergency card will be called for accidents that may require further medical attention. The person called will be told to pick up the student for further assessment by a physician. A record of illness/injury report will be completed informing you of the occurrence. The form must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school office the next school day. For emergency purposes, parents must keep the school informed of changes in work or home telephone numbers and addresses
3. In emergency situations such as broken bones, unconsciousness, extreme fever, large or deep cuts, and head injuries followed by vomiting and/or dizziness, 911 will be called; the parent, guardian, or emergency care person will be informed immediately. In the event the student must be transported to the hospital and the parent, guardian, or emergency care person has not arrived at school, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. A record of illness/injury report will be completed informing you of the occurrence. The form must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school office the next school day.

Each child is required to be covered against accident and injury. The school reserves the right to refuse readmitting a student after a serious illness even if a release is given by the child's doctor. Consideration for the school community is pre- eminent.

All parents must completely fill out the registration form and all forms related to health, accident, and emergency care. **FOR EMERGENCY PURPOSES, PARENTS MUST KEEP THE SCHOOL INFORMED OF CHANGES IN WORK OR HOME TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES.**

Illness

Children who become ill while at school will be sent to the office and isolated until the parent or authorized person arrives to pick them up, which must be within one hour from notification. The authorized parent or guardian must sign an appropriate form at the office to remove the student from the school. Symptoms considered serious enough to send a student home are as follows:

1. Diarrhea (Children with diarrhea should remain home 24 hours after the symptoms are gone.)
2. Vomiting
3. Fever - According to the US Department of Health a fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C) or higher. Students with fever should remain at home for at least 24 hours after their temperature returns to normal. (The fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
4. Rash (unless parent brings a note from a doctor that specifies that the rash is not contagious.)
5. Pink eye
6. Head lice
7. Extreme congestion and/or signs of a bad cold
8. Extreme tiredness

We realize that this policy may be difficult for some parents, but please understand that in school environments we must reduce risks to other students of possible exposure to illness.

Medication

If your child needs to take medications while at school, including field trips, the following procedures must be adhered to:

1. A completed *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form* needs to be on file at the school. **This form is only valid for 12 months.** Your child's healthcare provider must clearly document the name of the medication, the amount and time to be given and any special instructions for administering the medication on the *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form*. If your child needs to keep a medication with him/her at all times, as in the case of an inhaler, the healthcare provider must also state that on the *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form*.
2. The child's healthcare provider and parent/guardian must sign the form.
3. The parent/guardian must bring the medication to the school (children are not permitted to bring medications to and from school). The medication must be in the original container from the pharmacy. It must be labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication and the amount to be given. The school's designee will count the medication upon receipt and then keep it in a locked cabinet in the school office.
4. The director's designee(s) trained in medication administration will administer the medication to your child each day while at school.
5. If the medication order changes or is discontinued, the parent needs to provide the school with a new *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form*, completed by the healthcare provider.
6. If your child needs to have medication administered on a field trip that he/she would not normally take at school (i.e. field trip extends past normal school hours), the parent needs to have an *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form* completed by the healthcare provider. Trained school personnel will administer the medication. An alternative is for the parent/guardian to come and give the child the medication.
7. Parents/guardians must provide any equipment necessary to dispense the medication (i.e. spoons or cups marked with measuring lines).

8. Non-Prescription medications, such as Advil, Tylenol, Tums, Benadryl and cough drops will be administered at the school following the same procedures as prescription medication. Only the parent signature is required on the *Authorization for Medication/Treatment Form*, and only after the parent/guardian is contacted allowing the medication to be given will it be administered to the child. If you need additional copies of the forms, please visit the academy office.

There is a separate ***Diabetes Medication/Treatment Authorization Form and Insulin Pump Medication Form*** as well as an *Asthma Action Plan* that needs to be completed for children requiring medication and/or treatment for Diabetes or Asthma while in school.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Behavioral Goals

1. To encourage independence and responsibility
2. To show constant respect for all persons regardless of age, or position
3. To demonstrate respect for personal and community property
4. To act in a way that encourages and maintains the classroom atmosphere so that it is conducive to learning and shows respect for every student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach To accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions
5. To recognize that there are times when we err and, therefore, there are times when forgiveness needs to be asked for and when forgiveness needs to be given

Chapel and Assembly Expectations

1. Walk with their class, in single file, so others may pass to and from the assembly or chapel
2. Follow the teacher's instructions for seating
3. Show respect for the speaker and each other by being quiet and attentive

