

Emanuel Lutheran Preschool

Celebrating Academic Excellence
In a Caring, Christian Environment
Since 1957



Home and School with Christ

Parent/Student Handbook

2020-2021

October 2020



Celebrating Over 60 Sensational Years
Emanuel Lutheran Preschool

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www.ELSpatchogue.org

Faithfully serving families since 1957

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Emanuel Lutheran Preschool. We are happy that you have chosen to enroll your child with us.

This handbook has been prepared to help parents understand, support, and uphold the policies and procedures of our school.

Since 1957, Emanuel Lutheran has provided an exceptional academic experience. Today, we provide preschool families with more than just an education. Our programming strengthens the family and helps to reinforce the character attributes the parents feel are most important to the future of their children. Our faculty has designed unique ways to inspire the level of Christian development in children to be there to support each other in a cheerful learning environment.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with you and your child.

*God's Blessing
Emanuel Preschool Committee*

EMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL: Emanuel Lutheran Church was organized and erected in 1912 by the Reverend Hermann Zoller, who served the congregation until 1932. Soon after Pastor Zoller passed away, Emanuel called its second pastor, the Reverend Carl Gernannt. Pastor Gernannt served Emanuel until 1956.

Pastor Gernannt was succeeded by the Reverend William Hinlicky who organized Emanuel Lutheran School. The school's first Principal was Ray Steinert and first teacher Miss Charlotte Streck. Emanuel's kindergarten and first grade were opened to 17 students in September 1957. In February 1968, a nursery for three and four year olds was added to the school; September 1, 1969 and 1970 saw the addition of seventh and eighth grade classes. By 1972 the seventh and eighth grade were discontinued. On March 3, 1982, the church and school were destroyed by fire. Fortunately, there were no injuries and in September 1983 Emanuel dedicated a new church building. In March of 1993, the congregation approved the building of a new early childhood center. Ground breaking was on July 4, 1992, and the dedication on September 19, 1993. In July 1997, a full-day preschool program was added allowing children to be dropped off as early as 7:00 AM and picked up as late as 6:00 PM. In 2006 the seventh and eighth grade classes were added. In 2016 Emanuel Lutheran School was presented with the Inviting School Award by International Alliance for Invitational Education. Again, in 2017, our school was giving the Inviting School Fidelity Award. We celebrated our 60th year in September 2017. Unfortunately, our day school closed for grades kindergarten through 8th grade in 2019. In 2020 Emanuel Lutheran Preschool was licensed as a day care and is now serving children 18 months – 5 years.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Emanuel Preschool is committed to working with the parent community to provide a nurturing environment to foster the growth of children intellectually, spiritually, physically and socially.

VISION STATEMENT:

We strengthen families.

CORE VALUES:

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, intentional, measurable, optimistic and courageous.

ABOUT OUR FAMILY OF STUDENTS: Emanuel Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. Emanuel Lutheran Preschool does not intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, creed, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, predisposing genetic characteristics, gender or sex, in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other sponsored programs.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK: This handbook is a vital resource for parents/guardians. We have prepared this handbook to answer questions about your time in this school. Because of government regulations and the changing needs of our operations, we may change these policies from time to time. We will do our best to let you know of developments that may affect you.

ABOUT EMANUEL LEADERSHIP:

ADMINISTRATION: As the primary member of the administrative team, the Director of the School is directly accountable to the Preschool Committee of Emanuel Lutheran Church. The Director has been delegated with the responsibility of managing the operation and programs of the Preschool. In the absence of the Director, a Lead Teacher assumes the duties of the Director.

AUTHORITY: The Voters Assembly of Emanuel Lutheran Church is the final controlling authority of the school. The school budget, calling of personnel and major policy changes are submitted to and approved by the Voters Assembly. The Preschool Committee, appointed with the Church Council's approval, supervises the operation of the preschool. The Director acts as executive director, carrying out the decisions of the School Committee. The Preschool Committee aims at constantly improving the course of studies and educational experiences for our students. The committee is aided by the Pastor and President of the congregation. The Preschool Committee acts as the policy making organization for the school and is responsible for addressing and acting upon issues concerning the school.

