

St. Paul Lutheran School Extended Care Operational Policies

All information here is current as of November 1, 2017. Our policies are reviewed annually and updated if necessary. If policies or procedures change, we will provide a timely written notice to parents.

Purpose:

St. Paul Lutheran School (SPLS) Extended Care exists to serve students who attend SPLS. It also exists to support and follow the mission statement of SPLS.

Mission Statement:

St. Paul Lutheran School provides a Biblically-integrated, academically excellent education for students. St. Paul partners with families to equip children to boldly reflect the character of Jesus Christ.

License & Regulation: **746.501 (19 & 21)**

St. Paul Lutheran School Day Care program is licensed by the state of Texas as a Child Day Care Center with the capacity of 60 children, ages 4-13 years.

Parents are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the Director to show you the most recent copy of:

- Minimum Standards for Child Daycare Centers (these are also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at your local Licensing Office)
- Most recent DFPS Inspection/Investigation Report (compliance information is also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at your local Licensing Office)
- Our Center's Operational Policies and Procedures (handbook)

Hours of Operation: **746.501 (1)**

Our center is open 7 am-8 am for Before School Care and 12 pm to 6 pm for After School Care during regular school days. Our center is not open during summer vacation. **Children should not arrive at the center before 7 am, nor should they be left after 6 pm.**

746.501 (2)

Children will be signed in by staff in Early Morning Care and when they are released from school at noon. Parents must enter the building and sign their child/children out. Our responsibility for your child begins when we sign them into our program and ends when you take him/her from the care of the staff member. Please do not allow your child to wander off unattended or leave the building ahead of you. For safety purposes, only those designated on the school's software Renweb as a designated person for pick up will be permitted to leave with your child/children. If a circumstance should arise for someone other than those designated for pick-up of your child/children, you will need to update your list in advance or notify the staff in writing. We will require a Valid ID for identification of an individual we do not recognize. Please inform those whom you have designated to pick up of our policy.

Holidays/Closings: 746.501 (1)

Day Care will be closed on all school holidays and early dismissal days. The following are days Day Care & School will be closed. * Indicates Early Morning Care will be open.

Sept. 4 th	Labor Day	Feb. 19 th	Presidents' Day
Sept. 29 th	Walk-A-Thon*	Mar. 12 th -16 th	Spring Break
Oct. 19 th	Grandparents Day*	Mar. 30 th	Good Friday
Oct. 20 th	Parent/Teacher Conference	Apr. 2 nd	Easter Monday
Nov. 20 th --24 th	Thanksgiving Break	May 25 th	Last Day*
Dec. 22 nd -Jan. 5 th	Christmas Break		

***Note: This indicates there is no After School Care since the school dismisses at 12, but Early Morning Care will be open at 7 am.**

Anytime the center will be closed a notice will be posted as a reminder.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is based on facility and staffing that we must have available in order to care properly for your child. Therefore, if your child does not attend for any reason, tuition is **NOT** reduced. No reduction is given for unexpected closings, holidays, severe weather closings or absences.

Monthly tuition is payable in advance. Drop-In or hourly is billed at the beginning of the month for the previous month usage.

Monthly Tuition is as follows:

• Early Morning Care	7 am- 8 am	\$110.00 monthly
• Afternoon Care (PK only)	12 pm – 3:30 pm	\$320.00 monthly
• After School Care (K-8 th)	3:30 pm – 6 pm	\$200.00 monthly
• Afternoon & After School Care	12 pm – 6 pm	\$520.00 monthly

Drop-In/Hourly Rates:

- \$6.50 per hour with 24 hour advance notice given to the director via e-mail (Susan.Austin@sharingewlife.com or phone call (817-332-2281 x 113).
- \$13.00 per hour without 24 hour advance notice *(unforeseen events or an emergency will be taken into consideration)

In addition to tuition, the center has the following required fees:

At the time of enrollment, a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 is required.

A snack fee of \$60.00 per child is collected in September and January. (This fee applies to all children who stay for After School Care.)

Also, the center has the following fees which are incurred in certain situations:

A late pick up fee of \$1.00 is incurred for every minute (per family) that a parent is late picking up a child past the designated pick up time. The pickup time is 6 pm.

A late payment fee of \$10.00 is assessed when payments are late. Payments are due the 15th of each month. Late payments are considered late on the 1st working day after the due date.

