



LICENSED CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Date: 07/25/16

# Parent's Handbook

## PHILOSOPHY:

The goal of Lighthouse Learning Center is to support each child's development to his/her potential in all areas of growth and learning...mental, physical, social, and spiritual.

The staff aim to promote a child's good feelings about themselves through loving caregiving. We know that feelings of self-worth, meaningful peer and adult relationships, cognitive skills, and physical well-being are most important to the young child. Each child is valued for his/her uniqueness and individuality.

Our respect for children is visible throughout the day in the manner in which we talk with children, give choices in play, set up their environment, offer challenging and varied experiences which encourage creativity, open up their spiritual eyes, and follow the interest of children in our center .

**DIRECTOR: NOLA COX**

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### ***Licensing:***

The center is licensed by the State of North Dakota. We are also regularly inspected by the Fire Department and the ND Department of Health. All children are accepted on the basis of "being a child" and will not be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry. If you have any questions, concerns or complaint about a suspected licensing violation or a suspected child abuse/neglect regarding our preschool or a staff member feel free to call the State Department of Human Services Child Services Division, Burleigh County Social Services or Child Care Resource & Referral. The license is on display so that each family can see we have met the licensing requirements for the state of North Dakota. Each year the staff is required to attend a specified number of training hours to maintain that license.

### ***Staff:***

The administrative staff at Lighthouse Learning Center is comprised of a director and an administrative assistant. Each classroom will have a supervising teacher and a classroom aide depending on class size. Staff qualifications and child/teacher ratios are always met and often exceed state requirements. Our staff is always available to discuss any special needs or concerns you may have.

The staff at Lighthouse Learning Center was chosen to work here because of the respect, care, and concern they show for the children attending. They were also chosen because of their competence in being able to properly educate young children. The staff is continually being trained in early childhood practices by attending a number of classes throughout the year; they have also been trained in first aid and CPR. All staff members are required to have background checks.

### ***Parental Involvement:***

Parental involvement is encouraged. Your child will benefit most from our program if parents and staff communicate regularly in both formal meetings and informal conversation. You may drop in, unannounced, at any time. We do request that parents stop at the office and sign in first. We must know who is in the building at all times for security reasons. We welcome parent participation during holiday party activities. You may speak with the teacher concerning your child but we ask that this be arranged ahead of time so as not to disrupt the flow of instruction for other students. A conference may be arranged for children having special needs or problems.

### ***Communications with Parents:***

Methods of communicating information, advice, suggestions, etc. between parents and staff are available in various forms. News of closure or special events are posted on the doors, as well as notices of exposure to illness. Parents are informed of the activities of the preschool through occasional newsletters. Please keep the Director informed of any changes your child may be going through that we could help with.

### ***Transportation:***

We do not provide transportation to and from school/daycare. Parents are responsible for providing that service. If it will be provided by someone other than a parent/guardian, they will need to be listed on the release form.

### ***Aquatic Policy:***

We do not participate in any swimming activities. The only activities involving water play is our water table.

### ***Preschool Adjustment:***

It is normal for your child to have some fears and misgivings about being away from you. All children, like adults, need time to get used to new situations and people.

Prepare them ahead of time by discussing these changes as far in advance as possible. Talk about some of the new people and new things your child will do. Discuss any concerns your child may have and present the new experience in positive terms.

The first day:

- It is natural for the child to be hesitant, especially if it is the first time the child has been separated from you
- A cheerful goodbye kiss from you, a reassuring word that you will be back after work is all that you need do... then LEAVE
- Our caring staff will take it from there
- Please do not sneak out when your child is not looking
- Usually, the child settles down shortly after the parent leaves & gets involved with the other children & the program that is geared to their age & interests
- Feel free to call the preschool office when you arrive at work & see how your child is doing

Temporary problems may occur, depending on the child's age. Some children will "act-out" their feelings by clinging to you and refusing to let go, having tantrums, waking up at night or expressing a desire to stay home. Usually, these are only temporary problems. If your child is treated lovingly, this behavior should go away quickly. Remember – if you're enthusiastic the chances are your child soon will be too!

### ***Release Of Your Child:***

Your child will be released only to parents and persons for whom the center has written authorization. Proper identification is required. If someone other than the parent, or normal designated individual, is picking up the child then they will need to check in at the office. Only authorized adults may pick up students. It is the custodial parent's responsibility to keep the school informed of the legal status of guardianship of students.

Lighthouse Learning Center will:

- Not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent has legal custody where there is no court document
- Accept the information given by the enrolling parent unless we are presented with a court document from the custodial parent that shows otherwise
- Not subvert the law

For your child's protection, the following criteria are to be followed:

- Students will only be released to authorized persons listed on the student's emergency card. The authorized person must be 18 years of age and be able to show picture identification.
- No student is to be released without specific permission from a parent or guardian. We MUST have authorization in WRITING! If an emergency situation occurs, the parent/guardian must contact the Preschool Office giving verbal authorization for release of the child to an alternate person. The parent/guardian will be asked to provide the name and description of the person authorized to pick up the student and they will be required to show us a photo ID when they are picking the child up. Unless the Preschool office personnel can identify the caller without question, the parent/guardian will be asked to give their Social Security number.

### ***Absences And Tardiness:***

Because staff salaries and expenses continue even if your child is absent, full fees are to be paid. If your child is sick and will be absent for the day, dropped off late, or picked up early, please telephone the office by 8:00 a.m. A phone call letting us know will help our staff in planning for the day. If your child will be significantly late, please notify the office.

### ***Calendar:***

Lighthouse Learning Center will follow the Bismarck Public School calendar for scheduled holidays and vacation time off...excepting teacher in-service days.

***Inclement Weather:***

The center may also close due to inclement weather. If preschool is closed for the day, the local radio station (KFYR) will be notified as early as possible in the morning, or in very extreme cases, the preceding evening. If serious storm conditions develop during the day when children are already in the Center, the children will not be dismissed early unless picked up by a parent or an adult listed on the emergency card.

***Emergency School Closure or Dismissal:***

An emergency could occur that would warrant an emergency school closure (outside of regular school hours) or dismissal (during regular school hours). Every effort will be made to notify parents by phone. Students will be released to parents and/or adults listed on the emergency cards only!

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

***Educational Philosophy:***

The purpose of Lighthouse Learning Center is to offer a loving and learning environment for children ages 3 years through 5 years old in order that they may discover their uniqueness and their relationship to God's world around them. Our program is designed to meet each child's needs, to foster development of competence in intellectual and social skills, and to provide a safe, nurturing environment. The program will focus on increasing development in the emotional, social, physical, intellectual, educational, and spiritual growth of each child. Curriculum is utilized that develops a child in all dimensions of learning using the principles and values from the Bible for its structural basis. Our strong commitment to working with parents is evidenced through parent activities and programs.

***Program Description:***

Lighthouse Learning Center provides a high quality early education and care program. We are open between the hours of 8:15 am and 11:15 pm, Monday through Friday. The center serves children aged three years (providing they are potty trained) through five years and has the capacity to serve 49 children. The base curriculum used is the Essentials Preschool program which has been further enhanced by the Director to better meet the following goals and objectives. The curriculum is available for viewing at the Center by contacting the Director.

***Goals and Objectives:***

1. Teach the Bible as the inspired Word of God.
2. Teach the young child God loves and cares for him/her and all mankind and to build up the child's self-esteem.
3. To reach out to the child's family and share Christ's love for them.
4. To help make the child aware of the world around them.
5. To help the children develop good manners.
6. To help the children learn how to share, respect and care about others.
7. To provide a loving warm environment for all children that they may:
  - Develop self-expression through music and crafts.
  - Develop self-control.
  - Develop interest and joy in learning.
  - Develop responsibility and resourcefulness.
  - Become comfortable in a group setting where they both learn to be quiet and listen to the teacher or participate in fun and noisy activities.
8. Some areas of learning:
  - Language (number and letter recognition)
  - Visual motor skills (cutting on lines, tracing)
  - Visual perception (design/matching)
  - Auditory perception (same, different)
  - Auditory memory (shapes, sizes, colors, sequence)

***Daily Classroom Schedule:***

Although subject to change at the discretion of the Director or Preschool Teacher, the following schedule will most closely resemble a normal classroom day:

8:15 – 8:30	Free play (big room)
8:30 – 8:45	Bible story / morning songs
8:45 – 9:00	Share time
9:00 – 9:15	Bathroom break
9:15 – 10:00	Calendar / Academic lessons
10:00 – 10:15	Snack
10:00 – 10:30	Free play
10:30 – 10:45	Story (circle time)
10:45 – 11:15	Classroom project / closing activities

**REGISTRATION ENROLLMENT*****Admissions:***

Preschool Enrollment is open to all children between the ages of 3 (if potty-trained) and through kindergarten whose needs can be met by Lighthouse Learning Center. Authorization for admission is made by the Director if the child is of appropriate age and determined to be socially, emotionally, and physically mature enough for preschool. If classes are filled when a parent calls, the parent may request an application for the waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur. As vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list.

***Preschool Tuition Options:***

- Lighthouse Learning Center's preschool hours are 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM (the Center is open from 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM).
- You can choose Monday-Friday; or Monday/Wednesday/Friday; or Tuesday/Thursday.
- The monthly tuition is based upon the preschool plan chosen. Monthly rates are as follows: 5 days a week is \$185...3 days a week is \$140...2 days a week is \$115.
- Payments are due on the 1st of each month and will be considered late after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

***Available Discounts:***

- Family Discount ~ \$5 for 2nd child (\$10 if on the 5-day plan).
- Full-Year Pre-Payment ~ inquire with the Director.

***Registration Fee:***

The registration fee is a 1-time fee that covers the child's total time of enrollment at the school. The current registration fee is \$50.00 and is to be paid by cash or check at the time of registration. The registration fee is not refundable.

***Change of Schedule:***

Any changes in your child's schedule must be requested on the first of the month for the following month of care, subject to availability. Please stop by the office for a Change of Schedule Form. The request must be written and signed by the parent and give to the Director for approval. Because the teachers carefully plan ahead for the daily curriculum and because of staffing needs, there can be no "switching" of days or "drop-in" care. There can also be no "making-up" days due to absences.

***Withdrawal:***

One month's written notification is required for withdrawal from Lighthouse Learning Center. If it becomes necessary to withdraw a student from Lighthouse Learning Center, the parent or person responsible for the account must complete a withdrawal form, available in the office.

***Forms Required for Enrollment:***

1. Child Information Sheet...must be filled out completely (SFN 845)
2. Certificate of Immunization (SFN 16038)
3. Parent's Statement on Health of Child (SFN 847)
4. Parental Contract

***Confidentiality:***

Information relating to your child is confidential and will not be released unless written authorization is provided by a parent or legal guardian. An exception will be made in the event of suspected child abuse. Any suspicions will be reported to the director for immediate investigation and action with appropriate authorities.

**BILLING INFORMATION**

***Payment Agreements:***

If there is a problem with your account, or if you will not be able to pay on the due date, please talk with the Director *before* the bill is due. If you are unable to pay your bill on the due date, you may ask for a payment agreement stating when you will pay the amount due. Payment agreements may be for a one-time situation or to change the normal due date to a different time in the month on an ongoing basis. A late charge of \$5.00 per day will be assessed on all late payments. Tuition can be mailed or dropped off at the Preschool.

***Dis-enrollment for Nonpayment:***

Any account not paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> working day after it is due, or any payment agreement not paid on the due date, will be sent a past due notice. Children will be dis-enrolled if an account is 30 days past due. Children may be dis-enrolled within a shorter timeframe if a repeat violation of the payment policy or agreement. In the event an account should remain delinquent, the Preschool reserves the right to turn the account over to a professional agency for collection. All payments, including registration fees, will be applied to the oldest balance on the account.

***Returned Checks:***

If a check is returned, you will be assessed a \$25.00 returned check fee. If the amount is not paid, dis-enrollment procedures will be initiated. After the second returned check, the client must pay on a cash basis.

***Social Service Payments:***

If your child care is paid for by a government or community agency, please be advised that the late and returned check fees will not be covered. We request you have your caseworker send all contract information to the center. Parental fees must be paid on a timely basis.

***Absence Credits:***

Lighthouse Learning Center does not give credit for any vacation time or sick days.

**HEALTH CARE POLICIES AND SAFETY INFORMATION**

***Health Care Summary:***

As required by law, a health record is kept for each child by the Center, including a record of current immunizations and the signature of the child's doctor on or before the first day of Preschool.

***Illness & Medical Care:***

Please check your child each morning BEFORE coming to Preschool. If you suspect your child is ill, or if any one of the following symptoms are present, PLEASE DO NOT BRING your child to Preschool.

- Headache
- Nausea, or has vomited within 24 hours

- Listless, drowsy, unusually tearful
- Runny nose with a green or yellow discharge
- Frequent cough or cough that produces green or yellow sputum
- Sore throat, red throat, enlarged tonsils, or difficulty swallowing
- Diarrhea or gray/white stool within 48 hours
- Fever within 24 hours. NEVER send your child to Preschool if he/she has a temperature in the morning, even if you have given the child Tylenol. This only masks the condition temporarily.
- Difficulty breathing or catching breath
- Red, inflamed eyes; yellow or green drainage from eyes; sores on eyelids
- Unusual rash or spots on skin.
- Unusual discharge from vagina, penis, or rectum
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Open, draining wounds
- Head lice

Please keep your child home for 24 hours after these symptoms have disappeared, 48 hours for diarrhea. Frequently young children appear well in the morning with symptoms reappearing in the afternoon or evening when the child is tired. If your child is still ill, he/she is susceptible to a new virus. It is also helpful to encourage your child to wash his/her hands frequently, especially when he/she is sick, as he/she can re-infect himself or others. Thank you for your cooperation. The health of our preschool students depends on you!

If your child becomes ill while at preschool:

- The parent (or other individual authorized on the Emergency Card) will be notified to pick the child up to take home.
- The Preschool has the responsibility for seeing that children with obvious symptoms of illness do not infect others. In the event a child contracts a communicable disease and exposes the other children, notice of such exposure will be posted on the classroom door.
- Parents, or authorized representative, MUST pick up the child within ONE (1) hour of notification. It is routine policy to require parents to pick up their child when their temperature reaches/exceeds 100, the child is vomiting, has diarrhea, discharge from the ears, discharge from the eyes or red eyes, any rash or skin lesion that blisters and/or is unable to function normally at preschool.

Please report all contagious illnesses (e.g. chicken pox, strep throat.) to the preschool office. The Preschool should know about anything-contagious going around. As a general rule, the child must not return to preschool until:

- Fever has been broken for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
- Nausea or vomiting, or has subsided for 24 hours.
- Diarrhea has subsided for 48 hours.
- 24-hour period has passed since the start of a medication prescribed for a contagious illness.
- The child is feeling well again and normal behavior has returned.

Contact the Director to consult the return policy for specific illnesses.

### ***Medication:***

State law requires a prescription for all medicines that are to be administered in a school facility. Over the counter products – such as Tylenol, aspirin, cough syrup, Desitin – may be administered only with a note from a physician. All prescription medication must be in the original container bearing the name of the medicine, date filled, pharmacy label and number, physician's name, child's name, and directions for dosage. In addition, medication will be dispensed only upon your written order. All medications will be stored in a secure location and are NOT to be kept with the student (e.g. in backpack, etc.) A Medication Release Form must be completed for each medication. Medication that will be given longer than two weeks requires a physician's signature on the Medication Release Form.

### ***Medical Conditions:***

It is important that you inform staff of any special food allergies or medical conditions your child has. This will assist us in being better prepared to handle any emergencies that may arise. Parents of any child with health problems that might cause a health emergency should be certain to notify the preschool of the problems and the procedures that would need to be followed should the child become ill.

### ***Emergency Procedures:***

Parents will be contacted immediately in the event of an emergency. Please keep the front office updated of changes in your business and home address and phone numbers so you can be easily located. If other listed contact people cannot be reached, we will call the physician specified by you on the health record form. In case of serious emergency, the closest hospital will be used via an ambulance service.

### ***Injury:***

An Incident/Accident Report will be completed for each accident that occurs at the Preschool. The report will be made as soon as possible following the accident. The original report will be sent home with the parent and a copy will be retained in the child's file. The Preschool will give appropriate first aid to an injured child to include minor cuts and bruises.

1. A parent or guardian will be contacted, if it is the judgment of the Preschool staff that immediate medical attention is necessary.
2. If it is further the judgment of the Preschool staff that the injury is of an emergency nature, paramedics will be called to the Preschool and the parents contacted.
3. A Permission Form for Emergency Medical Care is REQUIRED at registration.

### ***Medical or Dental Emergency-Ambulatory Transportation:***

In the event of a serious illness or injury requiring immediate medical attention, your child will be transported by ambulance. You will be notified immediately and your child's physician will be contacted as soon as possible. Parents are responsible for all medical costs, including the ambulance.

### ***Insurance:***

Student insurance is provided by the school as a secondary carrier. Claims should be submitted to your primary carrier.

### ***Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect:***

It is our intent to build a partnership with parents to help them provide the most suitable environment possible for children. Toward this goal, we have many resources and referrals available to parents upon request. It is important, also, for parents to be aware that state laws require that any and all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect be reported to the appropriate agency. It is the responsibility of that agency to investigate each reported case.

### ***Fire/Tornado Drills:***

- A safety plan has been put into place for each one of these drills along with many other conditions or situations that could arise at a school setting.
- Emergency drills are held periodically to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do.
- During the drills each student is accounted for, and we work with each student to ensure they understand the importance of following the drill, and doing exactly what they are supposed to in case a real emergency would arise.
- The Preschool is equipped with smoke alarms and fire extinguishers. We train all our employees on procedures and practice regularly.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

### ***Birthdays:***

Parents are encouraged to allow their child to share his/her birthday with the class. Please give the teacher a few days notice. The teacher will let you know how many children will be at snack time and when to come.

### ***Snacks:***

Snack will be set up on a calendar where kids will take turns bringing snack for the entire class on their assigned day. If your child has any special dietary needs or allergies, please bring this to the teacher's attention. It will be recorded in your child's file.

### ***Toys:***

We request that you check with your child's teacher before you allow toys to be brought to school. Sharing personal toys is difficult for young children. Also, we cannot be responsible if a toy is lost or broken. We ask that "adventure toys" (such as super heroes, toy guns, swords, etc) not be brought into the classrooms as these toys are often associated with aggressive play.

### ***Share Time:***

Each student will have the opportunity to have a "special" share toy day. On this day they can bring a toy from home.

### ***Lost And Found***

- Lighthouse Learning Center will not replace lost/stolen articles or make reimbursement for lost/stolen articles.
- Students and their parents are responsible for damaged property, (personal, school or church) whether damage was willful or accidental.
- Lost and found items will be cleaned out periodically and donated to a charitable organization. In order to prevent missing articles, please label EVERYTHING! In spite of all the care you take, clothing will occasionally get lost or taken home by another child. Please check to make sure that what is taken home indeed belongs to your child. If something is missing, please check the "Lost & Found" located in the sign in area.

### ***Dress Code:***

Casual play clothes and comfortable shoes are a must. We paint with various mediums and the children should not worry about the mess. No long dresses, difficult snaps, belts and sandals, or dressy shoes (they are very slippery). If your daughter prefers dresses please put shorts underneath to retain their modesty.

A sweater or coat should be provided for a change in the weather. The Preschool is not responsible for replacing lost or damaged clothing.

- Underwear must be worn at all times.
- All children must bring a change of clothes marked with first and last name on it. A "Ziploc" bag with the child's name on it is convenient for storage. Please see that the clothes change as the seasons change. Please put first and last names on coat, sweaters, and/or extra clothes. Soiled clothes must be taken home and replaced with a fresh set the next day. Clothes are stored in your child's locker.
- For safety reasons it is not recommended that girls wear earrings that have hoops or dangle from the ear lobe for their protection during active play.

### ***Statement on Harassment:***

Lighthouse Learning Center is committed to providing a learning environment that is free of harassment in any form. The center will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will extend its best efforts to accomplish this goal.

Harassment occurs when a series of intentionally cruel incidents that are deliberately hostile and aggressive are directed towards a person. A person is being harassed when he or she is exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. Harassment also occurs when actions of one or more persons create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for an individual or small group of individuals.

Lighthouse Learning Center encourages informal, deliberate, and prompt resolution of concerns about prohibited harassment. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the facts surrounding the incident should be submitted to the Director in writing and signed by the parent or guardian. Complaints of harassment shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by appropriate personnel. Corrective action for prohibited harassment will be taken as warranted after a complete review of all relevant facts.

***Discipline:***

Our view in regards to behavior is it should complement the goals and values found in the home. We are interested in nurturing a thoughtful, considerate child who is concerned with his fellow students and his surrounding environment, a child who feels secure and in control within him/herself. Our strategy in attaining this is by using positive methods, rather than punishing methods. We believe the Lighthouse Learning Center is a prayerful, safe, and respectful place to learn. The center's policy for misbehavior is as follows:

Foremost in our behavior policy is the maintenance of a consistent, yet flexible structure. Children do best when they know what is expected of them. Our staff promotes good behavior through age-appropriate strategies, including positive reinforcement and "setting a good example", thereby facilitating the child's identification with parental figures. This is a key factor in shaping good behavior in young children. "Thank you for helping us pick up the blocks." "It is nice to see you share your toy," as well as the staff's demonstration of appropriate nonverbal behavior, are effective means of implementing this strategy.

When unacceptable behavior occurs, a child is first given positive redirection. If this is not sufficient, she/he is removed to another activity, with the acknowledgment that she/he may return when able to use proper behavior. This type of interchange allows the child to determine the actual consequences of his/her actions and reinforces the norms of acceptable behavior. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's behavior with the teachers if they have questions or concerns.

If the problem continues, the child is removed to an adjacent area and given a "time out" of two to five minutes depending on their age, which is a mechanism for children to regain some inner control and to re-evaluate the situation. The caregiver then prays with the child and discusses the problem and the child's feelings. These episodes are considered a normal part of a child's development.

If a child repeatedly disrupts the flow of class routine, or seems overly angry or hostile, a conference with the family may be in order to search for underlying causes of her/his behavior. When continued disturbances make it difficult for the child and staff to work positively together, the family may be advised to have the child observed by a Child Development specialist for further recommendation(s). In extreme cases, a family may be asked to withdraw a child from the Preschool.

At no time will a child be physically or verbally addressed in an abusive manner.

***Parent Donations:***

We welcome donations of almost any kind! Things you throw away or sell at rummage sales can often be used in the classroom.