YOUR ROLE AS PARENT: Cooperation between the home and Preschool is vitally important. Parents/guardians are considered partners in the educational process. As such, parents/guardians have the duty to support Emanuel Lutheran Preschool as it seeks to serve their child academically, socially, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Our school activities are designed to enhance the quality of the educational program. We urge parents/guardians to have an active church life as well. Laying a firm foundation for your children will find an eager and ready response in the hearts of the children. We urge you to be an active participant in your child's school life as well as his/her spiritual life. In partnership we offer this guidance for support of the school and its mission.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to:

- Practice proper procedures regarding meetings with teachers and the Preschool Committee.
- Support established, publicized school rules, as well as classroom practices and procedures (e.g. field trips, parties, and conduct expectancies).
- Be responsible to ensure that all paperwork is read and responded to, if needed, in a timely fashion.
- Ensure that their child's medical records are current and filed with the school as needed/required and immunizations are up to date.
- Ensure that their child conducts himself/herself in a manner consistent with the expectations and behavioral standards established by Emanuel Lutheran Preschool, a manner that strives to pattern Christian love, including respecting the professional educators, their policies and procedures. You will be asked each year to sign our Behavioral Policy.

Parent Information Center:

Filing Complaint or incident report: In the event you would like to report an incident or complaint against Emanuel Lutheran Preschool, you may report said incident or complaint to the administrators of Emanuel:

Parents/guardians may request time with the Preschool Committee. For the sake of proper order and effective planning, parents/guardians who request time with the Preschool Committee should specify the desire, question, or specific need in writing and direct this communication to the chairperson of the Preschool Committee in advance of the scheduled meeting (first Tuesday of every month). The Preschool Committee will make every effort to accommodate requests for time within reason and in as timely a fashion as possible.

We expect our school families to exercise good judgment, loyalty, honesty, respect, and integrity in all dealings with the preschool, its employees, and students on or off premises. Any conduct that could be detrimental or harmful to the school, its faculty/staff members, or students, is unacceptable. We provide the following example of such improper behavior; spreading gossip and rumors about the school, its employees, students, and administrators can adversely affect our school. Spreading rumors is not only unbecoming; people may be civilly liable for defamation if they spread rumors about the school, its employees, students, and administrators. This includes spreading rumors via electronic and or/ technological devices.

The Preschool Committee reserves the right to dismiss a family from Emanuel Lutheran Preschool, at any time during the school year, if it is determined that a child's parents/guardians have failed to uphold their responsibilities in supporting the School's policies and mission, vision, and values.

BEHAVIORAL PLAN: All parents are to sign Emanuel's Behavioral Policy at the time of registration.

CURRICULUM: Our emphasis is on learning through play. We run a developmentally appropriate, child centered, creative, program. Building a positive self-image is an essential part of our preschool experience. One way that we do this is by exposing the children to God's love for each of them and others.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS: Educational trips to various points of interest in walking distance are enriching experiences for the child. The school will notify the parents of any educational trip which the child will participate in. At check in each day, you will give permission for your child can participate in a walking trip.

COMPUTERS: Emanuel Lutheran Preschool is committed to maintaining and growing our technology program to equip our students to be 21st century learners.

SPORT/CLUB OFFERINGS/ENRICHMENT: Students may participate in our age appropriate afterschool and enrichment programs, when available. These programs are set up each school year and information will be sent home. There may be an additional charge for these programs.

EMANUEL'S UNIQUE PROGRAMMING:

EMERGENCY CONTACT CARDS: At the start of the school year, parents/guardians will be responsible for completing and emergency contact form for their child. These forms provide vital information when treating a sick or injured child and should be completed in a timely and detailed manner. Parents/guardians are required to submit updated information (change of address, phone numbers) promptly.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/DRILLS: Emanuel Lutheran Preschool maintains compliance with OCFS requirements for safety. Established Emergency Management procedures exist to safeguard the school community. Emergency/fire drills are conducted regularly. Trained, designated leaders are in charge. Students, faculty/staff, and visitors must adhere to the rules of silence and orderly exit so that instructions ensuring the safety of all may be clearly understood.

HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS: Emanuel Lutheran Preschool maintains compliance with NYS Department of Health requirements for health exams and immunizations.

Updated proof of immunization is required of all students prior to entering Emanuel Lutheran Preschool. Notification of immunization requirements will be sent to all families. Active immunization status is mandatory for a child to enter school.

All parents/guardians must sign Emanuel's Health Policy.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS: The decision to close the preschool is made, when deemed necessary, to ensure the safety of the students. The School Board of Emanuel Lutheran Preschool may make the decision to close the Preschool based on inclement weather conditions or other emergencies. His/her decision is final. In the event the decision to close school is made go to Brightwheel, our website.

On occasions when heavy snow falls during school this can mean students will be dismissed early. All students will need to be picked up within one hour of notification that school is being closed. This will insure that our staff gets home safely also

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES DUE TO PANDEMIC: The Preschool will implement the Pandemic Section of the Parent handbook under the guidance and direction of the program administration, local licensing agency, federal, state, and local governmental agencies. To ensure the safety of children, families and staff, the Preschool will monitor the situation and consider the guidance and suggestions for the authorities. Decisions made by the Preschool will consider the safety of children, families, and staff. Program changes may include:

Unplanned Preschool Closures: On occasion, we may need to close due to circumstances beyond our control and without much warning. During these situations, we must strive to ensure the financial sustainability of our Preschool, as well as work as creatively as possible to provide care and support to our families and staff.