A returned check fee of \$25.00 is assessed for every check returned by your bank. In addition, if the return check causes your payment to be late, you are also assessed the appropriate late payment fee.

Dispute of an invoice must be made within 30 days of the date of the invoice in question.

All records will be kept on for 3 years.

NOTE: Accounts must remain current for continued use of day care.

Billing Procedures: 746.501 (13)

Billing will take place at the end of each month. Those paying monthly will be paying for the following month, while drop-ins or hourly will be paying for the previous month usage. Invoices are e-mailed to parents.

Tax Statements:

A statement will be provided before January 31 of each year for those planning to expense childcare when filing taxes with the IRS. These statements will be mailed to your home.

Procedure for Release of Children: 746.501 (2)

Children will be released only to a parent or persons authorized by the parents on our Renweb system. Persons authorized by parents to pick up their children will be required to sign the student out and present their driver's license for identification. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the authorized names current.

For safety purposes, only those designated on the school software RenWeb as a designated person for pick up will be permitted to leave with your child/children. If a circumstance should arrive for someone other than those on your list to pick up your child/children, you will need to update your list in advance, or notify the staff in writing.

We require a Valid ID for identification of an individual we do not recognize. Please inform those whom you have designated to pick up of our policy.

If a child is not to be released to a parent listed it must be pursuant to a custody order and a copy of the court order must be placed in the child's folder. The centers' Director should be made aware of this at enrollment. If this document is not in the child's folder and the Director has no knowledge of the court order, we will be obligated to release the child to either parent.

Enrollment Procedures: 746.501 (13)

A file will be maintained on each child enrolled in our center by the school office and on RenWeb.

The file will contain:

- the child's completed application form (day care uses the school form)
- the child emergency contact information (RenWeb)
- the child's immunization record (kept by the school office)
- the child's emergency care plan for allergies (kept in school office, director's office, lunchroom & on caregiver's clipboard)
- the child's release information (RenWeb)
- the child's health form (PK only) signed and completed by a doctor along with a copy of the child's current immunization records

- record of contacts with child's parents (e-mails or notes)
- Signed record of receiving Operational Policy & Guidance & Discipline Policy
- Parents will be notified of all changes to the Operational Policies in writing, requiring a signature confirming they have received the new notification

Daily Schedules:

The activity plan is designed for a variety of activities daily which include indoor/outdoor play, a balance of active/quiet play, and child initiated activities/caregiver initiated activities. Jesus is woven into our day through everything we do. We teach Biblical truths in accordance with our school's beliefs. Screen time is not provided at our center.

- Early Morning Care 7-8 am
 - 7 am Children have creative play or weather permitting-outdoor play
 - 7:50 am Clean up and get ready for school
 - 7:55 am Pray with the children before they start their school day
 - 8:00 am Dismiss 3rd-8th grades for class, walk the PK-2nd graders to class
- Afternoon Care 12-3:30 pm
 - 12:00 pm Pick up the children from their classrooms & get them signed in
 - 12:15 pm Take them outside to play before lunch (weather permitting)
 - 12:35 pm Take them in to the restroom and wash hands for lunch
 - 12:45 pm Lunch time
 - 1:15 pm Restroom break before nap time
 - 1:30 pm Bedtime story and nap time
 - 2:30 pm Wake up and work on the craft of the day
 - 3:15 pm Get the children ready to go home
 - 3:30 pm Those going home in carline will be taken to car line and the remaining children will stay for After School Care
- After School Care
 - 3:30 pm Pick up children from school and take to the lunchroom for snacks
 - 4:00 pm Children can go outside to play or go to the homework room to work on their homework
The homework room remains open for 1 hour every day.
 - 5:00 pm Children are on the playground (weather permitting)
 - 5:30 pm Children will go up to the Day Care room for games until close
 - 6:00 pm Day Care Closes

PK Nap Policy: 746.2901

Children in our Afternoon Care take naps daily approximately from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM. We provide the cot and a storage container for your child's nap items. You will need to provide a crib sheet and a small blanket. These items will be sent home each Friday for laundry.

Children are welcome to have security objects such as a small stuffed animal at naptime. If you send in one, please make sure it is one that can be kept and sent home every Friday. At all other times of the day, objects are kept in the child's storage container.

We understand that some children don't sleep; however, they really need some rest time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning. They will be provided with books to look at and soft music is played.

