

Little Fishers preschool

“Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” -- Proverbs 22:6

PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Little Fishers Preschool

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All forms referenced in this handbook may be found on our website at

www.littlefisherspreschool.org/forms/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME -----	3	Dismissal Procedures -----	12
Welcome to Little Fishers Preschool -----	3	REGULAR DISMISSAL -----	12
Fishers of Men Lutheran Church -----	3	ENRICHMENT/STAY & PLAY DISMISSAL -----	12
Administrative Staff -----	3	Early Pick-up -----	13
LITTLE FISHERS PRESCHOOL’S MISSION -----	4	Late Pick-ups -----	13
Preschool Philosophy -----	4	Inclement Weather -----	13
Preschool Goal -----	4	DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE -----	14
Preschool Mission Statement -----	4	Discipline and Guidance -----	14
PRESCHOOL INFORMATION -----	5	Biting Policy -----	15
Overview of the Preschool Program -----	5	WHEN BITING DOES OCCUR -----	15
School Operating Schedule -----	5	FOR THE CHILD WHO WAS BITTEN -----	15
Summer Camps -----	4	FOR THE CHILD WHO BIT -----	15
Family Events -----	4	WHEN BITING CONTINUES -----	15
Chapel -----	4	Suspension and Expulsion -----	15
Nap/Rest Times -----	4	SAFETY & SECURITY -----	16
Meals -----	5	Sign In/Out -----	16
LUNCH -----	5	Parking Lot & Driving -----	16
SNACKS -----	5	Carpool -----	16
Birthday Celebrations -----	5	Visitation Policy -----	16
Physical Activities -----	6	Child Abuse/Neglect -----	17
REGISTRATION & ENROLLMENT -----	7	Gang Free Zone -----	17
Enrollment Procedures -----	7	Emergency Preparedness Plan -----	18
Registration -----	7	EVACUATION PLAN -----	18
Classroom Placement -----	7	GUIDELINES FOR STAFF -----	18
Withdrawal from the Preschool Program -----	8	ACCOUNTING FOR CHILDREN -----	18
Disenrollment Policy -----	8	RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DESIGNATED STAFF IN CHARGE -----	18
TUITION -----	9	SEVERE WEATHER -----	18
Tuition Policies -----	9	EVACUATION & RELOCATION MAP -----	19
Tuition Rates -----	9	LOCKDOWN -----	20
Extended Day Rates -----	10	ALTERNATE SHELTER -----	20
Tuition Payments -----	11	COMMUNICATION -----	20
ATTENDANCE -----	12	HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICIES -----	21
Arrival Procedures -----	12	Health Checks -----	21
		Medication -----	21
		Immunizations -----	22

Employee Immunizations -----	22	Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability-----	30
Hearing/Vision Screening -----	22	EMPLOYEE MOONLIGHTING -----	30
TB Tests -----	22	Staff Training and Professional Development -----	30
Illness & Exclusion -----	23	Exceptions to Preschool Policies-----	30
WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME -----	23		
WHEN A CHILD BECOMES ILL AT SCHOOL-----	23		
Allergies -----	24		
ALLERGIC REACTION EMERGENCY -----	24		
Medical Emergency Procedures-----	24		
Third Party Medical Services -----	24		
COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES -----	25		
Parent Notification/Communication -----	25		
Parent/Teacher Conferences & Progress Reports--	25		
Open Door Policy-----	25		
Parent Involvement -----	25		
Complaint Resolution Procedures -----	26		
STEP ONE: CONTACT THE TEACHER OR OTHER			
INDIVIDUAL-----	26		
STEP TWO: CONTACT THE PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR			
-----	26		
STEP THREE: CONTACT THE PRESCHOOL BOARD			
-----	26		
Custody Situations-----	26		
CLOTHING/DRESS CODE -----	27		
Dress Code Guidelines -----	27		
Shoes-----	27		
Extra Clothing -----	27		
Outside Play -----	28		
Sunscreen and Insect Repellant -----	28		
Potty Training-----	28		
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND POLICIES -----	29		
Field Trips -----	29		
Water Activities -----	29		
Animals-----	29		
Breastfeeding -----	29		
Photo and Video Policy -----	29		

WELCOME

Welcome to Little Fishers Preschool

Welcome to Little Fishers Preschool and thank you for sharing your children with us! This handbook will provide you with important information about our preschool. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures on the following pages. Feel free to contact us with any questions.

Upon review of the Little Fishers Preschool Parent Handbook, all required forms must be completed and returned to the preschool within the specified time, or your child may be unable to return to school.

As applicable, the term “parent” includes the legal parent or legal guardian within this Parent Handbook.

Fishers of Men Lutheran Church

Little Fishers Preschool is a not-for-profit Lutheran preschool that is part of the mission and ministry of Fishers of Men Lutheran Church. The preschool program is operated by Fishers of Men Lutheran Church as a service to God and the children and parents of Sugar Land and surrounding communities. Students and their families are invited and encouraged to participate in all activities, fellowship, and worship opportunities provided at Fishers of Men. Our Fishers Kids ministry offers activities for children throughout the year.

Sunday Worship Times

- 8:30 AM – Traditional Worship Service
- 9:45 AM – Children’s Sunday School/Adult Bible Education
- 11:00 AM – Blended Worship Service

Administrative Staff

Lindsey Wiesenborn, Preschool Director

director@littlefisherspreschool.org

Macy Mollberg, Preschool Office Assistant

office@littlefisherspreschool.org

Pastor Chuck Ridley, Senior Pastor

chuck@fishersofmen.org

Amy Benitez, Director of Church/Admin. Finance

amy@fishersofmen.org

Susan Yovich, Church Administrative Assistant

susan@fishersofmen.org

LITTLE FISHERS PRESCHOOL'S MISSION

Preschool Philosophy

We believe children grow when they learn that they are loved by God and by their family. They mature emotionally, physically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually when the best resources and teachers focus intently on their development. We are committed to educating while sharing Christ's love with young minds and hearts through prayer, Bible stories, weekly chapel services, and dedicated Christian teachers. We believe in nurturing the "whole child".

Preschool Goal

Our goal is to provide a quality program in a Christian environment. Each child is provided with learning experiences based on the knowledge of their own physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs. This is so they can learn and grow at their own rate under the guidance of a Christian teacher.