Classroom Expectations

1. Be ready to work when class is to begin
2. Be safety conscious
3. Obey classroom procedures as directed by the teacher
4. Respect and be polite to all people
5. Respect the property of other people and of the school

Playground Expectations

1. Balls are to be kept on the blacktop or grassy areas
2. Keep off fences
3. Playground flooring (mulch) needs to stay where it is (no throwing, tossing, etc.)
4. Equipment is to be used as intended
5. Always obey the directions given by the adult in charge

Safety Drill Expectations

1. Absolutely no talking
2. Listen to and follow the teacher's instructions exactly

Bullying/Harassment

Our definition of bullying is any inappropriate behavior used intentionally as power or control over an individual, such as exclusion, dominance, control, intimidation and/or threats. Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy will not tolerate harassing or intimidating conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual. Consequences of such behavior will be determined by the teacher and/or director. All corrective measures are used with the long range goal of helping children make a wholesome adjustment to present and future environments and impressing on them that they are responsible for their actions and resulting consequences.

Prohibited Items

Students are not allowed to bring electronic equipment such as cell phones, iPods, and hand-held game systems to school. **These items will be taken and kept in the school office until a parent or guardian comes in for them.** The school is not responsible for the loss, theft, misuse, or damage done to any item brought from home.

School Property

School property includes tables, desks, books, computers, furniture, and any part of the building and grounds with which we all come in contact. Children are to be careful not to mar, ruin, or destroy anything within the building or on the outside. It is our goal to instill in each child a respect for school property and the property of others. In extreme cases, anyone who destroys property as a result of disobedience or carelessness will be responsible for paying for it and will be subject to suspension. Anyone who loses school property will be expected to pay for it.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the school that sexual harassment on the part of employees, parents, or children at any level is not permitted. By definition, sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is illegal in school according to the Civil Rights Act Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments. The federal law applies to everyone in the United States.

By sexual harassment it is understood:

- To make insinuating or sexual demands, the requirement of sexual favors or any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with the work of another.
- To utilize the rejection or acceptance of sexual demands as a criterion upon which decisions shall be made that would affect the promotion/grades of a person.
- To express oneself in a sexual manner verbally (inappropriate and unwanted comments about a person's body, clothing, gender, etc.) or physical (inappropriate and unwanted touch) to such a degree that it would create a hostile and/or offensive atmosphere for the employee or student.

Any complaint will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Social Networking

The Administration will intervene if any member of the school community posts, or forwards a comment or photo that negatively affects the school climate.

Solicitation or Sale of Goods or Services

Children may not sell or advertise any goods or activity on school property or at any school-sponsored activity without the expressed and written approval of the principal.

Weapon Possession

Any child responsible for bringing or using a weapon on school or church property or at any school or related church event shall be subject to immediate suspension and/or expulsion. In the case of a firearm, the police department will be notified immediately.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

In keeping with Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy's mission to develop Christian character and instill self-discipline, faculty and staff members strive to clearly communicate all school rules and classroom guidelines regarding conduct. These rules and guidelines are shared with the parents at the start of the school year. Conformity to these rules is expected at all times, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or elsewhere on the school campus. Children are expected to follow these rules out of love for God, respect for their teachers, and consideration for their fellow students.

The staff assumes the role of parent when the children are left under their care each day. The early childhood director and teachers use their discretion whenever discipline is deemed necessary. Parents can rest assured that all discipline is carried out in the spirit of Christian love by teachers who genuinely care about each child. Discipline comes from the word "disciple" – to teach. Discipline is our way of teaching children to make proper choices. Discipline, then, is viewed not as punishment, but loving correction. No form of physical, corporal, or emotionally abusive disciplinary measures are used at any time.

Discipline is administered for the following unacceptable behaviors and may lead to suspension, confiscation of material, and/or other disciplinary action:

- Being disrespectful, rude, or disobedient to school personnel
- Repeated violation of expected behaviors
- Using inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene language
- Stealing or possessing items not belonging to you
- Harassment of fellow students
- Vandalizing/defacing school property (parents will be financially liable)
- Attitude and examples which are detrimental to the welfare of other students
- Possession of water pistols, toy guns or knives.
- Possession of illicit substances.
- Possession of phones, electronic games, I-pods, and other electronic equipment without permission.