Immunization Requirements: **746.501 (11)**

Immunizations are required of all children attending child care in the state of Texas. You must show proof of the appropriate immunizations BEFORE your child can attend our center. We must have a written plan of action signed by your child's physicians if the immunizations are not meeting the Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child Care Facilities.

Exceptions:

Exceptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. You must contact the local health department to find out what you must provide to us in lieu of the immunization record.

All children in PK must have a Health Statement signed by their physician and submitted at enrollment. TB testing is not required by the county for children to be in Child Care.

Employee Immunizations: **746.501 (27)**

While the health and safety of our employees and the children in our care is very important, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employee. The only exception to this policy is the TB test that is currently required for the employee by the City of Fort Worth Consumer Health Department.

The vaccine that we currently recommend our employees receive:
Influenza (annually)

Hearing & Vision Screening Requirements: **746.501 (12)**

Hearing and vision testing is required for children starting at age 4.

Dispensing Medicine: **746.501 (4)**

Our Center does not dispense medication. All medicine is stored and dispensed through the school office.

Long term medication will be dispensed with authorization from a licensed physician.

Prescription medication should be in the original container labeled with the child's name, a recent date (within six (6) months), written directions (including times) and the physician name.

Short term non-prescription medication (such as pain relievers or cough syrup) should be labeled with the child's name and recent date. This medication is administered to the child only with written authorization of a licensed physician or the students' parents. A form must be filled out completely, dated and signed with directions (including times) for any medication to be given.

The school secretary should be informed in writing, when medication is to begin, be discontinued, changed, or used on a trial basis.

All medications are kept in the school office under lock & key.

Medication that is expired or no longer required will be disposed of or returned to the parent.

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent: 746.501 (18)

Our center does not furnish or apply sunscreen or insect repellent.

Inclement Weather:

The principal of St. Paul Lutheran School may need to close, delay, or dismiss early due to an emergency situation, including but not limited to severe weather conditions. We are committed to the safety of our children, parents and staff. Closures may be announced via school wide email, official school social media accounts, and through local television news outlets. Early Morning Care along with After School Care will also follow St. Paul Lutheran School closings, delays, or early dismissals.

Illness & Exclusion Criteria: 746.501 (3 & 26)

Every effort is made by the center staff to prevent the spread of disease. Even with precautions, children still become ill from time to time.

If your child exhibits a change in mood or behavior, a health check may be conducted to determine if your child is ill. The health check may include a visual or physical assessment of the child and/or the use of a thermometer to reveal the child's temperature.

When a child is ill, they are in need of more care than the caregiver can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care. We are not licensed to provide get-well care; therefore, ill children must be excluded from day care.

In the event that a child becomes ill, we will attempt to contact the child's parents. If we cannot contact the parents, we will contact the person(s) designated as the emergency contact on the child's admission forms, and ask them to pick up the child. Once parents are notified, an ill child needs to be picked up within 30 minutes.

The administrative staff makes the final decision of whether the child can remain in care or if the child should be excluded from day care.

The following are conditions are causes for exclusion from the Center:

- **Fever over 100 degrees.** Children should stay at home at least 24 hours after a normal temperature is achieved **WITHOUT** the help of fever-reducing medications. For example, if your child goes home on Monday with a fever, they may come back to the Center on Wednesday, if their temperature was normal on Tuesday. The 24-hour waiting period allows your child's immune system to regain strength.
- **Fever over 99 degrees with a stiff neck or back.** Children may return only with a doctor's written permission.
- **Diarrhea** (watery bad smelling stools more than once in succession). Children may return when normal function returns.
- **Vomiting** (two or more episodes in the last 24 hours). Children may return when they can retain a light meal.

- **Persistent hacking or congested cough with sore throat** (very red or blistered throat). Children may return with doctor's written permission.
- **Green nasal discharge** (indicates a respiratory infection which requires treatment). Children may return with doctor's written permission.
- **Difficulty in breathing** to the point where the child is very uncomfortable or unable to sleep normally.
- **Convulsions.**
- **Persistent pain in abdomen.**
- **Swelling, redness, or throbbing in an injured part of body.**
- **Undiagnosed profuse rash or blisters on parts of the body.**
- **Unexpected profuse sweating.**
- **Head lice.** Child may return after treatment and removal of all nits.
- **Infectious skin or eye conditions** (such as ringworm, impetigo or pink eye). Children may return 24 hours after treatment with an antibiotic is begun.