Preschool Mission Statement

Our mission at Little Fishers Preschool is to: Excite, Explore, and Educate through Christ, and grow with God.

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

Overview of the Preschool Program

Faith development is the core of the Lutheran early childhood program curriculum. The curriculum is the totality of all experiences, from the first hello to the last goodbye. It includes Bible lessons, Chapel, phonics and language development, storytelling and poetry, math skills, art, music, science, social studies, Learning Without Tears, practical life experiences, sensory experiences, gross and fine motor development, and Spanish. All aspects of the curriculum are developmentally appropriate for each age group. Little Fishers Preschool is licensed and regulated by the Texas Health and Human Services. A review of minimum standards and licensing inspection results are available at the request of parents to the Director.

School Operating Schedule

Little Fishers Preschool operates its own school year calendar, which is coordinated in close conjunction with the Fort Bend ISD school calendar. We start later and end earlier in the school year so as not to conflict with older siblings' school events. A calendar will be issued at the start of the Fall semester, and a Summer Camp schedule will be available in the Spring.

Little Fishers Preschool operates Monday - Friday. Classes are from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

18-MONTH-OLD CLASSES (Younger 2's)	
TUES/THURS	9 am – 2 pm
TUES/WED/THURS	9 am – 2 pm

2-YEAR-OLD CLASSES	
TUESDAY & THURSDAY	9 am – 2 pm
TUES/WED/THURS	9 am – 2 pm
MONDAY - FRIDAY	9 am – 2 pm

3-YEAR-OLD CLASSES	
TUES/WED/THURS	9 am – 2 pm
MONDAY - FRIDAY	9 am – 2 pm

PRE-K 4-YEAR-OLD CLASSES	
TUES/WED/THURS	9 am – 2 pm
MONDAY - FRIDAY	9 am – 2 pm

KINDERGARTEN/BRIDGE CLASSES	
MONDAY - FRIDAY	9 am – 2 pm

EARLY MORNING DROP OFF	
MONDAY - FRIDAY	8 am – 9 am

ENRICHMENT CLASSES (available for 3, 4, and 5-year-olds)	
MONDAY - THURSDAY	2 pm – 3 pm

STAY & PLAY CLASSES (available for 18-month and 2-year-olds)	
MONDAY - THURSDAY	2 pm – 3 pm

Summer Camps

Summer Camps are held during the summer months from Monday – Thursday. Summer Camp days are from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. Registration typically opens around the week after Spring Break. The curriculum during Summer Camp may vary from the school year. Policies and procedures from the school year remain the same during Summer Camp.

Family Events

Little Fishers Preschool hosts several family events throughout the school year, including:

- Meet the Teacher
- Backpack Blessings
- Thanksgiving Feast
- Christmas Program
- Holiday Class Parties
- Donuts with Dad
- Muffins with Mom
- End of Year Celebration

The preschool also coordinates with the Fishers Kids ministry at Fishers of Men to offer additional family-friendly events to invite our preschool families to attend, including:

- Trunks & Treats
- Christmas Program
- Easter Egg-stravaganza
- Vacation Bible School

Chapel

Students and staff members attend chapel services on Thursdays at 9:30 am. Chapel services are led by the Pastor, Preschool Director, or other Little Fishers Preschool or Fishers of Men Lutheran Church staff. Sometimes, a special visitor will be our guest. Parents are welcome to attend chapel services once students are settled into our school routines. Parents will be informed when the chapel opens up for visitors.

Nap/Rest Times

Two-year-old classes include a nap time after the lunch period. Students sleep on their own mats, which are brought to and from home each week. Children are encouraged but never forced to sleep. Students may bring one small stuffed toy or doll to school for naptime if it helps aid the child to sleep or remain resting.

Three-year-old, four-year-old, and kindergarten classes will observe a quiet time/story time after lunch.

Meals

Parents must provide a snack, lunch and a water bottle/spillproof cup (plastic or stainless steel, NO GLASS) labeled with the child's name. Children are encouraged but never forced to eat their food.

LUNCH

During Lunch, your child will practice social graces. Your child should bring a healthy lunch (a protein, fruit/vegetables, and a sugar-free drink) packed in a lunch kit labeled with the child's name. Please do not send candy or carbonated beverages; avoid foods high in sugar. If candy is sent in lunches, it will be sent home with a note reiterating our policy. Chips and cookies are acceptable if the child finishes the "growing food" first. *Little Fishers Preschool is not responsible for your child's daily nutritional value intake.* Lunches from home should be able to be eaten as is. We do not have a microwave available to heat food for the children, or refrigerator space to keep individual lunches cold.

If your child forgets their lunch, a staff member will call you to bring a lunch for your child. If you cannot be reached, LFP will provide a lunch from our LIMITED food pantry, and **you will be billed \$5.00**. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child has a lunch.

Pizza Wednesday is an option if children choose to participate. Cheese pizza is delivered and served with a side of fruit and vegetables. Order forms will be provided for the Fall and Spring semesters so that students can participate in Pizza Wednesday lunch.

SNACKS

For your child's morning snack, we encourage healthy nutritional snacks, such as yogurt, cut-up fruits and vegetables, applesauce, cheese cubes, etc. (If your child's snack requires an eating utensil, please include it with their snack.) If your child does not have a morning snack, the teacher will encourage them to eat something from their lunch. We ask that a second snack be provided from home if your child is enrolled in any after-school activity, such as an Enrichment class or Stay & Play.

Birthday Celebrations

Arrangements may be made with the teacher if you want to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Birthday treats should be "store-bought". Examples of birthday treats to bring: individual cookies, mini cupcakes, rice crispy treats, or brownies. **Please check the label on the package to be sure that the treat does not contain peanuts or peanut oil and that it has not been prepared where there may have been traces of peanuts.** Children do not exchange gifts at school. Invitations to a party may be sent home in the children's bags if ALL children in the classroom are included.

Physical Activities

Little Fishers Preschool strongly believes in and supports the need for physical activity each day.

When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits occur. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk of developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also benefit academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

Classes will participate in at least 50 minutes of moderate to vigorous, active play daily. Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when weather permits.

Little Fishers Preschool will promote active play for all children each day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous unstructured activities to the extent of their abilities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping. Physical activity will occur in the classroom, on the playground, in the Worship Center or Gathering Area during their weekly Motor Skills class, and in the Chapel room during Music class and Chapel time. When weather conditions prohibit outdoor play, we may utilize the above indoor spaces for physical activities, including the Library.