Disciplinary Procedures

Children learn best through experiences. Teachers must lovingly guide and redirect the children to help them to learn to cooperate with their peers and to have positive education experiences. Teachers work to accomplish this by:

1. Having a variety of activities for the children
2. Being consistent with classroom rules.
3. Limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid overcrowding, to allow for sufficient materials, and to provide the opportunity for constructive interactions.
4. Using a ratio below the HRS recommended ratio of adults to children
5. Speaking with a child if behavior is inappropriate
6. Using positive language with the child, giving praise for appropriate behavior
7. Refocusing a child through a touch on the shoulder or silent clue
8. Parents may receive a phone call, hand-written note, or e-mail message from the teacher indicating concern for the student's behavior and inviting parental involvement.
9. Ongoing infractions may result in student conferences with the Early Childhood Director.
10. A teacher or administrator will request a parent conference in which behavioral issues are identified and solutions are discussed.

11. A student may be suspended for continued violations of school rules. The types and quantity of violations are taken into consideration. A suspension may be 1, 3, or 5 days and may be served at home or in the school as directed by the administrator.
12. If a student persists in his/her lack of cooperation as indicated by an unwilling spirit, rebellious behavior, or unacceptable attitude, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child.

Parents with questions or concerns about disciplinary actions should first contact the teacher involved. If parents still have questions or concerns, they should then address them to the early childhood director. The director will then decide on the proper course of action. As disciplinary situations arise, we will approach our concerns with prayer and Christian love, always seeking to arrive at peaceful and proper solutions that are in the best interests of the child.

Termination of Enrollment

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy is able to provide an outstanding quality Christian Education to most students who apply for enrollment. Because of size and resource limitations at the present time, we are unable to offer "special education classes" for those who are severely handicapped, have pronounced learning disabilities, or serious behavioral problems. Within our limitations, we work with students who have special needs but without "special education classes." All students must be able to function within the generally accepted norms of acceptable behavior in the classroom and playgrounds. If serious behavior problems exist, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The teacher will attempt to resolve whatever problem exists. The teacher will keep dated documentation of attempts to resolve the problem.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the teacher will request a meeting with the parents or guardians. The director will be notified of such a meeting. It is assumed that parents will approach such a conference in a spirit of cooperation with the teacher so that a mutually satisfactory solution may result. Where appropriate, behavioral covenants may be utilized.
3. Should the problem continue, the teacher, parents, and director will seek a solution. The church council will be notified. If a solution is still not reached, the teacher, parents or guardians, director, and a church council representative will meet to consider an appropriate course of action.
4. If the problem cannot be resolved satisfactorily in the best interest of the child, other children in the class and the school, the child will be dismissed from Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy.
5. If a child is dismissed from Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy, the school administration will be fully cooperative with the child's new school and will forward all necessary records and information, as requested, to the new school.

The administration reserves the right to expel any pupil for persistent and unacceptable behavior, continued lack of progress, or lack of home support. It should likewise be noted that situations involving inappropriate language, disrespectful behavior, or acts of defiance would warrant sending the child home during the school day. Persistent or repeated misbehavior would warrant expulsion of the child from Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy or our Extended Care program.

The School Board also reserves the right to expel any pupil if a parent uses disrespectful language towards a teacher or staff person, or demonstrates a lack of faith and trust in the mission of Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy.

In the event of an expulsion, financial obligations are to be met in accordance with our Financial Policies. If parents wish to discuss an expulsion, they must notify the church council in writing within ten (10) days of the expulsion. The council will schedule a meeting at the earliest possible date.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Backpacks

Backpacks are a necessity. You will need to have one that is large enough to hold an extra change of clothes, a rain poncho, a sweater or jacket (when weather dictates the need), your child's folder, crib sheet, and lunch box if your child is staying beyond the noon dismissal. The change of clothes and the student folder (our way of corresponding back and forth with each other) should remain in the backpack and come back and forth each day.

Birthday Celebrations and Invitations

The school requests that birthday invitations be sent through the mail or given via telephone rather than handed out at the school unless the entire class is being invited.

You may provide a special snack for your child's birthday if the teacher has been notified ahead of time of your intentions. We ask that only the snack and one decoration are provided. If your child has a summer birthday, please speak to your child's teacher regarding the arrangement of a school year celebration, if desired.