Procedure for Handling a Disaster: 746.501 (23)

Caregivers are knowledgeable in emergency procedures for a fire, tornado, or toxic spill and can relay this information to the children in their care. Diagrams of exit routes are posted in each room.

At the beginning of each year, caregivers will talk with their children about fire drills, what happens, how they line up, where to exit and where they go during the drill. The fire drills will take place once a month.

In preparation for a tornado drill, the caregiver will show the children where the safest area-(normally a hall or closet away from the windows) and how they will need to sit. These drills are conducted 4 times each year.

In preparation for a toxic spill, the caregiver will keep the class inside their room to avoid exposure.

A lock down situation requires all doors to the classroom be locked. Caregivers will move children to an area where they can't be seen from the hallway or outside. It is important for the children to remain silent. School lock downs would be in a response to an intruder in the building or police action in the area. This drill will be practiced 4 times a year.

In preparation for evacuation of the building all children will be relocated to The D.O.C.K. It is located at 1701 11th Ave. Fort Worth, Texas. If necessary, parents will be notified via phone or text to pick their child up from The D.O.C.K.

Emergency Preparedness: 746.501 (23)

In the event of an emergency, operating procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the children.

Evacuation Plans:

- In some circumstances, parents will be called upon to pick up their children.
- In the event of an emergency, the staff is responsible for moving children to the designated safe area or alternate shelter.
- Emergency evacuation & relocation diagrams are located in classrooms & Day Care bulletin board.
- Alternate Shelter: The D.O.C.K. located at 1701 11th Ave. Fort Worth, TX 76102 817-332-2281
 - Upon departure and arrival, the staff will have a list of all children that must be account for. Together, the director and staff will verify that all children are present.

- The principal of St. Paul Lutheran School is responsible for calling the local authorities needed.
- The Director will notify parents and DFPS child care licensing.
- The Director is responsible for securing children's emergency numbers & emergency medical authorization.
- The school secretary will be responsible for all medication.

Injuries: 746.501 (6)

Our staff will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately, accidents may occur. Our staff members are trained in CPR and basic first aid procedures. We have implemented the following procedures, should your child experience an injury while at our center.

The caregiver will assess the injury and if it is minor (i.e. scabs, bruises, bumps, etc.) first aid will be given and a "Boo-Boo" report will be filled out and sent home with the child. If the injury is in question, the director will be called to determine the severity of the injury.

In case of a serious accident or injury, EMS 911 will be contacted first. Within limits of their ability, the staff will administer first aid. We will make every attempt to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the person you have indicated on the forms to make medical decisions for your child. If we cannot reach you, we will release your child into the custody of the emergency paramedics to transport your child for immediate medical care. Staff is prohibited from transporting an injured child. A staff member will remain with your child until you arrive.

Any medical bills that may arise from an accident are the responsibility of the parent.

Procedure for Handling Medical Emergencies: 746.501 (5)

Our center will notify parents immediately if their child:

- is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional;
- have a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the program.

The center will follow the following procedures in case of emergencies:

1. Call 911
2. Give the child first-aid treatment or CPR when needed:
3. Contact the child's parents.

Discipline and Guidance: 746.501 (7)

(See also St. Paul Lutheran School's - Addendum - A Christ-Centered, Principled Approach to the Treatment of Others)

Our center always strives to have a positive atmosphere. No corporal punishment or verbal abuse of any nature is allowed. For the safety of all children, those who show repeated misbehavior will be dealt with in steps. They are as follows:

1. Talk with the child and let him know his behavior is not appropriate and can't continue
2. Second time, meet with the child and principal or director with a note going home to parents for their signature.

3. Third time, parents are called in to visit with principal, director and child. A plan of action is given to parents and told next offense; the child will be excluded from our center for a determined amount of time.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self- control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child.

The following are examples:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything on or on a child's mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Suspension and Expulsion of Children: 746.501 (8)

Unfortunately there are sometimes reasons we have to suspend or expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child/children in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

In the event of a possible suspension or expulsion, the day care director makes the decision. Parents who wish to appeal the suspension and expulsion may appeal to the school principal.