REGISTRATION & ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Procedures

All enrollment paperwork is required before the child can attend. Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted. Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Registration Form
- Tuition Agreement
- Enrollment Packet

The State of Texas Health Department requires a Statement of Health and Immunization Record for your child to be on file at the school before admission to Little Fishers Preschool (it must be signed by a licensed family physician within the past 12 months stating that the child is in good health and free of contagious disease). Special medical situations or concerns should be reported to the school office upon the child's registration to Little Fishers Preschool.

Registration

Little Fishers Preschool offers classes for children ages 18 months – 5 years (Kindergarten). We admit children on a space-available basis without regard to race, gender, national or ethnic origin, or religion. There is a registration fee of \$200 for new students or \$175 for current/returning students. Placement of children at Little Fishers Preschool is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. If classes are full, names will be put on a waiting list. As spaces open during the year, they will be filled with children from the waiting list. Children must be **re-enrolled each fall term**. You will not automatically be re-enrolled for the upcoming school year.

Early registration begins in February and is open to the children currently enrolled in the school, their siblings, and Fishers of Men Church members. Registration is then open to the community beginning mid to late February. A Registration Form and Tuition Agreement should be completed and returned, and your account will be charged the Registration Fee.

Payment of the registration fee will hold your child's place in the program until May 5th, at which time the Supply Fee is due. Tuition Payment #1 is due August 5th to ensure your child's placement in the program for the following school year.

The Registration Fee, Supply Fee, and Tuition Payment #1 are non-refundable. (NO EXCEPTIONS)

Enrollment is not considered final until notification is received by the preschool that all paperwork and fees have been collected.

Classroom Placement

Children are placed in classes based on their age as of September 1.

- 18-month-old class.....18 months old by September 1, 2025
- 2-year-old class.....2 years old by September 1, 2025
- 3-year-old class.....3 years old by September 1, 2025
- 4-year-old Pre-K class.....4 years old by September 1, 2025
- Kindergarten/Bridge class..... 5 years old by September 1, 2025

While each classroom has been designed with a specific age group in mind, each child will be placed in the class that best meets the child's needs.

Withdrawal from the Preschool Program

Intent to withdraw a child from Little Fishers Preschool requires a thirty (30) day written notice; otherwise, children are considered enrolled, and tuition is owed. Neither tuition nor fees will be pro-rated or reimbursed for any days not attended or for early withdrawal. Registration, Supply fees, and May 2027 Tuition are non-refundable. Intent to withdraw must be in writing and provided to the Preschool Director or emailed to director@littlefisherspreschool.org. The Preschool Board will have the final word on whether to release a family from their financial obligation. If withdrawing your child during the school year, the May 2027 Tuition will NOT be applied to your child's last 30 days of school.

Disenrollment Policy

Little Fishers Preschool reserves the right to terminate services. Reasons for termination could include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate behavior (when the health, welfare, and safety of others are at risk.)
- Little Fishers Preschool unable to meet the child's special needs.
- Chronic tardiness at pick-up time.
- Student's financial account in default.

TUITION

Tuition Policies

- An invoice will be provided each month before the tuition due date. If you have trouble making tuition payments on time, please speak with the Preschool Director immediately.
- Accounts with insufficient funds will be charged a \$25 NSF penalty fee.
- Tuition **will not** be reduced or pro-rated if a child is absent during the school year. If a child is absent for longer than two weeks and **tuition remains unpaid**, the child's place in the class will not be held. The child may be re-enrolled in school when they return, contingent upon space availability **and** payment of tuition and registration fees.
- If an account is more than 30 days past due, the child, at the discretion of the Preschool Director and the Preschool Board, will not be allowed to return to school until the account is current.
- Unless approved by the Little Fishers Preschool Board, no refunds or pro-rated tuition amounts will be given due to bad weather days, holidays, or any school closures due to unforeseen circumstances, including closures initiated by state or local officials.

Tuition Rates

2026 – 2027 MONTHLY TUITION			
AGES	DAYS	TUITION (MONTHLY)	SUPPLY FEES (SEMESTER)
18-MONTH-OLDS	3 DAYS (T/W/Th)	\$425	\$140
	2 DAYS (T/Th)	\$325	\$120
2-YEAR-OLDS	5 DAYS (M-F)	\$575	\$150
	3 DAYS (T/W/Th)	\$425	\$140
	2 DAYS (T/Th)	\$325	\$120
3-YEAR-OLDS	5 DAYS (M-F)	\$575	\$150
	3 DAYS (T/W/Th)	\$425	\$140
4-YEAR-OLDS (Pre-K)	5 DAYS (M-F)	\$650	\$170
	3 DAYS (T/W/Th)	\$500	\$160
5-YEAR-OLDS (Kindergarten)	5 DAYS (M-F)	\$675	\$180

Discounts:

- (1) Pay the entire yearly tuition by the first week of school and receive a 5% discount.
- (2) Active Fishers of Men Lutheran Church members will receive a flat 5% discount on total tuition.

**** Only one discount is permitted per family.**

Extended Day Rates

2026 – 2027 EXTENDED DAY TUITION		
PROGRAM	DAYS PER WEEK	TUITION (MONTHLY)
EARLY MORNING DROP-OFF	5 DAYS	\$160
Available Monday – Friday	4 DAYS	\$130
8 am – 9 am	3 DAYS	\$95
	2 DAYS	\$65
	1 DAY	\$35
STAY & PLAY CLASSES	4 DAYS	\$130
18-Month-Olds & 2-Year-Olds	3 DAYS	\$95
Available Monday – Thursday	2 DAYS	\$65
2 pm – 3 pm	1 DAY	\$35
ENRICHMENT CLASSES	4 DAYS	\$170
3-5 Year-Olds	3 DAYS	\$125
Available Monday – Thursday	2 DAYS	\$85
2 pm – 3 pm	1 DAY	\$45

Tuition Payments

Payments are processed via automatic draft from your bank account on file. Invoices will be available on the 1st of each month, and payments are scheduled to be processed on the 5th of each month.