Book Orders

About once a month you will be given book order forms from Carnival, God's World, Scholastic Firefly, Trumpet, and Troll. This is an inexpensive way of purchasing books for your child to read. From time to time Scholastic offers a software brochure that offers computer games. Each order earns bonus points which teachers can use for classroom supplies. Directions for ordering will be with the order forms.

Calendars

Each child will receive a monthly calendar with important information. Some of this information will be what we are working on each week: theme, Bible story, snack person/leader for the day (3's and 4's), field trips, chapel day, music day, library day, and other special events. Please post this calendar in a prominent location so you can keep track of what we are doing each day. Keep in mind that your child's assigned snack day is also his/her Show and Tell day.

Chapel

Chapel is on Wednesday mornings. Parents are always welcome to attend. Offerings are collected from the students at chapel services for outreach ministry.

Church and Sunday School

Church and/or Sunday school attendance is encouraged weekly. Students may attend the church of their family's choice. School families are always welcome to join in worship services at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. Worship services are held on Sunday at 8:00AM and 10:45 AM and on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Bible Study and Sunday School are at 9:30 AM each Sunday.

Classes

Gloria Dei reserves the right to exercise its prerogative in the placement of our younger, early childhood group of children. A natural progression of moving children from one age group to another gives each child the opportunity to develop and progress at his/her own natural pace.

Classroom Celebrations

Classes usually have parties to celebrate special holidays. A list of necessary items will be provided by the classroom teacher. To prevent classroom disruptions, siblings from other classes are not excused from class to attend a brother or sister's celebration. Parents volunteering may not bring along siblings, as the volunteer's undivided attention is needed to help with the class.

Communication:

Gloria Dei Academy publishes a weekly newsletter called “Eagle’s Wings.” A copy is sent home with our students and a copy is emailed to our families each Friday. The newsletter will include information regarding upcoming school activities and other useful, interesting information. You can also find information on our website at **www.GloriaDeiAcademy.org**. Please read all items sent to you in a timely fashion so you do not miss any activities, deadlines, or important information.

In early August parents are expected to meet with the director and teachers at a **Parent Orientation** night to discuss the school’s philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-and-answer session provide parents with the helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year. **No students should be at orientation.**

If at any time during the school year parents have questions concerning their child’s progress or behavior, they are encouraged to talk with the teacher and/or call the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. This may be accomplished by stopping by or calling the school office or e-mailing the teacher. The teachers will make every effort to return your call or respond to your e-mail no later than the following day.

As part of our open-door policy, parents are welcome to visit their child’s classroom and observe education in action. Prior to the visit, arrangements should be made with the teacher for the best time to visit so that the teacher may prepare ways to involve the parent during the visit. Upon arrival at school, parents will sign in and obtain a guest pass from the school office.

Cooking

Occasionally, on your child’s snack day, your child may be asked, on a rotating basis, to bring in ingredients for a special cooking project. This cooking project will also be our snack for the day. Sometimes you will be asked to bring in the ingredients ahead of time so the children can cook or bake the project the day before they eat the snack. A note will be sent home prior to the cooking day to remind you of what will be needed.

Emergency Situations

It is important for the safety of the children at Gloria Dei to participate in drills for fire, duck and cover, and lock down situations. This way if a crisis situation should occur, they will be prepared.

- **Fire Drill:** The purpose of a fire drill is to have a quiet, orderly evacuation; assure a complete evacuation; and know primary and alternative evacuation routes. At the sound of the alarm, all students and faculty will stop their activities and exit from the building in an orderly manner.
- **Tornado Drills:** The school will monitor the national Weather alerts for severe storms and tornado watches/warnings. When alerted to possible severe weather the teachers and students will be instructed to leave their classrooms and report to their tornado drill stations. Students will be seated with their backs against a wall whenever possible. Students should use coats and jackets to protect themselves from flying debris.
- **Bomb Threats:** Should the school receive a written or verbal communication indicating that an explosive device has been placed on the premises; the principal will send a staff member to alert the faculty and offices. After receiving the warning, all teachers and students will stop their activities and exit the building in an orderly manner. Teachers and students will report to their assigned fire drill locations. Should there be insufficient time for a staff member to alert the teachers, the fire alarm will be used to order the evacuation of the buildings. Police and/or fire personnel will determine when students and staff may reenter the buildings.

Should staff members or students find a suspicious package or container, they must not touch or move the package, but immediately alert the office to its presence. A suspicious package is defined as “any unknown container producing a ticking or other sound indicating some type of timing device, contains visible wires or sections of pipe, or has an odor of gunpowder or chemicals.”