Staff Supervision of Children:

- Two staff will be present at all times(should one need to be away, the director will step in)
- Staff/Child ratios are set in Minimum Standard guidelines by the State of Texas and are followed
- Playground area is checked regularly to reduce the likelihood of accidents and injuries
- Staff are trained to respond quickly & appropriately to emergencies
- Staff will actively scan the play environment
- Staff are physically positioned in two places to observe the maximum area possible
- Staff will regularly move around the area, observing & interacting with the children
- Staff should never be on their cell phones

Personal Belongings:

We strongly recommend all toys and personal items be left at home. Please note that if your child does bring an item he/she is responsible for any items brought to our center. Our center will not be responsible for toys or personal items brought from home.

PK children are required to bring items for naptime (crib sheet, small blanket and/or small stuffed animal to sleep with). These items must be marked with the child's name. We will furnish each child a cot and a small storage container to keep them in during the week. Every Friday these items will be sent home for cleaning.

Weather permitting; we will go outdoors to play. Please be sure your child has the proper clothes for our changing weather.

With all children wearing uniforms to school, be sure your child's clothes are labeled so they can be easily found in case they are lost.

Procedures for Parental Notification: 746.501 (6)

Our center will notify parents in writing of any changes to the operational policies and enrollment agreement. Parents must sign and date the updated information.

Meals and Food Services Practices: 746.501 (10)

Meals are served every day for a cost of \$3.50 including milk. Parents maintain a lunch account through the school office. Milk is 60 cents per carton. Your child can bring a lunch and purchase a milk to drink with their sack lunch or water is provided. If a child's account becomes quite delinquent, crackers will be served until the account is reconciled. All parents have the opportunity to apply for the reduced or free lunch program. Menus are posted online for parents and on the Day Care bulletin board to view.

In addition:

- Staff are educated on food allergies and precautions are taken to insure children are protected
- All food served is prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials
- Healthy snacks are served to children in after school care at 3:30 pm
- Food is never used as a reward or bribe
- We do not refrigerate or microwave food brought from home

Food Allergy:

A child that is allergic or sensitive to a particular food must be reported to the Director upon enrollment.

- **Allergy to a particular food requiring an Epi-Pen**
 - Parents are responsible to report all food allergies to the Director in writing
 - An Emergency Care Plan must be on file. It must be filled out by the child's doctor with his signature and the parents signature
 - It must state the food or item the child is allergic to
 - It must state the symptoms to watch for & when to administer the Epi-Pen or when an antihistamine may be used
 - The child's Epi-Pen and antihistamine will be kept in the school office (both must be in original container with child's name and expiration date)
 - The identified food will not be served

- **Sensitive to a particular food.**
 - Parents are responsible to report all food sensitivity to the Director in writing
 - A note will be placed on the child's file listing their sensitivity to the food
 - Every effort will be made to make sure your child isn't given the food in question
 - If you prefer to send in your child's snack, please talk with the Director

Food brought from home must not pose any allergy risk to children in our care.

Visits To The Center: 746.501 (20)

Parents are welcome to visit the Center at any time. No prior scheduling is necessary, but parents should check in at the main welcome center desk. You will be required to sign in and get a "Visitor's" badge to be worn while on campus.

We invite parents to come have lunch with their child. If parents plan on eating a meal from the school lunchroom, please call the school office by 9 AM the morning of your planned visit to order your lunch. The cost for an adult meal is \$4.50.

Preventing and Responding to Abuse & Neglect of Children: 746.501 (25)

- Director & caregivers receive annual training in prevention techniques for and the recognition of symptoms of abuse and neglect as well as the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect
- Reporting Abuse or Neglect: Texas Law requires a caregiver to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas DPRS or law enforcement. Call 1-800-252-5400 to make confidential reports or go to www.txabusehotline.org. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime.
- Our Center will notify the Department of Protective Services, and/or local law enforcement officials, when it appears that a child is being seriously neglected or abused.
- Resources are available at <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Reporting/resources.asp> for employees and parents on increasing awareness and prevention of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.

Parent Concerns: 746.501 (19)

Parents are invited to discuss any concerns or suggestions they may have about their own child or the policies and procedures of the child care program with either the teacher or the Center director. If you have a question or concern and feel more comfortable talking with the Director, please feel free to schedule an appointment by calling or e-mailing.