Remote Learning Opportunities During Closure (if staff remain employed):

- Teachers will maintain ongoing communication with families and children.
- Brightwheel will be utilized for activities, sing along and story time; individually and in group settings.
- Phone calls, emails and newsletters will be sent regularly for teachers and administrators.

Changes when Program is reopening: When the Preschool reopens, all required protocol mandated by our local licensing agency, and our Health Care Consultant will be initiated. Some examples of practices that may be implemented are:

- Temporary reduction of program hours: hours will be determined based upon staff availability and parent need.
- Reduced hours may also be considered to provide staff with enough time for extra cleaning and program planning.
- Enhanced health screenings and temperature checks upon arrival.
- Stricter child exclusions for signs of illness – refer to Emergency Health Policy.
- Limitation of family members in the building. Rest assured, you will always have access to your children, but in an effort to reduce the number of people coming into the building, we have amended our drop off/pick up policy, see below. Please note, if you do enter the building, you will be required to follow our health screening procedure, must wear a mask, and follow physical distancing guidelines.
- Elimination of non-essential visitors to our building.

Pick Up and Drop Off: To create a safe and manageable way for children to arrive and leave our program, we will be implementing the following protocol:

- Children will be received from the front door. Families can pull up to the curb and drop their children off. The children will be screened before entering the building.
- At the end of the day, as you come to the building please line up at the curb in your vehicle and call the Preschool, a staff member will escort your child to the care.

- For families that are walking to the Preschool, a staff member will be at the front door from 7am – 9am to receive your child. Again, please adhere to physical distancing when picking up and dropping off your child.
- Teachers will communicate with families via phone, email or the Brightwheel app.

Personal Items from Home: Because we are limiting the cross contamination of bodily fluids even more stringently at this time, staff members will provide you a list of mandatory supplies for your child. These supplies must be maintained on a daily basis in order for your child to attend the Preschool.

Amplifying our Daily Cleaning Efforts: While this is part of our normal routine, there will be additional efforts made to disinfect the classrooms, gross motor spaces and high traffic areas, paying special attention to doorknobs, phones, tables, chairs, keyboards, handrails, gates, etc. We will be disinfecting with a higher concentrated bleach/water as recommended by the CDC. In addition to classroom cleaning, all staff members will be assigned various areas of the building for frequent disinfecting.

SNACK: Healthy snacks provide a needed energy boost to maintain academic and physical performance. Research proves that healthy snacking will provide your child with an opportunity to be more successful in school. Your child will be invited to enjoy a healthy snack each day during school. Possible snacks include: Fruit (dried or fresh), fresh vegetables, cheese, pretzels, applesauce. Not permitted are cakes, or candies and juices with artificial flavors and coloring. Please see your child's teacher regarding allergies.

NUTRITION: Emanuel is working towards teaching and encouraging nutritious eating habits in children. We would like parents to provide healthy and nutritious lunches and snacks for your child to eat while they attend Emanuel.

TELEPHONE: The school telephone number is (631-758-2250 extension 2). The school office hours are 8:30am – 3:30pm, Monday through Friday. For business matters please dial extension 3. If you cannot get through to the office and you need immediate assistance you can dial extension 4 to be connected to the preschool building. If you need immediate assistance during extended care hours, you can dial extension 4 to be connected to our extended care staff.

VISITORS: In order to responsibly care for our students, the school requires all guests (including parents/guardians) to abide by publicized procedures for registering in the office before further entry, and follow the Department of Health check in questions. Once registered, a staff/faculty member will accompany guests through the building.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination prohibited by federal and state law. It is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It is the imposition of unwelcome and/or unwarranted sexually oriented acts that creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive academic or work environment.

Our Policy: Emanuel Lutheran Preschool is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence, where all employees and students can work and study together comfortably and productively. Emanuel Lutheran Preschool prohibits any form of sexual harassment or sexual violence.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee at Emanuel Lutheran Preschool to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature defined in this policy. Emanuel Lutheran Preschool recognizes that sexual harassment can originate from a person of either sex or against a person of the same or opposite sex, and from classmates as well as adults.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee at Emanuel Lutheran Preschool to be sexually involved with a student or employee. Any relationship involving romantic or sexual overtones with a student is strictly prohibited and will certainly result in immediate dismissal. Relationships between consenting employees may be a form of sexual harassment if the participation of any individual is not entirely voluntary. This is particularly true where one of the participants is in a supervisory capacity. Any person who in any way feels pressured into a relationship with a coworker should report it immediately to the Director. Furthermore, any employee with supervisory responsibilities who enters into a social relationship with a subordinate must exercise extreme care to ensure that the participation of the subordinate is entirely voluntary, or the superior will risk being found guilty of harassment.