Field Trips

While on field trips away from school, children are reminded that they are ambassadors for Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy and therefore required to demonstrate appropriate behavior. At all times children are to be in the presence of a teacher or an adult chaperone. A child who violates the privilege of attending field trips may not be permitted to attend future trips. A child that is not permitted to attend field trips will remain home and the school will not be obligated to provide or arrange for supervision of that child.

On some field trips the teachers may ask for a limited number of parents to help. Parents volunteering to help are not to bring along other children or infants as their undivided attention is needed to help with the class.

If your child arrives at school after the class has left campus for a field trip, you will be unable to leave your child at school.

Several field trips require payment to cover the cost of the field trip. The cost is determined based on attendance by all students. When a field trip is scheduled for your child’s class, you will be charged for the cost of the trip whether or not your child is present for the field trip.

Field trip forms are to be signed and returned before a student is permitted to attend a field trip. There will be no exceptions. Verbal permission will not be accepted.

Folders

Beginning with the first day of school, your child will be given a special student folder. There are two pockets on the inside of the folder. One side will be labeled “To Come Back to School.” Items in this pocket need your attention and then need to be returned to school. The other pocket will be labeled “To Go Home.” These items will be projects and other items that are being sent home and do not need to be returned. Each day when your child arrives in class, he/she will remove the folder and place it in the special basket. The teacher will fill the folder, and it will be returned to you at the end of the day. This folder will be our way of corresponding back and forth. If you have a message for the teacher, please see to it that it is placed in your child’s folder. It is very important that you check this folder each evening, and it should be returned to school each day in your child’s backpack.

Grievances

Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy and the education process is a cooperative endeavor of students, parents, staff and administration. On occasion, complaints or concerns about issues, styles or occurrences will arise between individuals. The church council believes that all concerns should be resolved at the lowest possible level of decision-making.

Grievance Procedures:

If a parent is concerned about a situation at school, the following procedure must be followed:

- Speak with the teacher involved.
- If the issue is not resolved, speak to the early childhood director.
- If necessary, speak to the director a second time.
- If still dissatisfied, speak to the pastor or bring it to the attention of the church council.

Concerns directed to the church council must be submitted in writing at least one week prior to the next meeting of the council. The president will consider the concern with the council in executive session and determine whether or not to schedule a hearing. Information concerning a hearing will be communicated to all involved persons. After a hearing, the church council will render a decision within a reasonable time. At every stage of the process, we will follow the guidelines set by: *Matthew 5 and Matthew 18*.

Grievance Process:

Complaints will be handled in the following manner: Any complaint of sexual abuse by a staff member will be reported to DCFS immediately. Pending an investigation, the identified staff member will be placed on leave with pay.

- A report by a student that a staff member may have subjected any student to any form of sexual harassment or discrimination is a serious allegation and must be reported to the director.
- The director shall undertake an investigation, documenting all facets pertaining to the allegation.

Appropriate disciplinary or other action against a staff member who is found to have committed any act of sexual harassment or discrimination will follow the procedure established in the congregational personnel manual.

Complaints from students or parent/legal guardians of students concerning corporal punishment, verbal abuse or other complaints about a teacher or staff member will be investigated immediately, and documented by the director. This subsequent investigation may or may not result in disciplinary action based on the following criteria:

- Determination of the validity of the infraction
- Severity of the infraction
- Repeated nature of the infraction (if earlier infractions were considered to be minor)
- Any disciplinary action imposed on staff members will follow those procedures established in the congregational personnel manual.

A written report, including the signed complaint, investigation results, and any disciplinary action imposed by the director will be given to the president of the church council and the pastor. The director, the president of the church council, and pastor will sign the report and return it to the director for inclusion in the staff member's personnel file.

A verbal report of the investigation will be given at the next church council meeting. Following this meeting, the director will report to the complainant that an investigation has been conducted and completed.

Jesus Time

We will have a weekly Bible theme with daily religious sessions including Bible readings, role playing, special songs and finger plays, and prayers. The children will be given a Bible sheet each week that is the basis for our weekly theme.

Label, Label, Label

All items your child brings to school each day must be labeled with his/her name (first name, last name, or just initials). This labeling is necessary for lunch boxes, plastic containers that are in the lunch boxes, backpacks, sweaters, jackets, rain ponchos, and blankets and sheets used in aftercare. Please make sure everything is labeled.

