

St. Matthew's Lutheran School

Pre-Kindergarten Handbook

2008 - 2009



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St. Matthew's Lutheran School
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School Phone: 262-567-5396
School Web Site: www.smls.org

MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

St. Matthew's Lutheran School exists to make disciples for the Lord's kingdom through Christian education, assisting parents in the training of their children as we grow in God's inerrant Word, serving and glorifying Him.

MISSION OF ST. MATTHEW'S PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

It is the mission of St. Matthew's Lutheran Pre-Kindergarten to assist parents in the Christian training of their children, by providing successful opportunities to develop basic learning and living skills.

HISTORY OF OUR PRE-KINDERGARTEN

St. Matthew's Pre-Kindergarten began operating in August of 1986. At that time our Pre-Kindergarten was entirely self-supporting, relying solely on enrollment and tuition fees to cover all operating costs. Today our Pre-Kindergarten is supported primarily by the members of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church through their weekly offerings.

GOALS OF OUR PRE-KINDERGARTEN

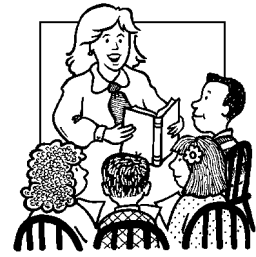
The goals for the Pre-Kindergarten education at St. Matthew's School, are:

1. To instill in the young child a knowledge of God's love for him/her.
 - a. To know that our Bible lessons are from God's book, the Bible.
 - b. To trust God as a loving Father.
 - c. To know that Jesus is one's best Friend and only Savior.
 - d. To provide opportunities to worship, work, and play with other friends of Jesus.

2. To meet the basic needs of young children.
 - a. To develop self-awareness and a sense of self worth.
 - b. To help children develop both gross and fine motor skills.
 - c. To help children adjust socially to their peer group.
 - d. To help children learn the skills necessary for a successful school experience.

3. To introduce and familiarize the child with basic academic skills.
 - a. Reading Readiness - visual discrimination, rhyming, sequential order, letter identification, language development, opposites, classification, consonant/vowel sounds, guided reading, prewriting, journals
 - b. Math Readiness - matching, size, counting with understanding, shapes, spatial relationships, number identification and comparison, graphing, patterns, sorting, addition, subtraction, money, measuring, estimating

- c. Science - seasons, nutrition, 5 senses, habitats, living and nonliving things, plants, magnets, day and night, land forms, animals, earth, matter
- d. Social Studies - safety, community, holidays, family, school, friends, history, our country, careers, transportation, farms,
- e. Music - singing, finger plays, rhythm, musical instruments, participating in worship services, foreign language
- f. Art - coloring, scissors skills, painting, pasting, introduction to various art media and artists
- g. Physical Education - creative movement, parachute activities, games, development of large motor skills, free play on the playground



A TYPICAL MORNING AT PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Sessions will be held from 7:50 A.M. - 10:50 A.M.

7:30 - 8:00	Library / Welcome
8:00 - 8:15	Bible Time
8:15 - 8:30	Morning Meeting / Spanish
8:30 - 9:00	Large Motor
9:00 - 9:15	Snack
9:15 - 9:40	Readiness Skills / Story Time / Music
9:40 - 10:30	Free Play / Centers / Art
10:30 - 11:00	Clean Up and Closing Time

A TYPICAL AFTERNOON AT PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Sessions will be held from 11:45 P.M. - 2:45 P.M.

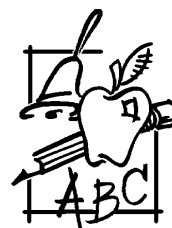
11:30 - 11:45	Library / Welcome
11:45 - 12:00	Bible Time
12:00 - 12:15	Afternoon Meeting / Spanish
12:15 - 1:00	Readiness Skills / Music
1:00 - 1:30	Snack / Story Time
1:30 - 1:50	Large Motor
1:50 - 2:35	Free Play / Centers / Art
2:35 - 2:45	Clean Up and Closing Time

PRE-KINDERGARTEN CALENDAR / NEWSLETTER

Our Pre-Kindergarten calendar coincides with our Lutheran Elementary School calendar. A copy of the calendar will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. A classroom calendar will also be distributed, listing any classroom events or special days. You will also receive a Pre-Kindergarten weekly newsletter to inform you about weekly themes, Bible stories and verses, upcoming events, and fun homework projects. In addition, a school newsletter will be sent home with your child each week.

OUR CHRISTIAN CURRICULUM

Each school day begins with a Bible lesson. Our religion course called *Christ-Light* teaches the children that God loves them so much that He sent His Son to be their Savior. The Bible lessons are presented through flannel board presentations, puppets, role playing, and songs. All other units and daily activities are taught from a Christian viewpoint.