Emanuel Lutheran School will act promptly to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment or sexual violence and to discipline any student or employee who sexually harasses or is sexually violent to a student or employee of Emanuel Lutheran School. Any person reporting in good faith any act of perceived sexual harassment will be protected from retaliation of any type or nature whether harassment is found.

Definition of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Sexual harassment is unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or of obtaining an education; or receiving any form of benefit; or
2. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting a person's employment or education; or

3. The conduct of communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work, employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic or work environment; or
4. It is considered unwelcomed by another.

Examples of prohibited behavior that are sexual in nature and are unsolicited and unwelcome include:

Written Contact: sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, and drawings. This includes computer messages of a sexual nature. Verbal Contact: sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, jokes (including jokes about racial and gender specific traits), any sexual propositions, comments about (an employee's, student's) one's body or sexual characteristics that are used in a negative or embarrassing way. Physical Contact: any intentional pats, squeezes, touching, pinching, repeatedly brushing up against another's body, assault, blocking movement, or coercing sexual intercourse. Visual Contact: suggestive looks, leering, or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters or magazines. Sexual Blackmail: sexual behavior to control another employee's or student's work environment is also prohibited- this includes salary, promotions, evaluations and/or better job assignments or grades. Every effort will be made to eliminate sexual harassment by non-employees including parents, suppliers, and other visitors to the school.

Reporting Procedures: The Preschool Board is responsible for receiving oral or written reports of sexual harassment or sexual violence at the building level. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment by a student or an employee at Emanuel Lutheran School, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment or sexual violence, should report alleged acts immediately to the Director.

If the Director is accused, the report shall be made to the President of the Preschool Committee, President of the Congregation, or the Pastor. Emanuel Lutheran Preschool encourages the reporting party or complainant to make his or her report in writing.

Emanuel Lutheran Preschool considers acts of sexual harassment to be of a most serious nature, always and everywhere unacceptable and contrary to the Church's teaching on the dignity of human beings. Therefore, it will investigate all complaints properly and aggressively. Where acts of sexual harassment are found, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which may include warnings, monetary penalties, and even termination.

INFORMATION RESOURCES:

TUITION: Tuition rates are kept as low as our high standards of teaching and equipment will allow. Tuition payments cover the cost of personnel and the educational materials of the school. Emanuel Lutheran's congregation believes that our school is a mission and therefore is contributing to the total cost of educating your child.

Tuition payments are payable the first of each month. The first payment is due August 1st of each school year and the first of each month thereafter, through the month of May. Full tuition for the school year may be paid by August 1st at a 3% discount. Strict adherence to this payment schedule is upheld. All delinquent accounts will require removal of the child from the school. A financial agreement form must be signed before the first tuition payment. If a child is withdrawn from school, families are responsible to complete tuition payments through the end of the month of withdrawal.

Out of consideration for the many financial demands made upon families, the church has made it possible for church member families to participate in the Emanuel Lutheran Preschool program at privilege tuition rates. An application form for this discount must be completed annually. On this form there is an opportunity for you to share your family's worship life, discipleship, stewardship, and communion participation. Both the Pastor and Preschool Committee review these forms and make the final decision.

RE-REGISTRATION: Parents/guardians of children attending Emanuel Lutheran Preschool will be notified of the procedure to re-register children for the next school year. Children presently attending will be given preference during a re-registration period before registration is opened to the general public. Once registration is opened to the general community, spaces for students are filled on a first come basis until classes are full. Parents are urged to register children promptly for the next academic year, thereby avoiding a waiting list.

The Preschool Committee retains the right to decline the re-registration of a student. Judgment shall be based on a variety of factors

SCHOOL CALENDAR, UPDATES AND HAPPENINGS: Our school calendar, updates, highlights activities and announcements, and any changes to policy or dates etc can be found on our website, www.ELSpatchogue.org, Email

We believe it is important to promote good home/school communications. Notices pertaining to a student's school opportunities, schedule reminders/changes, and other valuable and timely pieces of information are often conveyed to our school community on our website. Parents/guardians are urged to visit our website daily. You will also receive reminders and information through email and remind texts.

SUPPLIES: Supplies for the year will be required. A supply list will be mailed in July and/or given at time of registration.

EVENING ACTIVITIES: Unless otherwise noted, any child who attends an evening activity sponsored by the school must be accompanied by a parent, a responsible adult, or a designated guardian. It is not the teacher's or Director's responsibility to supervise children when the parent is in attendance at these activities.