Music

In addition to learning a lot of different songs in our classroom circle times, the children will attend group music/singing time once a week. Lynn Macha will lead us in this half hour music period.

Personal Property

Students are not to touch the property of others without the other person's expressed permission. This is also true of items found on the teacher's desk. Items found are to be presumed lost and should be turned into the office. To do otherwise will be considered stealing.

Items of value, including large amounts of money should not be brought to school. If such is a necessity, the items should be left in the office.

Children may bring ONE personal item belonging to them for **Show and Tell** time. We encourage bringing an item that relates to the theme of the week. However, no guns, action figures, or toys pertaining to violence will be allowed. We will not be responsible for jewelry or valuables. If you are concerned, please do not allow your child to wear jewelry to our school. Body tattoos are discouraged.

Political Solicitations

Gloria Dei teaches its students the rights, duties, and responsibilities of good citizenship. We teach this through classroom instruction and through observations and discussions of political campaigns. We encourage our staff, students and parents to participate fully in political activities apart from our school; however, while on school grounds or as part of a school-sponsored activity, we do not permit any staff member, student, or parent to promote the cause or activities of any political party or political action group. In addition, we do not allow the promotion of a philosophy that contradicts the teaching of our church.

Potty Training

Children entering the three and four year old programs are expected to be potty trained. For our younger children, potty training can be easily accomplished if your child is developmentally ready, but it takes a lot of cooperation and positive praise between the parents and staff. It is essential to be consistent with your child and the staff, or it only confuses the child.

Clothes must be ones that are easily taken on and off. No one piece or suspender type clothing (such as overalls) should be worn during this training period. Three to four pairs of training pants, extra clothing, and a plastic bag must be brought to the classroom.

Rest Time

According to Health Department regulations, all children in daycare must rest for one hour. A towel or blanket labeled with the child's name is needed. The bedding remains in school during the week and should be taken home each Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday. Heavy quilts and pillows are not permissible since there is not enough storage space.

School Closing

Emergency and Inclement Weather Campus Closings at Gloria Dei:

- When the Broward County schools are already scheduled to be open and they close due to inclement weather or other circumstances, we will follow that announcement—our campus will be closed.
- If the county, state, or federal government declares a “state of emergency” we will close our scheduled campus activities.
- If the county schools were already scheduled to be closed and we were scheduled to be open and a “state of emergency” is called, the pastor, president, head elder and director will communicate and make a decision in the best interest of the school and the congregation. Such an announcement will be communicated through local radio, the local TV stations, text, or email, and where possible, via the internet.
- Emergency school closing delay: It is possible from time to time that a critical event occurs at or near Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy that compels us to consider closing school. The director, or a designee, will have the sole discretion to make a decision regarding closing, taking into account the best interest of the school community. From time to time this will be communicated to the church and academy via a newsletter or other postings as a reminder of the emergency closing policies.

School Insurance

Accident insurance is not provided. Insurance must be provided by the parents via a private insurance company.

Security

Parents are discouraged from leaving personal items of any kind, and especially purses, cell phones, and laptops in their vehicles. Parents should not place these items in the trunk of their cars after arriving on campus. These measures will discourage thieves from breaking car windows. At no time should children be left in vehicles without supervision.

Show and Tell (3- and 4-year-olds)

One person will have Show and Tell each day. The day your child will have his/her Show and Tell is the day he/she is assigned to be the snack person. Each child can bring in an item of his/her choice. A time will be set aside during the day for him/her to talk about this special item. It is best if the chosen item is not fragile, too large, or really valuable. We always try to be very careful with the items brought for Show and Tell; however, sometimes things do break.

Snacks

Our Pre-K3 and PreK4 children take turns bringing a snack for the class on assigned days. Your child’s teacher will supply you with a monthly calendar. Please check the calendar to be sure you are ready to provide snack on your assigned day.

We ask that you furnish a healthy snack with milk or a natural juice such as orange, fruit, apple, or white grape juice. Please do not send in red or purple juices. We do have a freezer and refrigerator for snacks only. Each month your child’s teacher will put at the top of your calendar how many snacks you will need along with one gallon of drink.

If your child is absent on their snack day or if your child forgets snack on his/her assigned snack day, please send in a non-perishable snack and drink when your child returns to school. Again, you will need to supply one gallon of drink and enough snack food for the class, but it must be non-perishable since it won’t be used immediately.