Tuition is due on the following dates:

2026 – 2027 TUITION	DUE DATE
MAY 2027 TUITION	AUGUST 5, 2026
SEPTEMBER 2026 TUITION	SEPTEMBER 5, 2026
OCTOBER 2026 TUITION	OCTOBER 5, 2026
NOVEMBER 2026 TUITION	NOVEMBER 5, 2026
DECEMBER 2026 TUITION	DECEMBER 5, 2026
JANUARY 2026 TUITION	JANUARY 5, 2027
FEBRUARY 2026 TUITION	FEBRUARY 5, 2027
MARCH 2026 TUITION	MARCH 5, 2027
APRIL 2026 TUITION	APRIL 5, 2027

**** Please note:** Monthly tuition is calculated by dividing the annual tuition equally throughout the school year. It is not based on the number of school days during the month.

Tuition Payment for May 2027 is due by August 5th (or at the time of enrollment if enrolling after August 5th).

ATTENDANCE

Arrival Procedures

All students should arrive at school by 9:00 am and be signed in by their parents or an authorized drop-off person. It is very important that your child arrives on time each day. If they are consistently late, valuable teaching time is missed, and late arrivals disrupt the teacher and students.

Doors will open at 8:55 am for the school day. Once the parent has signed the child in at the entry kiosk, a staff member will escort the child to their classroom.

At this time, the parent should inform the staff of any change to the child's ordinary routine (e.g., if the child is on medication or if someone other than the parent is picking up the child). Children should remain with their parents until they have been transitioned to the care of a staff member. At no time should children be left unsupervised.

Dismissal Procedures

Checking a child out and saying goodbye signals to the child, parent, and teacher that it is time to leave, and the child has transitioned from teacher supervision to 100% parental supervision and responsibility.

REGULAR DISMISSAL

Doors will open for dismissal at **1:55 pm**. Doors will be locked during the school day for the safety of the children. All children will be in their classroom at the end of the day. Once again, the child must be signed out at the entry kiosk by a parent or authorized adult (*read more about authorized pick-ups in the SAFETY & SECURITY section*). Parents may take a moment to discuss their child's day with the teacher. (Please keep this conversation brief due to the teacher's obligation to the other children still in the classroom as well as the teacher's after-school duties.) If you find that the necessary brevity of this exchange leaves unanswered questions and/or unaddressed concerns, a conference may be scheduled.

ENRICHMENT/STAY & PLAY DISMISSAL

Doors will open at **2:55 pm**. Sign your child out at the entry kiosk, then proceed to collect your child from the Enrichment/Stay & Play teacher.

Early Pick-up

If a student must leave school before the school day ends, we ask the parent to send a note explaining the need for early pickup or let someone in the front office know. Upon arrival on the school premises, the parent must first sign out the child at the entry kiosk. The child will then be brought to the school office for pick-up by the parent/guardian.

Late Pick-ups

Your child must be picked up at the designated dismissal time. If your child is still at school after **2:10 pm**, a \$5.00 late fee may be charged to your account, and \$1.00 for each minute after that. The child will be waiting for you in the school office. In case of an emergency, please call the school office. *This also applies to our after-school activities (Enrichment Classes and Stay & Play— late fee after 3:10 pm, Soccer Shots— late fee after 2:45 pm).*

Inclement Weather

If it becomes necessary to close school, have early dismissal, or late arrival due to inclement weather, the closing policies of Fort Bend ISD will be followed. Fort Bend ISD closings will be announced on local television and radio stations, and Little Fishers Preschool will notify parents. Little Fishers Preschool will attempt to follow Fort Bend ISD's make-up schedule for any days missed based on inclement weather closings. The final decision, however, will be up to the Director and the Little Fishers Preschool School Board.

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE

Discipline and Guidance

Staff members will always deal with children in a loving, Christ-like manner that builds self-esteem, nurtures faith, and enhances relationships with other children and staff. Our classroom rules are straightforward. We have found that these rules apply to most situations: Quiet Voices, Walking Feet, and Gentle Hands. Discipline will 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.

Little Fishers Preschool staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which includes at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- 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.

Harsh, cruel, or unusual punishment of a child is strictly prohibited. These include:

- 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 an instrument.
- Putting anything in 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 closed or open doors.
- Withholding active play or keeping a child inside consequently for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development. (This is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.)
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills that help them navigate their physical and social environments. This aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them develop internal control over their actions and encourages acceptable behavior.

If particularly disruptive behavior occurs, the child may be temporarily removed from the classroom to give the child time to reset. If the behavior persists and the child cannot be returned to the classroom, a parent may be called to pick up the child for the day. Little Fishers Preschool reserves the right to terminate care for the child due to disciplinary problems at any time.

Biting Policy

WHEN BITING DOES OCCUR

There are many reasons biting can occur, including communication and frustration. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child who bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children.

FOR THE CHILD WHO WAS BITTEN

- 1) First aid will be administered.
- 2) Parents or guardians will be notified.
- 3) An "Incident Report" will be completed to document the incident.

FOR THE CHILD WHO BIT

- 1) An "Incident Report" will be completed to document the incident.
- 2) The teacher or staff will address the child to help determine why the biting occurred.
- 3) The teacher or staff will reinforce that biting is not appropriate.
- 4) Parents or guardians will be notified.

Moving forward, the child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. Teachers and staff will observe the child to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.). The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

WHEN BITING CONTINUES

- 1) If a child inflicts two bites in one week (5 days of school attendance), a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and set a plan for how the behavior may be modified.
- 2) If the child again inflicts two bites in one week (5 weekdays), another conference will be held with the parents to discuss the incidents and adjust the behavior plan.
- 3) If the child continues to bite, suspension or expulsion may be warranted.

If a child bites twice in 1 day, the child must be picked up from preschool for the remainder of the day.

Suspension and Expulsion

Behaviors of a serious nature may warrant more severe punishment, as determined by the Little Fishers Preschool administration on a case-by-case basis. Students will report immediately to the Director and may be subjected to suspension or expulsion as warranted by the student's behavior. Examples of offenses that will cause a student to be disciplined this way include, but are not limited to:

- Physical and/or verbal assault and fighting
- Making any form of threat
- Any conduct that disrupts the learning process.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Sign In/Out

Per the Texas Health and Human Services, a child must be signed in and out each time they arrive or leave school by ONLY the parent, guardian, or an individual listed as “Authorized to pick-up” (ID verification will be required) on the child’s account. (Children will not be released to a minor). It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to maintain current contact information and a list of authorized individuals for pick-up.