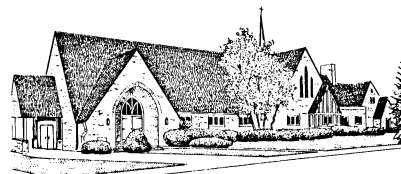


Our Pre-Kindergarten class sings in a Sunday church service at St. Matthew's in fall and again in spring. They participate in one of our Christmas Eve services and attend monthly chapel services one Friday each month.

The school chooses four mission projects a year. The Pre-Kindergarten class also receives information about these missions and is given the opportunity to give money which is used to help others learn about Jesus. The mission offering is collected each Friday.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Regular church attendance is extremely important in your child's life. It is the Pre-Kindergarten teacher's duty to assist you in the spiritual training of your child and to encourage faithful attendance at God's house. It is the policy of St. Matthew's Lutheran School to keep a record of church attendance as a means of encouraging regular worship. Attendance is recorded on the Pre-Kindergarten Weekly Sheet that will be sent home every Friday. This sheet is returned on Tuesdays, and the teacher will track the information recorded.



PARENT / TEACHER

Pre-Kindergarten children have a short attention span and it isn't uncommon for them to come home with things out of context. Please feel free to phone the teacher at any time if a question, problem, or grievance should arise, rather than discuss these things with others. Working together makes Pre-Kindergarten a good educational experience. Parent/Teacher consultations are held at the end of the first and third quarters and are for informational and evaluation purposes. Additional conferences may be held at anytime during the year at either teacher or parent request.

ADMISSION POLICY

St. Matthew's Lutheran School is open to all children whose parents are interested in a Christ-centered education. Parents and children will not be denied admission to the program because of race, color, creed, or socioeconomic background. All Pre-Kindergartners must be 4 years of age by September 1 to enroll.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Mrs. Laura Lai has been teaching for twelve years. This is her third year at St. Matthew's, where she also teaches 8th grade on a part time basis and serves as a remedial resource teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a Master's degree in school administration. She also has experience teaching Spanish and likes to incorporate foreign language into daily activities.

CLASS SIZE

Children at this age work and learn best in small groups. We attempt to keep our class sizes small and provide the following class size divisions:

- ◇ Up to 12 children - one morning class
- ◇ 13-16 children - one morning class with one teacher + one aide
- ◇ 17+ children - separate morning and afternoon classes with each class not exceeding 12 students

TRANSITION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

We want your child's first school experience to be a rewarding one. Here are some tips for parents to help your child enjoy his or her year at Pre-Kindergarten.

1. Let your child know that school and learning are exciting.
2. Send your child regularly and promptly.
3. Inform the teacher of anything about your child that will help her understand him better.
4. Be interested in what your child brings home from school.
5. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest, has a regular bedtime, and eats a good breakfast or lunch before coming to school.
6. If your child has a fever, or other symptoms of illness, it is best to keep him/her at home.
7. Let your child feel the confidence you have in his/her teacher.
8. Get involved - volunteer to help in the classroom, attend PTL meetings and other school functions.
9. Always emphasize what your child *CAN DO*, not what he/she doesn't know. Development of skills will come when the body and brain are ready. Be patient!

FACILITIES

This summer our Pre-Kindergarten classroom was remodeled. Our new classroom will provide developmentally appropriate learning spaces and give us room to display our projects. We have access to a large playground behind school, which we use in the spring and fall. In winter we use our school's full gymnasium and its large supply of athletic equipment.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL / TRANSPORTATION

Parents are asked to bring their children to our classroom and pick them up there. (Students should not arrive before 7:30 A.M.). Children should enter the school through the main school doors (porch). The children will remain in the classroom until the parents or a sibling comes in to get them after school. Student transportation to and from Pre-Kindergarten is the responsibility of the parents. Children will not be released from the Pre-Kindergarten at pickup time to anyone other than their parents unless parents send a note or personally contact the teacher. There is no busing available for Pre-Kindergarten children.

ABSENCES

We hope to see your child for each session. If your child is sick, notify the school office (567-5396) prior to school on the day of the absence. Teachers should be notified of planned absences.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather, stay tuned to local radio and television stations for possible closings. St. Matthew's Lutheran School will not be mentioned specifically, but we will be closed if Oconomowoc Public Schools are closed.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In accordance with state law, we instruct the children in orderly fire and tornado drills. Drills are conducted in a manner designed to minimize fear but to maximize the importance of the plans. The Pre-Kindergarten children will be under constant, trained supervision, and so far as possible, dangerous situations will be foreseen and prevented. St. Matthew's is equipped to deal with minor accidents, and we have a nurse on campus at all times. In the event of an emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents. If the severity of the emergency dictates it, we will obtain whatever medical assistance is deemed necessary for the child.