WE DO SERVE PEANUT BUTTER ON CAMPUS

Special Clothing Notes

Please provide your child with a change of clothes for emergencies. Place the clothes in a zip-lock bag in your child's backpack for their convenience. Please also include socks. Cold weather attire should be provided on chilly days.

Special Programs

A number of special programs take place during the school year to demonstrate the children's talents and learning skills. All students are expected to participate in those programs applicable to their grade level. These may include musicals, plays and church programs.

Students who leave school early, or are absent on the day of an event are prohibited from participating in the event unless prior arrangements have been made with the director's approval.

Teacher's Desks

The teacher's desk is her domain. Children must respect the right of privacy of each teacher. No messages or materials of any kind are to be removed from the desk without the teacher's permission.

Volunteers *ALL VOLUNTEERS NEED TO BE FINGERPRINTED*

Volunteers to help with class parties, field trips, and fund raising events may be recruited and their efforts coordinated by classroom teachers. Upon arrival, all volunteers, including those preregistered for a volunteer assignment, must sign in at the office before going to a classroom. The office will issue a tag to wear identifying the volunteer.

PARKING POLICIES

Parking Lots

Parking lots are a source of danger to your children. When dropping off in the morning and picking up later in the day you must park your car and come to your child's room. Please observe the following guidelines at all times:

1. **ALWAYS** park in a designated parking spot. Please DO NOT park in the striped safety areas or on the side of the walkways or driveways.
2. **NEVER** leave a car unattended with the motor running!
3. **ALWAYS LOCK YOUR CAR! DO NOT LEAVE PURSES OR OTHER VALUABLES IN YOUR CAR WHILE YOU ARE DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP YOUR CHILD.**
4. **ALWAYS** hold your child's hand when coming from or going to an automobile. Do not let your child run ahead of you. He/she might inadvertently run behind a car that is just starting to back out.
5. If you are going to be late picking up your child, please call the school. You must park your car and come to your child's room to sign out your child.
6. We will take walks to the parking lot with the children and discuss safety precautions.
7. Enter and leave the parking lot with extreme caution. Always be on the lookout for wandering children.

Driving Rules for Academy Property:

1. Our parking lot speed limit is 5 miles per hour. Please drive slowly as you look carefully for other families walking in our parking lot. We will report speeders to the Davie Police Department.
2. **Cell phone use while driving on campus is prohibited.**

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Payment of Fees

The Infant Program is based on a weekly fee that is due each Monday after attendance. A late fee of \$15.00 will be applied for all invoices not paid by the second week.

The 1 Year Old Program and 2K (two year old pre-kindergarten) Program are based on a monthly tuition that is due on the first of each month. A late payment fee of \$15.00 will be applied for any balance not paid by the 15th of the month. New students will receive a pro-rated tuition if attendance begins after the start of the month.

The 3K (three year old pre-kindergarten) Program is based on a yearly tuition fee for 180 days of school, divided into monthly payments for your convenience. If your child is registered for the full school year you will be billed using a ten (10) month plan. All monthly payments begin in August and run through May. New students will receive a pro-rated yearly tuition for the number of school days remaining that will be divided into the number of months remaining until May.

Payments for August – April are due on the 1st of each month. A late payment fee of \$15.00 will be applied for any balance not paid by the 15th of the month.

The final tuition payment for May must be paid by the 1st of May in order for the child to attend that month. **All 3K accounts must be paid in full by May 1st.**

The 4K (VPK) Program consists of two parts. The state funded VPK program covers 180 school days that run from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. If your child is registered for only the morning VPK program there are no fees involved. Students who will be participating in our Extended Care Program for before and after school care will receive a monthly billing that is due the first of each month. A late payment fee of \$15.00 will be applied for any balance not paid by the 15th of the month.

Tuition may be paid by check or cash. A credit card or debit card option is also available for a fee of 3.5% for each transaction.

The fee for returned checks is \$35.00.

Any refunds due to parents for over payments will be given at the end of the school year.

If your account becomes delinquent one month it may cause immediate suspension.

Tuition Discounts

Only one discount will apply per student.

Multiple children: Families with multiple children registered at Gloria Dei Lutheran Academy will receive a 10% discount on the tuition of a 2nd child.

Heroes of Gloria Dei Scholarship

A discount of 15% for tuition is available to eligible children of Active Duty Military members, Military Reservists, Veterans, Police Officers, and Firefighters. Please inquire with the office for full details of the program.