Parking Lot & Driving

The speed limit in the parking lot is **5 MPH**. SAFETY MUST COME FIRST, so please do not exceed the speed limit!

For your safety, please do not leave your valuables in your car when you drop off or pick up your child from school. Unfortunately, thieves rely on you letting your guard down because you feel safe in a preschool/church setting, so please be diligent about keeping yourself, your children, and your valuables secure. Little Fishers Preschool/Fishers of Men Church is not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles or contents on this property.

Please refrain from using your cell phone in the parking lot.

Carpool

While we understand the need for families to carpool, we do not facilitate a carpool line and ask that a parent bring each child into the building. Little Fishers will not set up carpools between families. However, parents may set up carpooling with other families if they choose to. Be sure to include any names from the carpool in your child’s list of authorized pick-up persons.

Visitation Policy

Little Fishers Preschool welcomes parents, guardians, and others to visit and participate in school activities. The support and cooperation from visitors is essential to the safety and success of the school. Because the protection of our students and staff is of utmost importance, the school has established guidelines for campus visitors. The guidelines apply to our school building during regular school hours on standard school days. In particular circumstances, the school may make discretionary changes to these guidelines to ensure a reasonable level of campus security. A “visitor” is defined as any person who is not a Little Fishers Preschool student, school employee, Board member, or approved school volunteer. All visitors to campus must sign in at the preschool office immediately upon arrival. Valid identification may be requested and kept on file with the preschool office.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Keeping children safe is of the utmost priority at Little Fishers Preschool. All staff are required to obtain annual training in the following areas:

- Recognizing the signs of child abuse and neglect
- Shaken Baby Syndrome, SIDS, and Understanding Early Childhood Brain Development (for teachers of children younger than 24 months of age)

Per Texas Family Code Section 261, preschool staff are **REQUIRED** to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and local or state law enforcement. Little Fishers Preschool is committed to increasing awareness and prevention techniques for employees and parents through training, memos, etc. We also coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

The staff may notify CPS or law enforcement about suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation without the knowledge or consent of the parents. Parents will be notified only if DFPS or the police recommend it.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage them to get help. Please call the National Parent Helpline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit <https://nationalparentyouthhelpline.org/>. If you need to report any suspected abuse or neglect, the statewide Abuse and Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, or you may report online at txabusehotline.org.

Gang Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Little Fishers Preschool is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

EVACUATION PLAN

- 1) Fire alarm sounds, or notification of the need to evacuate is given.
- 2) Immediately exit the building through the primary exit route from the classrooms.
- 3) Teachers check to see all students are gathered and accounted for.
- 4) Proceed outside to the designated safe area (the grassy area facing Austin Parkway).
- 5) Teachers count students to ensure all students are still gathered together.
- 6) Everyone remains in the designated safe area until notified that it is safe to return to the building.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

- 1) Learn the escape routes to the exits.
- 2) Follow the designated staff's instructions (director or designee).
- 3) Count children under your supervision.
- 4) Leave immediately. Do not stop for any reason.
- 5) After reaching the evacuation area, count the children under your supervision again.
- 6) Stay at the designated area until released to return to the building.
- 7) Treat any fire alarm as a real emergency.

ACCOUNTING FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Count the children present before and after evacuation.
- 2) Bring attendance sheets for that day and students' emergency contact information.
- 3) Check off those present.
- 4) If someone is missing, inform the designated staff (director or designee).

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DESIGNATED STAFF IN CHARGE

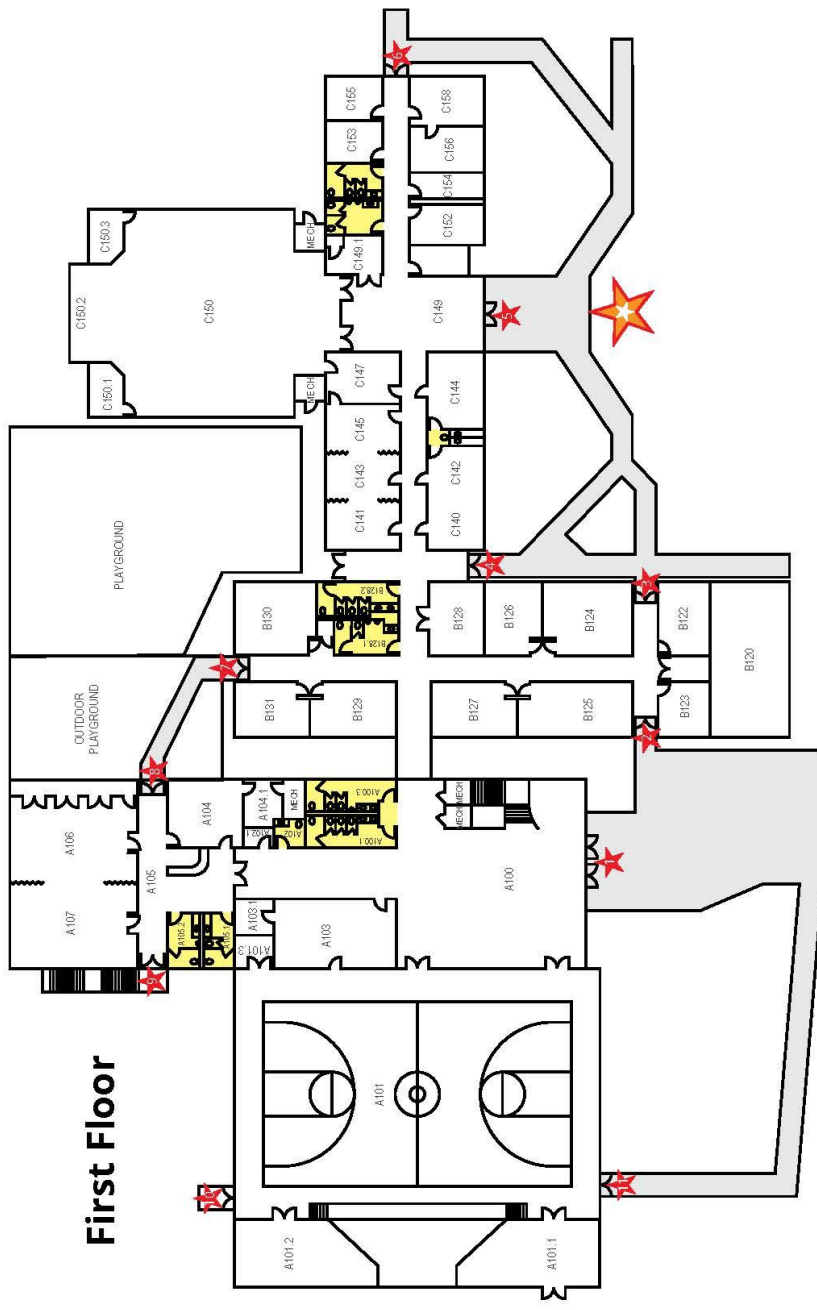
- 1) Survey the area carefully to ensure all staff and children have evacuated.
- 2) Be the last one to leave your area.
- 3) The Preschool Director will be in charge. In the absence of a director, an administrator will be designated. Any teacher may serve as an administrator in the event of an emergency absence or inability of the director or their designee.

SEVERE WEATHER

When a Tornado Warning is issued:

- 1) The director or designee will notify each classroom of these conditions by blowing an air horn with one long blast and/or notifying each classroom individually.
- 2) Immediately proceed to the designated places for severe weather shelter.
- 3) Bring a flashlight, attendance sheets for that day, and students' emergency contact information.
- 4) Teachers count students to ensure all students are still gathered together.
- 5) Everyone will remain in their designated place for shelter until notified that it is safe to return.
- 6) Watch for debris and fallen power lines. Stay away from any damaged areas. Use a flashlight if needed.

Little Fishers Preschool Emergency Evacuation & Relocation



First Floor

* In an emergency, fire exits and exit routes can change due to various hazards that can occur.

Weather Drill Locations

Classroom:	A104	Relocate To:	A102
	B123		A100.1 or A100.3
	B124		A100.3
	B125		A100.1
	B126		A100.3
	B127		A100.1
	B128		B128.1 or B128.2
	B129		B128.1
	B130		B128.2
	B131		B128.1
	C140		B128.2
	C144		C140/144 Bathroom

Fire Exit Locations

Classroom:	A104	8 or 9
	B123	3 or 4
	B124	3 or 4
	B125	3 or 4
	B126	3 or 4
	B127	3 or 4
	B128	4 or 3
	B129	7 or 4
	B130	7 or 4
	B131	7 or 4
	C140	4 or 5
	C144	5 or 6

-  Fire Exit
-  Fire Exit Meeting Place
-  Bathrooms

LOCKDOWN

One way to secure the preschool is to implement lockdown procedures. Lockdown procedures may be activated in situations involving dangerous intruders or other incidents that could harm people in school and/or church facilities. Lockdown drills are conducted during the school year to prepare staff and students for an emergency lockdown.

ALTERNATE SHELTER

- If students and staff must relocate to an alternate shelter, the City of Sugar Land Post Office, 3130 Grants Lake Blvd., Sugar Land, TX 77479, 800-275-8777, will be the alternate shelter.
- Students and staff will walk to the alternate shelter between Little Fishers Preschool and the City of Sugar Land Post Office.

COMMUNICATION

In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911 for Police, Fire, or EMS.

The telephone number for Fort Bend County Health and Human Services Department is: 281-238-3233

The telephone number for Little Fishers Preschool is: (281) 265-5656

Parents will be notified immediately and without undue delay of any early school closures due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Little Fishers Preschool may use email, phone calls, and Procure messaging to communicate with parents.

HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICIES

Health Checks

The key elements of a health check are observing the child and communicating with the child's parent or guardian. Little Fishers Preschool staff will visually inspect the child upon arrival each morning. If they notice anything unusual, they will point it out to the parent at that time.

A staff member will greet the child and look for the following:

- Breathing difficulties
- Severe coughing
- Discharge from the nose or eyes
- Changes in skin color
- Bruising or swelling
- Cuts, sores, or rashes

The staff member may hug the child or gently feel the child's cheek, forehead, or neck (checking to see if the child feels unusually warm or cold and clammy). If the child exhibits symptoms of a fever, they will be brought to the preschool office, where a staff member will take the child's temperature with a thermometer. If the child can talk, we will ask them questions (e.g., "Did you take medicine this morning? What color was the medicine?").

Teachers and/or administration will talk with the parent to find out about changes in the child's:

- Sleep
- Eating or drinking
- Toileting habits
- Mood and behavior at home

Findings will be documented on the teacher's daily attendance sheet.

Medication

Little Fishers Preschool does not administer medication to students, except for an EpiPen or Benadryl in the case of a severe allergic reaction (please see details of allergy medicine in the Allergies section). If your child needs medication during the school day, you must come to the school and administer it. Please do not send medications to school with your child.

Immunizations

Little Fishers Preschool requires students to be fully immunized according to the Texas Department of State Health Services schedule. The state requires all records to be on file with our preschool within one week of the admission date and must be signed by a healthcare professional who has examined the child within the past year. Please visit www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize for current immunization requirements for Texas child care centers.

All immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission unless:

- The child is exempt or excepted from an immunization, and the exemption or exception is verified by the date of admission.
- The child is homeless or in foster care and is provisionally admitted for up to 30 days if evidence of immunization is not available.

Employee Immunizations

In compliance with the Texas Health and Human Services requirements for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases, Little Fishers Preschool has selected the following immunizations as recommended for employees.

Immunizations currently recommended for our employees to receive:

- Influenza (annually)
- Pertussis (Tdap)
- Covid-19 vaccine

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, Little Fishers Preschool recommends that they consider them. If the employee decides that these immunizations are appropriate and beneficial for their health and well-being and receives the immunization, they are asked to provide the Preschool Director with the documentation that the immunizations have been received. The employee will indicate if any exemptions would prevent them from receiving an immunization for a vaccine-preventable disease.

Little Fishers Preschool will encourage using protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible diseases. The protective medical equipment would include gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer. The use of protective medical equipment will be based on the level of risk the employees present to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure to children.

All employees will be required to sign this policy, which will be retained on file. Information related to whether an employee chooses to have immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases will be kept confidential. Failure to sign this policy will result in the employee being unable to work directly with children.

Hearing/Vision Screening

The state of Texas requires all students who turn 4 years old by September 1st to complete a vision and hearing screening with numeric results. Little Fishers Preschool partners with a local hearing and vision screening specialist to offer this service at our school. Parents may also obtain this screening service from their child's healthcare professional. Parents must provide a copy of these screenings to the preschool.

TB Tests

Students are NOT required to have a TB test for admittance; however, it is recommended for children whose families travel extensively abroad.

Illness & Exclusion

Per the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, Little Fishers Preschool observes and enforces the following Illness and Exclusion Policy.

A child will be excluded from care in the following circumstances:

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in preschool activities, including outdoor play.
- 2) The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
- 3) The child has any of the following:
 - a. Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or greater.
 - b. Uncontrollable diarrhea or two or more episodes of vomiting in 24 hours.
 - c. Excessive runny nose, headache, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, or earaches related to the common cold, respiratory infection, or gastrointestinal infection.
 - d. Any other symptoms of serious illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, a rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, or behavior changes.
 - e. A healthcare professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is not contagious.

Please visit www.dshs.texas.gov/idps-home/school-communicable-disease-chart for a list of communicable diseases and the criteria for school exclusion and readmission criteria.

The student is not permitted to return to school until they are free of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours WITHOUT medications.

The best way to prevent the spread of illness at the preschool is for sick children to stay home until they are entirely well. Full cooperation of all parents is required for the preschool to maintain a healthy environment.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME

Notify your child's teacher and the school office if your child is ill, whether chronic or temporary. You are asked to keep your child at home until the readmission criteria are met (24 hours symptom-free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.). Please see the link listed above for more detailed readmission criteria.

WHEN A CHILD BECOMES ILL AT SCHOOL

If a child becomes ill at school, the child will be excluded from the classroom, and the parent will be contacted to pick up their child immediately. When called to pick up a child due to illness during the school day, parents must pick up their sick child within one hour of notification or be subject to the late pick-up policy and fees. In the event of severe illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, Little Fishers Preschool may call for an ambulance at the parent's expense.

Allergies

If your child has any allergies, please notify the Preschool Director and indicate the allergy on your child's Enrollment Form. An Allergy Emergency Plan must be completed and signed by the child's healthcare professional and must be on file in the office. All classrooms and kitchens are equipped with a list of children with food allergies, and teachers will have the child's Allergy Emergency Plan in their possession in case of an emergency. Any medication required for allergies must be provided by the parents and include a prescription. Students' EpiPens are kept in the teacher's Emergency Bag, which is carried with them at all times. Lunch and snacks will be monitored carefully to prevent a food allergy reaction. *Note: Little Fishers Preschool is not a peanut allergy-free facility.*

ALLERGIC REACTION EMERGENCY

If a student has an allergic reaction:

- 1) Teacher or staff will IMMEDIATELY administer an EpiPen (if the student is prescribed one).
- 2) Teacher or staff will notify the administration of the emergency via school walkie-talkies and another staff member will step in to occupy the other children in the classroom.
- 3) Administration will call 911, then the student's parents and/or emergency contact on file.
- 4) The student will continue to be monitored until emergency services and/or parents arrive at the school.

Medical Emergency Procedures

In a medical emergency, Little Fishers Preschool staff will first seek to ensure the child's safety. Parents will be contacted immediately. If neither parent can be reached, the emergency contacts listed in the child's school account will be contacted. Should the emergency require professional attention, 911 will be called.

Third Party Medical Services

Outside therapy services may be scheduled as "pull-out" sessions or occasional observation periods. Therapists must have written permission from parents, and credentials must be provided to the school office before sessions can begin. Therapists must also adhere to our school's Visitation Policy.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

Parent Notification/Communication

The preschool office hours are from 8:00 am until 3:00 pm on Monday – Thursday, and 8:00 am until 2:00 pm on Fridays. If you need to contact the preschool office outside of regular office hours, please leave a message, and your call will be returned as soon as possible. E-mail addresses for the Director and Office Assistant are listed at the beginning of this handbook. We welcome your comments, questions, or concerns.

Each day, your child will take home their folder, which will include notes from the teacher and any student work completed that day. Please look through your child's folder daily. Your child has worked hard during the week and is proud of their work. The director writes a **monthly** newsletter for parents called "The Fishing Line." Classroom teachers also write weekly newsletters to their parents. Parents will be provided links to sign up for these newsletters at the start of the school year. Parents can also access newsletter links on our website at www.littlefisherspreschool.org.

Parents are discouraged from contacting Little Fishers Preschool staff through personal social media channels. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat. Teachers are prohibited from personal use of cell phones during school hours.

Parent/Teacher Conferences & Progress Reports

There are three assessment periods during the school year where progress reports will be completed for each student. Progress Reports will be sent home with students for parent review. A Parent/Teacher conference may be requested to discuss your child's progress. If you have difficulty arranging an in-person conference with your child's teacher, a phone conference is always available. If needed, children are welcome to accompany a parent for conferences. Please get in touch with your child's teacher or the school office to schedule a conference.

Open Door Policy

At Little Fishers Preschool, we believe that offering the best environment for children requires a team effort between administration, teachers, and parents. Parents should feel welcome to address any issues or concerns about the preschool with the Director, teacher, or member of the Preschool Board. Parents are welcome to observe their child at any time during the hours of operation unless health and safety protocols temporarily prevent the observation. We ask parents to observe their child in a manner that provides the least amount of distraction and disruption to the students and regular class routine. If parents know in advance they would like to observe, it is always helpful to let the teacher know.

Parents are also welcome to review a copy of the Minimum Standards Requirements for Licensed Child Care Facilities at any time. A copy of this document is available in the preschool office. The most recent copy of the school's Licensing Inspection Report is always available for review and can be found on the bulletin board by the preschool office. For information on child care licensing, call 1-800-862-5252 or visit the website at www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care

Parent Involvement

Parents' involvement in their child's school is integral to their success and ensures a positive educational experience. Parents must communicate any significant changes in their child's life to the teacher. Parents are encouraged to attend programs, class parties, etc. If a parent desires to volunteer with the preschool, please speak with the Director or Office Assistant.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

Situations may arise throughout the school year that may cause concerns with parents or teachers. Resolving these situations promptly is beneficial for all parties involved. The following steps are necessary for reaching satisfactory solutions.

STEP ONE: CONTACT THE TEACHER OR OTHER INDIVIDUAL

The most direct route to resolving a concern is to confer directly with the person involved, whether a teacher or parent, as soon as possible after the incident. Over 95% of concerns are resolved at this level.

STEP TWO: CONTACT THE PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

If a parent's concern is not resolved by conferring directly with the individual involved, the complaint should be shared with the director. This step should be taken only when Step One has not resolved the concern.

STEP THREE: CONTACT THE PRESCHOOL BOARD

The Little Fishers Preschool Board is in charge and is responsible for concerns that may arise from the school's operation. This step should only be taken when Steps One and Two have not resolved the concern or when the concern involves the Director. Complaints to the Preschool Board may be sent to the Director of Church/Admin. Finance, Amy Benitez, via email at amy@fishersofmen.org. All decisions made by the Preschool Board are final.

Custody Situations

Little Fishers Preschool prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. Little Fishers Preschool will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. *PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.* That said, all enrollment forms must be completed with BOTH parent's information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. If a custody dispute occurs on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, Little Fishers Preschool has the right to terminate care.

CLOTHING/DRESS CODE

Dress Code Guidelines

A uniform is not required at Little Fishers Preschool. Children should wear clothes suitable for active play and Sugar Land's constantly changing weather. Children should also be dressed for freedom of activity and to avoid worrying about dirt, paint, etc. Assume that anything worn to school can get dirty.

To help encourage independence in dressing and undressing, please make sure that your child's clothing is free of complicated fasteners (i.e., snaps, overalls, jumpsuits.) and that they can handle their own clothing with minimal assistance from teachers when using the restroom and/or putting on jackets, etc.

Please label all clothing with your child's name. We cannot be responsible for lost clothing. Girls should wear shorts under a dress. Please make sure that undergarments (panties or underwear) are worn daily. Students are encouraged to wear their LFP school shirts on Chapel days.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose, not too tight) that enables full participation in active play.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Sturdy shoes with closed toes, such as tennis shoes.
- Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket.

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running or that provides insufficient support for climbing.
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as loose drawstrings.

Shoes

Sneakers and socks must be worn and must be safe for all activities. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. (Please no flip flops, etc.) Sandals, cowboy boots, crocs, rain boots, and slippery-soled shoes invite accidents.

Extra Clothing

Please bring a Ziploc bag with a complete set of clothes (including socks and shoes) for emergency use. The bag should be labeled with the child's name. Please replace clothing as your child grows and the seasonal temperatures change.

Outside Play

Little Fishers Preschool strongly believes in and supports the need for physical activity each day. Each class will have the opportunity for daily, scheduled playground periods that are 35 minutes long, as stated on the playground schedule. Children are taught the playground rules and proper use of the equipment at the beginning of the school year. When weather conditions prohibit outdoor play, physical activities will occur in the classroom, the Worship Center, the Gathering Area, or the Library during the scheduled outdoor time. Teachers will have activities planned for “rainy days”.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellant

The staff of Little Fishers Preschool will not apply sunscreen or insect repellant on children. If needed, please apply these protectants before coming to school.

Potty Training

Children must be toilet trained BEFORE they enter the three , four, and five-year-old classes. Expectations for children who are fully potty trained include:

- the ability to communicate their needs
- be independent in the bathroom
- pulling up and down their own clothing
- the ability to clean themselves and wash their hands

We understand that accidents may occur and will help the children change quickly so that they may continue the day. Please ensure that an extra change of clothing is sent to school in your child’s backpack.

However, if your child has frequent accidents during the first month of school, we reserve the right to temporarily remove the child from the current classroom and place the child in the two-year-old classroom (where changing facilities are readily available) until the child is thoroughly trained. *(Subject to availability)* Once your child is wearing underwear consistently with minimal accidents, we will place them back in their original class. If you choose to pull your child out of the program until they are completely potty trained, we will hold your child’s spot for a maximum of 30 days. **Registration Fee, Supply Fee, and Tuition fees will not be refunded.**

For our two-year-olds, please furnish an adequate supply of diapers or pull-ups for each day that your child is at school. The class will make several bathroom trips during the day, and we will positively promote children’s toilet training successes. Children often model other children, and we find this to be an incentive for them. If your child has frequent accidents during toilet training, the teacher(s) may request that you supply pull-ups during this transition. Teachers will be diligent in taking children in pull-ups to the toilet regularly.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Field Trips

Little Fishers Preschool does not take off-campus field trips.

Water Activities

Water activities will consist of water table and sprinkler play only.

Animals

From time to time, Little Fishers Preschool may have class pets or visiting animals that meet the requirements of Texas Child Care Licensing. Parents will be notified of any animal visitors before the day of the visit.

Breastfeeding

Mothers have the right to breastfeed and may do so for their children while in care. Little Fishers Preschool offers comfortable options for mothers to breastfeed. Please contact the director or your child's teacher for additional information.

Photo and Video Policy

Little Fishers Preschool believes in the benefits of using real-life pictures in our educational program. Photos and videos taken of children by staff will only be used in our school program. A consent form is included in the enrollment packet, and parents have the right to opt out of photos or videos being taken of their children during regular school programming. Please note that photographs may be taken during special events by parents, guardians, or other visitors in attendance. If you wish for your child not to be photographed, you may want to remove them from these events.

Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability

Injuries can and may occur in any activity. Being fully aware of these dangers, the parent voluntarily consents to their children participating in all programs and activities at Little Fishers Preschool. Parents, on their own behalf, and on behalf of the child and respective heirs, administrators, executors, and successors hereby covenant to sue and forever release Little Fishers Preschool, its officers, directors, employees, or other representatives, whether paid or volunteer, from all liability for any and all damages or injuries suffered the student/child/participant while under the instruction, supervision or control of Little Fishers Preschool. Fishers of Men Lutheran Church and/or Little Fishers Preschool will not be liable for any injuries and/or damage(s) caused on the property outside of normal operating hours.

EMPLOYEE MOONLIGHTING

Little Fishers Preschool is not responsible for childcare or other arrangements made with our employees outside our business day.

Staff Training and Professional Development

Every Little Fishers Preschool staff member receives annual training to follow the State Licensing & Regulation Guidelines and Requirements. All staff are certified in CPR and first aid and have completed an FBI background check.

Exceptions to Preschool Policies

Any exceptions to the policies in this handbook must be approved by the Little Fishers Preschool Board. Parents will be notified in writing within 30 days of any policy change. Signatures from parents may be required.