Susan Austin

Telephone: 817-332-2281 x113

E-Mail: Susan.Austin@sharingnewlife.com

Contacting Your Local Licensing Office or Child Abuse Hotline: 746.501 (22)

According to Texas law, any person who has reason to believe a child is being neglected and/or abused must report his suspicions to the local Department of Family and Protective Service. This can be done by using one of the following:

Gang Free Zone: 746.501 (27)

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Non-Hiring of Center Staff

In order to maintain the Center's confidentiality and professionalism, persons employed as staff at or by the Center are prohibited from contracting, soliciting or engaging in temporary employment as a caregiver or babysitter for any parent/guardian who has a child enrolled at our Center.

Addendum : Guidance & Discipline

A Christ-Centered, Principled Approach to the Treatment of Others

God instructs us to "love our neighbors as ourselves." Mean behavior does not comply with this instruction—and it does not reflect God's love and grace. The bullying of any student, therefore, is unacceptable behavior at St. Paul Lutheran School ("SPLS").

If a student or parent believes there has been bullying behavior involving an SPLS student, he or she should report it to a teacher or the principal and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

A Christ-Centered Approach

SPLS is committed to providing a safe, loving, and forgiving environment. We strive to protect our students and at the same time encourage them to mature in their walk with Christ, even as they stumble as we all stumble.

It can be difficult for school leadership to pinpoint specific acts of bullying. These acts usually occur beyond direct supervision. Most bullying is done between classes, in hallways, on the playground, at lunch, and before or after school. Identifying acts of bullying will require vigilance by staff and the support of parents in a compassionate pursuit of truth and mentoring of our students. Therefore,

1. All staff will lead by example as they seek to love others as image-bearers of God and will teach that a proper understanding of one's self is found in their identity in Christ. We encourage the promotion of positive—Christ-like—interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

2. We will take an active role in resolving conflicts and encouraging students to resolve conflict in a God-pleasing way.
3. SPLS teachers will be vigilant in watching for signs of bullying. We expect students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their level of development and maturity. Accordingly, teachers will instruct and intervene as appropriate to keep our students safe and to encourage our students' growth as followers of Christ.
4. SPLS leadership will partner with parents to discover and verify acts of bullying and to take appropriate corrective measures. Developing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in Christian self-discipline and the demonstration of genuine respect for all people must be a cooperative effort between and among the school and parents.

Principles

The principles below guide the SPLS administration and staff regarding bullying and indicate the behavior that they will seek to model.

1. We are made in the image of God therefore every person has intrinsic worth, value, and dignity and each believer should ensure that others are treated accordingly.
2. Jesus identified the most important commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37–40; John 13:34–35; Romans 12:18). Bullying behavior is rebellion against God's character and command. Therefore, SPLS takes bullying seriously. SPLS will support all involved when bullying is reported and verified. Bullying will be forgiven and corrected—but it will not be excused, permitted, or tolerated.
3. God helps us to learn how to love others through the example and instruction of godly teachers. (1 Timothy 4:11–12). The primary responsibility to model and teach how to love others as God commands falls to the parents of children. (I John 3:23; Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Ephesians 6:4). Therefore, we expect parents to equip their children with the appropriate training and tools to live lives of love and encouragement and to hold their children accountable for the children's failures to exhibit such behavior.
4. Through the Scriptures, we are taught that relationships inevitably involve conflict. (Luke 6:27–28; James 4:1–3). Conflict may be caused by our sinful nature, including by selfishness, jealousy, greed, arrogance, and rivalry. Individuals may become resentful, sullen, or angry when they do not get what they want. Each student can expect such sinful behavior to be confronted and corrected.
5. Humility and brokenness are essential to life in a Christ-centered community and will be encouraged and expected of staff, students, and parents.

6. God calls individuals to overlook minor offenses as we love one another (Proverbs 19:11) and to seek justice (Micah 6:8).
7. Individuals can sin in word, action, and thought. (Matthew 5–7, Ephesians 4–5). Bullying is sin.
8. Humans should not seek revenge. (Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:19).
9. Words have power and reflect the condition of one’s heart. (James 3:1–12). When another person sins, the goal of leadership ought to be restoration and reconciliation. This involves a Spirit-directed discerning of the heart. Restoration involves ownership of the sinful behavior, acknowledgement of the hurt, asking forgiveness, and repentance. Love requires gentle confrontation or a firm rebuke and correction when sinful behavior is identified.
10. Sometimes the context of restoration must be outside of the student population for the safety and health of others. (Matthew 18:15–20).
11. Prayer accomplishes much. (James 5:16).
12. The objective of this policy is not to merely maintain a safe community but to develop one that is transformational and life-giving through the Holy Spirit.

Definitions

“**Bullying**” is engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a school vehicle and that:

1. exploits an imbalance of power between the offending student and the victim student through written or verbal expression or physical conduct;
2. interferes with student’s education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school; and
3. either: a. has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or of damage to the student’s property; or
b. is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student.

Proper Reporting and Response

1. All bullying incidents should be reported immediately to a teacher or the principal. Any student who believes he or she has been bullied should immediately report the situation to a teacher or the principal. These reports will be treated seriously.
2. Teachers to whom incidents are reported will immediately notify the principal.
3. The principal will promptly investigate any report of bullying and take interim steps to prevent bullying during the investigation. The investigation may include, but is not necessarily limited to, interviewing the accuser, interviewing the accused, and interviewing potential witnesses and by-standers.
4. The principal will review the evidence obtained during the investigation and determine if bullying occurred. If the principal finds that bullying occurred, prompt and appropriate remedial action will be taken. The students involved will be informed that the behavior will stop immediately. Consequences for students who bully will be tailored to the specific incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the age of the offending student, and the student's history of behavior at SPLS and elsewhere. Consequences will be consistent with the Parent-Student Handbook. Responsive measures, taken through the lens of the Principles set forth above, are designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and protect the student who was bullied.
5. If the situation warrants, parents of the students involved will be informed by email or a phone call and be summoned to the school to discuss the problem.
6. The one guilty of the bullying behavior may be asked to genuinely apologize to the student victim seeking reconciliation and forgiveness from the student victim.
7. There may be a range of punitive responses up to suspension or expulsion for the offending student.
8. After the incident has been thoroughly investigated and dealt with, faculty and administration will monitor both students (including regular "check-ins") to ensure that bullying does not resume or reoccur.
9. All substantiated incidences that are reported and result in suspension or expulsion will be documented in the offending student's behavioral record.
10. In severe instances, local police may be notified.

Confidentiality

Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations.

Retaliation

Retaliation or false accusations against any person who reports an incident of potential bullying is prohibited. Retaliation against any person suspected of having bullied is also prohibited. Students should report bullying behavior instead of retaliating. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as the alleged bullying behavior. Retaliation is subject to disciplinary action.

False Reports

Falsely accusing another of bullying behavior is in direct contravention of God's command to not bear false witness. Such false accusations are prohibited and will subject the accuser to disciplinary action.

Bystanders

Bystander support of bullying can cause the behavior to continue or increase. The school prohibits both active and passive support for acts of bullying. The staff and students should encourage bystanders to either walk away from these acts when they see them or constructively attempt to stop them, and report the behavior to a staff member.

The report taken from witnesses and by-standers (submitted by staff) will document the answers to the following questions:

- 1.. Who was involved?
2. What happened?
3. Where at school did it happen?
4. When did it start? How long has it been going on? How often?
5. Who are the witnesses? Who saw or heard what happened?

Responsibilities for Implementation

The principal is responsible to ensure that this policy is implemented.

Publication

This policy will be included in the Parent-Student Handbook and copies will be available in the school office.

Awareness

Annually, as part of in-service training for all school staff, the principal will arrange for a formal discussion with teachers and staff of the policies herein.

Teachers will, as needed, conduct class discussions, role-playing, and activities to educate the students in seeking help from an adult, reporting incidents, speaking up and supporting the student victim, expressing disapproval of bullying behavior, responding assertively to the aggressor, walking away from the behavior, etc.

The principal will be responsible for ensuring the school maintains an age-appropriate learning module related to student conduct, particular related to bullying, and that teachers are aware of the content and school policies related thereto. This learning experience should be provided at least once annually.

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Last Name of Family: _____

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE ATTACHED PAGE INDICATING THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF:

- 1. The Operational Policies Document**
- 2. The Center's Policies regarding child discipline and guidance**

My signature verifies I have read and received a copy of the Operational Policies Document along with the center's policies regarding child discipline and guidance.

Parent/Staff Name: _____

Signature

Date

Check one please:

☐ Parent

☐ employee/caregiver