ENROLLMENT FEES

An enrollment fee is charged for each student. Because St. Matthew's Lutheran School is supported chiefly by the offerings of all members of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, a higher enrollment fee is assigned to non-members (see below). If the entire fee is paid at registration, which is the recommended method, there will be a \$15.00 discount. Families that are unable to pay the full amount at registration will be asked to sign a form indicating the payment plan they choose. A Christian education should be available to every child. Be sure to talk with a pastor or the principal before letting financial concerns bring a halt to your child's Christian education.

All fees must be paid in advance according to one of the following plans: annually, semi-annually, quarterly, or monthly. Fees for the quarter must be paid before the child will be allowed to enroll for the next quarter, unless other arrangements have been made. The fees for the 2008-2009 school year are shown below.

The Enrollment Fee is reviewed each year and is subject to change by the Board of Education with the approval of St. Matthew's congregation.

Children of members of St. Matthew's:	\$559
Children of non members:	\$675

Please refer to the enrollment fees schedule located in our school enrollment packet for information regarding member family multiple student discounts. Contact the school office with fee questions.

SUPPLIES / DRESS

A school bag and a folder should be brought to school each day. This helps very much in distributing notes and in keeping belongings together. Other supplies are listed on the yearly school supply list mailed out in July. Please do not bring toys to school as they may become lost or broken.

Each child will be expected to purchase a *New International Version* Bible at the beginning of the year. This Bible will be kept at home and used by parent and child to reread the Bible lesson of the week. The Bible reference will be listed for each lesson on the Pre-Kindergarten weekly Sheet and also in the newsletter. This can be a wonderful way for you to review the Bible lesson with your child and have him actually reading the Bible at an early age.

Clothes should be practical, durable and very washable. Keep in mind the activities in which the children will be involved (painting, gluing, outdoor play, crawling on floor). It is very frustrating for a child to have to worry about a new shirt, or being unable to run because of slippery dress shoes. Also, children like to be self-sufficient. Whenever possible dress your child in clothes he can open, close, put on, or remove without help. Please keep a change of clothing in your child's backpack.

We will use our outdoor playground as often as weather permits in fall and spring. Please send jackets, caps, mittens, etc. whenever the weather is changeable.

HEALTH / IMMUNIZATIONS

Upon registration, current immunization information must be supplied to the school. A health form and an emergency procedure card are also filled out for each Pre-Kindergarten child. Children with a sore throat, fever within the last 24 hours, acute runny nose or cough, rash, lice, vomiting, diarrhea, inflammation of the eyes, or any other illnesses should be kept at home.

COMPUTER

We have several Macintosh computers in our classroom. The children are introduced to the main parts of the computer and use it for reading and math readiness.

LIBRARY

Students are allowed to borrow books from our classroom library daily. Please help your child to be responsible with his/her book at home and return it when finished.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

Educational trips are taken throughout the school year. A permission slip for the child to participate in and to be transported for field trips will be filled out prior to each field trip. For most field trips we will need volunteer parent drivers. Should drivers be needed, it is important that each driver carry liability insurance. Since the function is away from the church grounds, St. Matthew's liability policy will be secondary to that of the driver's.

SHOW AND TELL

Show and Tell is scheduled on Fridays. A specific theme will be announced for each week in the weekly newsletter. If a field trip takes place on a Friday, we will not have Show and Tell for that week.

Please encourage your child to share one item each week - even a picture is enjoyable for all. Bringing that "link" from home can really aid in the adjustment to school.

OUR SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to help with special projects, snacks, parties or computer work. Each child loves to have a parent spend part of a day with him/her at school. It is also an opportunity for you to see how your child interacts with others in a school setting. Anyone interested in observing a Pre-Kindergarten session is welcome to visit at any time.

SNACK TIME

The Pre-Kindergartners will have a short snack time each day. Our classroom will have a snack schedule. Each child will take a turn being the snack helper for a week.

During the week that your child is the assigned helper, please send in simple snacks to share with the class. Pretzels, crackers, and graham crackers are examples of snacks that can be easily distributed. The children also enjoy fresh fruit or vegetables. We also ask that you send drinks for the week. This can be juice boxes, a gallon of milk, or a container of juice. Drinks and snack foods need to be nutritional. Please try to avoid drinks and foods that are high in sugars or offer little nutritional value.

Children are more than welcome to bring a special treat on their birthdays. Those children with summer birthdays will be assigned a day toward the end of the school year on which we will celebrate his or her birthday. A treat can be sent to school on that day if you wish.

At snack time we will encourage common courtesies and appreciation for snacks shared by others. Most importantly, the habit of praying before snack will remind the child that our food comes from God.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is designed to help the child develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others. Children will be disciplined through positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear-cut limits. We teach children to apologize and receive forgiveness in situations where they have wronged someone. Jesus' love and forgiveness is also announced whenever a child corrects his/her own behavior. We continue to train children to be Jesus' children by exhibiting kindness, love, courtesy, cooperation, and respect for others.



CONCLUSION

This is a special privilege to be entrusted with instructing your child. We are here to serve you and pray this service will be to the glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ.