

Lutheran Church of The Cross Day School



Preschool Handbook

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Dear Parents and Students,

The home-school partnership is paramount to your child’s educational success. We value our relationship, recognizing the quality of our parental involvement sets us apart as a school family.

The information and policies contained in this handbook are necessary to function as a successful school. We strongly encourage and deeply appreciate families observing our Arrival and Dismissal procedures, complying with the Dress Code in place for each campus,

communicating with faculty and staff when questions arise and generally reinforcing all LCCDS policies and procedures with your child.

We have been blessed as a school for over 50 years due to family involvement and commitment to education. LCCDS is proud to partner with you, our families, as we travel this education road together.

Warmest regards,



Alexis Walker
Head of School



Jennifer Brady
Assistant Head of School



Katy Davis
Early Childhood Director

MISSION STATEMENT

LCCDS is a partnership of school, church, and families, inspiring superior academic performance while instilling leadership, responsibility, and values in a nurturing environment. Our mission is to meet the changing needs of our students as they develop their God-given potential from early childhood through adolescence.

PHILOSOPHY

At LCCDS, each child is valued for his or her unique traits in personality, styles of learning, rate of development and ability. We strive to instill a lifelong love of learning in an appropriately challenging and faith-centered environment. Education based in Christian values and ethics provides a moral foundation for life. At LCCDS, we believe that school is not just preparation for life; for a child, school is life. Learning how to move from the dependency of the preschooler to become a caring, respectful young person who can think, and act independently requires the encouragement of both school and home working together. Children gain confidence as they grow in responsibility. Challenging children's potential and preparing students for future competitive pre-college preparatory schools is key to LCCDS's mission.

Knowing how to lead, how to function well as part of a group, and how to take another's perspective, moves students a step beyond independence to interdependence, and toward being a vital part of a community.

STAFF

Our professional staff is carefully selected for their educational background, teaching experience, and for their sensitivity to the individual needs of children.

LCCDS is accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools. Additionally, the Preschool staff is accredited by the Pinellas County Licensing Board. Our teachers have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Courses, seminars, and workshops are a continuing effort to keep our staff informed of new developments in early childhood, elementary, and middle school education. All teachers undergo a thorough background check, including fingerprinting.

LCCDS admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

LCC Day School Preschool

As a Christian school, LCC Day School has the right to expect and does expect that students, their families, and LCC Day School faculty and staff will conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner as Christian role models.

Parent Information

Play is children's work. Our play-filled environment includes the following developmentally appropriate activities:

- Play-oriented activities
- Cooperative learning
- Social skills
- Manipulatives
- Problem Solving
- Balanced Literacy

Class times are either 8:30 AM -11:30 AM or 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM. There is one scheduled parent-teacher conference each school year for 3's, 4's, and 4/5T. Please feel free to schedule an additional conference.

Additional Information:

- Each child MUST BE POTTY PROFICIENT.
- Please send your child to school in clothes that can "take it", are comfortable, allow freedom of movement and make it easy for your child to toilet himself.
- Please send your child to school in sneakers. Please NO SANDALS, COWBOY BOOTS, SLIP ONS. or RAIN BOOTS.
- Panther Spirit Fridays - Students are encouraged to wear LCCDS Spirit Shirts on Fridays. Spirit Shirts can be purchased from our Spirit Store (located in the Life Center lobby).
- Some teachers may have classroom pets. Please advise us if your preschool has any allergies.

Florida Law states:

Children 5 years old or younger must be secured in a federally approved child restraint system:
Children 3 years old and younger must use a separate car-seat or the vehicle's built-in child seat.
Children 4 through 5 years must sit in either a separate car seat, a built-in child seat or a seat belt, depending on the child's height and weight. Children may not be transported in the front seat of a car even without airbags. Drivers must carry \$100,000/\$300,000 liability policy limits and \$100,000 property damage limits.

Extra Care Hours:

- Before Care is offered Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
- After Care is offered Monday – Friday 11:30 a.m.– 3:00 p.m. for preschoolers and also 3:00 p.m.– 5:30 p.m. Preschoolers will need lunch and a cot sheet (may purchase from the school) for the 11:30 – 3:00 hours.

If your child is not a Full-Care student, please call the office for available spaces. Space is limited and on a first come, first served basis.

Arrival and Dismissal

All Preschool students leaving or returning to school during school hours must sign in and out at the school office. When it is necessary to pick up a child during school hours, parents are required to park, come to the office, and sign the checkout sheet, and the student will be called from class.

Parent Volunteering

Parent Volunteering, whose contributions are integral to the excellence of our programs, provides a structure for parental involvement in the school. Opportunities include classroom volunteering, school events and fundraising. LCCDS's goal is to have 100% family involvement, maintaining a positive influence on the continuing growth of LCCDS Preschool, Elementary, and Middle School.

Parent-Teacher Conference Policy:

Communication between home and school is vital to a student's success. Conferencing is a very effective tool. The 2's teachers have continuous conversations with their parents throughout the year tracking progress, usually weekly but in some cases daily. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year for the 3's, 4's, and 4/5 Transitional classes.

To schedule a conference, please call the school or e-mail the teacher. Teachers are not available for unscheduled conferences, and you are requested to refrain from calling/texting the teacher on their home/cell phone. Phone calls or emails to teachers will be returned before or after school, or during a teacher's break time. Please keep in mind that emails sent after school hours or on the weekend may not be received until the next school day. Teachers' email addresses are listed on the LCCDS website.

Field Trip Policy

Field trips are an integral part of the program at LCCDS. Florida Law states: "Children 5 years old or younger must be secured in a federally approved child restraint system."

Children 3 years old and younger must use a separate car seat or the vehicle's built-in child seat. Children 4 through 5 years must sit in either a separate car seat, a built-in child seat or a seat belt, depending on the child's height and weight. Children 6 through 17 years old must be in a seatbelt.

Due to this law, we ask drivers to refrain from bringing extra passengers whenever possible. Drivers may include parents, legal guardians, and immediate family, 21 years of age or older. All drivers must carry \$100,000/\$300,000 insurance liability limits and \$100,000 property damage limits. Students should not be seated in the front passenger seat with airbags. A Field Trip Permission Form must be signed by the parent/guardian before the student is permitted to attend the planned field trip. School rules are applicable on all field trips. The student is representing LCCDS and should act accordingly.

Failure to obey school rules will result in the student missing the next field trip. We do not visit gift shops during field trips unless otherwise designated.

General Information & Helpful Hints:

- Please read all communications sent from the school, including Panther Paw Weekly (electronic weekly newsletter) and blast emails and texts. In addition, please post the monthly class calendar you receive from your child's teacher.
- Parents are asked to refrain from texting teachers/staff regarding school business. Please use email or a phone call to send or retrieve information. Text messages cannot be returned per Board policy.

- Keep your address, home and cell phone number, and email address updated in RenWeb/FACTS so we may contact you in an emergency.
- Please email your campus Administrative Assistant with carpool arrangements and changes by 2:00. • See that your child arrives at school on time and is picked up promptly. Please notify the Preschool Office if your student is not going to attend school or will be arriving late.
- Per Florida Statute XXIII 316.6135, please do not leave children in your car unattended. Also, please do not leave your car unattended during the carline.
- Please do not pack hand sanitizer in your child's backpack.
- Please do not send any items depicting violence to school, i.e., clothing or accessories.
- Please leave all personal toys at home except on "Show & Tell" days.
- Holiday & Birthday Celebrations are so important to our children, our teachers will make sure the day is extra special for your child! Parents may check with your child's teacher regarding providing a Birthday treat or joining the class during the treat/snack time.
- Please see that your child has a good night's sleep.
- Please inform us of any problems that may cause your child to be emotionally upset.
- Remember that in your child's artwork, it is the process, not the product, which counts. Admire your child's artwork but let him/her tell you about it.
- Class lists and address information may not be used for business solicitation.
- Student placement is an administrative decision based on the student's social and academic needs; therefore, teacher requests are not accepted.

Food & Nutrition

Every child will need to bring his or her own morning snack each day. Additionally, a catered lunch is available 5 days a week through our school catering company. The catered lunch includes a beverage. Beverages are not sold separately. For the convenience of parents and families, menus and prices are available online. Lunch may only be ordered and paid for online. Additional information regarding the school lunch program is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Students may bring packed lunches and drinks from home. Microwaves and refrigeration are not available for students' lunches. Be sure to pack ice packs with your child's lunch to ensure food safety. In keeping with the guidelines of the USDA, we ask that you send in a nutritious lunch that includes items from all 5 food groups, as you are able. This would include items from fruit, grain, vegetable, protein and dairy food groups. A complete guide from ChooseMyPlate.gov is sent home for parent education at the beginning of the school year. In keeping with these guidelines, we request that NO CANDY, GUM, or SODA be sent in your child's lunch. Please do not send in food items that may present a choking hazard for children under the age of 4. This includes but is not limited to: whole/round hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cubes of cheese and any food that is of similar shape and size to the trachea/windpipe.

***Students forgetting their lunch will be provided with a school lunch from the LCCDS lunch vendor and the parents will be invoiced.*

Student Health

- All students must have Physical and Immunization Forms on record by the first day of school. As required by the PCLB, we must inform you: "Some children in our care may not have current immunizations." • All students must have birth certificates on file.
- Parents should notify the office if their student has a communicable disease or virus such as Covid, Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, Head Lice Etc.

- Any child who leaves school must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine before returning to school unless the school receives a doctor's note.
- Any child who has head lice must be nit free to return to school.
- No medicine shall be administered at school without written permission on the LCCDS Medication Record form available from the office. All medication MUST be in the original container with a doctor prescription attached.
- All accidents and injuries will be reported to the parent. Accident or Incident Report forms need to be signed by a parent or adult picking up the child.

In case of emergency, the following steps will be taken:

- Notify parent
- Notify emergency contact person.
- If parents or emergency contact person cannot be reached, then contact the child's doctor.
- In case of serious injuries, 911 will be called.

Potty Proficiency

Our school is licensed by the Pinellas County License Board. One of our license requirements is for all students to be "potty trained" since we are not licensed for diapering. Yes, we understand that accidents do happen, but we do have some expectations as to what your child should comfortably be able to do before they come through our door. For your child to be considered "potty proficient" they need to be able to accomplish the following:

- Your child knows when they have to "go" and can verbalize to an adult.
- our child can "go" when you take them.
- Your child can pull down and up the simplest clothing.
- Your child can wipe after toileting with some accuracy.
- Your child rarely, if ever, has a toileting accident.
- Your child can aim with some accuracy (boys).
- Your child is able to get on and off a regular-sized toilet.

We want your child to feel confident and independent when it comes to bathroom duties. Our goal is to provide the very best preschool experience for your child.

Student Records

LCC Day School Staff may have access to student records. The case often arises where other professionals or schools (camps, physicians, educational psychologists, therapists) require official school transcripts, recommendations, or behavioral questionnaires. We ask that parents provide us one week's notice to complete and mail these.

Please note: No records, recommendations, observation forms, etc. will be released directly to parents. It is our policy to mail all information.

Discipline Management

Realistic expectations will be set for children and acceptable behavior will be continually reinforced in a positive manner.

The two principal rules governing behavior are:

1. Children must respect each other both physically and socially.
2. Children must respect property that belongs to either the school or another person.

As required by the PCLB, we must inform you: *“No child will be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, or frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.”*

Discipline Policy

Becoming a student who can think, and act independently requires the encouragement of home and school working together. Good conduct and discipline are necessary for cooperative learning. The expectations for all LCC Day School students:

- To demonstrate concern for others, as well as self
- To respect the rights of others
- To accept and respect others
- To grow in their own self-discipline and independence

The following are required behaviors for LCC Day School students:

- Following classroom instruction
- Listening respectfully to teachers and staff
- Cooperating with teachers and peers
- Staying on task and asking relevant/focused questions pertaining to the subject matter at hand
- Being respectful of property and others

The goal of discipline management at LCC Day School is to create a positive learning environment for all students. Discipline issues will be handled by the classroom teacher on an individual basis, working with the parents and the administration as necessary. Response to the behavior will be immediate and consistent. If severe disruptive behavior continues which threatens the well-being of others, or repeatedly disrupts the daily routine, permanent removal from the school will be an option.

Dress Code

- **Comfortable Clothing/ Weather appropriate:** easy to move in clothes, and take on and off.
- **Closed-toed shoes:** Sneakers are best for safety and play. No rain boots.
- **Ready for Mess:** Send kids in clothes that can get dirty from art and outdoor play.
- **Label Clothes:** Put your child’s name on their clothes to avoid mix-ups.

As an extension of our uniform policy LCC Day School prohibits the wearing of political attire (buttons, shirts, hats, etc.) in support of any particular candidate or political or social movements. This is a blanket requirement and irrespective of the particular affiliation of that candidate or movement.

Drugs and Alcohol

Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and non-tobacco products, including the full range of options for vaping and electronic cigarettes, and/or any additional illegal substances is strictly prohibited at LCCDS and this applies whether;

- On campus
- Off campus at school sponsored events or while representing the school
- Off campus when interacting with classmates

***The Pinellas County Licensing Board prohibits smoking, including e-cigarettes, on the LCCDS campus.*

Threat of Harm to Self or Others

Should the school become aware of a threat regarding a student's intention to harm him/herself or others, the school will investigate the situation and parents/guardians will be notified. Following this, the School Protection Officer from CIS will be informed. A student may not return without a full psychiatric evaluation to determine both the student's safety, as well as the safety of the school community. Specifically, the medical evaluator will report to the school that the child in question is not a harm to themselves or others. A follow-up with the School Counselor will be required. The student's therapist must provide counseling strategies and maintain regular contact with the school counselor.

Weapons

The safety of our students, faculty, and staff is paramount; therefore, we have a "zero tolerance" policy for threats of violence or weaponry on campus. These offenses will be taken seriously and may result in permanent removal from the school.

***Violation of any school policies will result in discipline which can include suspension or expulsion. LCCDS administration shall have absolute discretion in all matters of student discipline up to and including expulsion. Discipline decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.*

Mutual Respect Policy

School staff members, as well as all school families, deserve mutual respect and should feel safe and secure in the school environment at all times. In the event a family member/guardian uses inappropriate behavior or language, becomes verbally and/or physically threatening or abusive to a staff member or another family, the following will apply: Offending individuals will be banned from school property at all times, or said child's enrollment in LCCDS will be terminated immediately.

Carline Procedures

Times

- Student hours: 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM
- Before care 7:30 AM - 8:15 AM, After care (reservations required) from 3:00 PM -5:30 PM •
Morning carline: starts at 8:15 AM
- Midday carline: starts at 11:30 AM
- Afternoon carline: starts at 3:00 PM

Preschool Carline Specifics

- Please join the Preschool Carline from the North end of Overlook Dr. To get into Carline, you may need to cross over to Bayshore Blvd. and use Kentucky Ave. to get back to Overlook Dr. We ask that you make a right-hand turn ONLY into the Preschool Carline.
- Preschool parents must unbuckle/buckle their children in/out of their car seat.
- When exiting the Preschool covered drive-through, you must turn right and exit onto Chancellor Street.

General Carline Rules

- Your family name tag must always be visible through the front windshield of your vehicle. If someone else is picking up your child, you must let the office know before 2:00 PM.
- If someone else often picks up your student, please request an extra car tag for them.
- Students should enter and exit the vehicle from the side closest to the sidewalk, which is the safest side and required by our FCIS accreditation.

- Only allow your child to exit your car when a Staff member is present.
- Please practice buckling and unbuckling the seatbelt or car seat with your child.
- We respectfully ask that you do not walk your child into the buildings to their classrooms.
- Drive slowly while on our campus, 15 mph maximum.
- Left hand turns will not be permitted when entering and exiting the campus during the AM or PM Carlines.
- Please refrain from using your cell phone while in carline.
- Please be courteous to our neighboring homes and businesses. We are aware that the hustle and bustle of carline can sometimes put stress on everyone, including the Shore Acres Community. Please represent LCCDS in a positive light.

Before Care Arrival Specifics

- Preschool, Elementary and Middle School Before Care is available starting at 7:30 AM for students enrolled. Before Care must park and walk with your child to the designated locations.
- Preschool students: Walk up to the front office where you will sign in and be greeted by a staff member who will receive your child.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures for fire, severe weather, intruder alert, or any other school wide emergency are practiced by faculty, staff and students. All staff are trained in LCCDS emergency procedures. Information relating to emergencies will be communicated via school-to-parent text, or at www.lccdayschool.com.

LEAP Summer Program

LCCDS has a summer program geared for children who have completed a 2-year-old program. The purpose of this program is to provide a continuous educational experience, which is both interesting and stimulating for the children. The main emphasis is for children to be challenged while having fun. Enrichment includes in-school field trips, projects in art and science. This program begins the week after school is dismissed for the summer. Registration is limited and opens in February.

ELCA Partnership

Lutheran Church of the Cross Day School is a ministry of Lutheran Church of the Cross. As such, we are sharing the Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion statement adopted by the governing body of the church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In keeping with ELCA's mission to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Mission & Vision

Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.

Vision – A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation.

Values - Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as a church together.

Purpose - Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.

Forgiveness and reconciliation – We are reconciled to God by God's forgiving mercy. Forgiveness and reconciliation flow from what God has made us to be in Jesus Christ and what God is doing with us in the world. As a people of God, we embody forgiveness in speech, action and relationships, and our ministry in reconciliation is foundational.

Dignity, compassion, and justice – Each person is created in God's image. We respect this God-given right to dignity and, inspired by the life of Jesus, show love and compassion for all people. Through proclamation of the gospel, through worship and as servants of God working for healing and justice in the world, we uphold and seek to protect the dignity and human rights of all people.

Inclusion and diversity – As Christ's church, we value the richness of God's creation and offer a radical welcome to all people, appreciating our common humanity and our differences. We are a church that does not view diversity as a barrier to unity. We recognize and will challenge dynamics of power and privilege that create barriers to participation and equity in this church and society – for women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, people who are marginalized or living in poverty, and the LGBTQ community.

Courage and openness to change – Because we trust in God's promise and understand faith to be a living, daring confidence in God's grace, we are emboldened to embrace learning and change in our spiritual and institutional journey as a church. This means we are open to new ways and willing to take risks to discover God's plan for this church.

Faithful stewardship of God's creation and gifts – As church together, faithful stewardship is about holding to God's purpose and ensuring the responsibilities and resources that God has entrusted to us are used with great care and with accountability to God, to each other and those served by this church.

Information included in the Parent Handbook is accurate at the time of printing. LCCDS reserves the right to add/change policies or information to the Parent Handbook at any time during the school year. In the event an addendum becomes necessary, parents will be notified through blast email.