

SLLS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parent Handbook

Mission Statement

The Preschool and Kindergarten Programs at Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church are dedicated to nurturing the whole child through age and developmentally appropriate experiences and activities. In serving the congregation and the community, we seek to provide a Christian atmosphere of loving acceptance wherein each child can grow socially, spiritually, emotionally, physically and intellectually. We believe each child is a child of God and, therefore, has a right to develop to his or her fullest potential. A positive self-image is a firm foundation for a happy and successful child, and our primary goal is to develop this in each child.

Accreditation and Licensing

Saint Luke's Little Saints is accredited through the Preschool Directors' Association of the North Georgia UMC Conference, earning the status, "Program of Excellence." Prior to earning this new status, SLLS was accredited for ten years through AdvancEd/SACS, an organization that conducts rigorous reviews of schools. To ensure that our Little Saints realize their full potential, the Program of Excellence certification was chosen because it includes a spiritual development component in addition to a thorough analysis of academic practices. After a year-long self-study and documentation presentation, we were pleased to host an on-site review conducted by a peer mentor and our accomplishment was announced in May 2020.

SLLS meets the criteria for exemption from state licensure based upon its established curriculum and the hours of operation.

Professional Development

On an annual basis SLLS staff members acquire training hours from a variety of professional educators, consultants and/or therapists from such organizations as Bright From the Start (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning) and Georgia Educational Training Agency.

S A F E T Y

Emergency Medical Authorization

Should a child suffer an injury or illness while in the care of the Saint Luke's Little Saints program and the facility is unable to contact parent immediately, SLLS shall be authorized to secure such medical attention and care for the child as may be necessary. Parent shall assume responsibility for payment for services. Parent is to keep the SLLS program informed of changes regarding emergency contacts in order to be reached during school hours. SLLS will inform parent of any incidents requiring professional medical attention involving their child.

Emergency Contacts

Emergency notification contacts must be supplied by a parent and filed in our office on or before the first day of school. Contact information will be accessible to the Director, administrative personnel and classroom teachers. Parent shall notify SLLS administrative personnel of any changes.

Emergency Preparedness

Once a semester, we practice what to do in case of fire, hurricanes, tornados and intruder alerts. We conduct fire drills each semester, with the goal of monthly practice.

Inclement Weather Policy

Emergency closing of school due to storms, snow, etc. will follow the same procedure as DeKalb County Schools. Notifications are posted on the County and the SLLS websites. If DeKalb County Schools are closed or delayed for weather emergencies, SLLS is closed. SLLS follows DeKalb as a safety measure and communication tool only as it applies to closings due to weather. Please note: SLLS does not follow the DeKalb County School System calendar. SLLS will not make up the days nor refund for days closed.

Mandatory Reporting

SLLS is required by law to report any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children's Services.

Peace of Mind/Emergency Phone Contact

Families are encouraged to keep the Director's cell phone number, located in the Student Directory, in their phone contacts. The church landline connection has occasionally been interrupted due to construction or weather. By having access to this number, families can still communicate with the school and vice versa.

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Nut Policy

At SLLS, we have a "no nut" policy. This includes all school lunches and party snacks for birthdays or holidays. Please do not send nuts, nut mixes or peanut butter. This includes granola bars OF ANY KIND. It is not possible for a school to declare itself "nut free" due to common food items that are prepared in facilities where nuts are also handled. However, it is our goal to create a "nut safe" environment, restricting actual nuts and nut products from SLLS.

H E A L T H

Wellness Policy

Our staff will make every effort to help keep your child well. Your child will not enjoy school if he or she is not feeling well. To ensure that children stay healthy while they are enrolled, please do not bring your child to school if he or she shows any of the following symptoms in the 24 hours prior to class: fever; runny nose with colored discharge; rash; diarrhea; vomiting; unexplained itchy scalp. If our teachers notice any of these symptoms or any abnormal changes in behavior, you will be notified and asked to pick up your child. If your child contracts lice, a letter from a professional lice removal company stating that your child is lice-free must be obtained before the child AND any SLLS siblings are allowed to return to school.

Children need to be fever free 24 hours without aid of medication before return to school.

Covid continues to be a virus that our world is navigating. Decisions for covid policy rely on the latest information available. SLLS reserves the right to adjust these policies and procedures in the wake of the pandemic. Flexibility and resilience will continue to be essential!

Immunizations

All children attending SLLS must meet Georgia state standards for immunization. Form GA 3231 must be current and on file before children enter the program. Kindergarten children must have Form 3300, Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening on file. SLLS does not accept religious exemption from immunization.

Medical Exemption

Medical exemption is applicable when a child has a long-term condition that contraindicates immunization. The pediatrician must provide detailed documentation regarding the reason for the exemption. Medical exemption documentation must be turned in with the Registration Application, which will then be reviewed by the SLLS Governing Board for a final decision. The exemption must be renewed annually.

Delayed/Alternative Vaccination Schedules

Parents whose children are on a delayed or alternative vaccination schedule must submit documentation from child's pediatrician indicating the reason for the delayed/alternative schedule and the vaccination schedule that will be followed. The "Parent Refusal to Vaccinate Form" will not be accepted as a reason for the delayed or alternative vaccination schedule.

Epidemic, Outbreak, Exposure

In the event of a contagious disease epidemic, outbreak or exposure, children with medical exemptions or delayed/alternative vaccination schedules will be required to remain at home until the Georgia Department of Public Health announces the outbreak has ended.

Medications

Staff members may not administer medications to any child. If a child requires medication, a parent must come to school and personally dispense. Exceptions are the administration of life-saving medications such as Epinephrine, Antihistamine or inhalers for asthma. If these medications are provided by the parent, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that expiration dates are valid. Clearly written directions must be attached to the medication including proper dosage.

Early Childhood Intervention

SLLS believes in the power of early intervention and will make every effort to support a child's needs. We may recommend that a child participate in a screening or evaluation to help us better educate and assist your child so that he or she is able to reach his or her full potential in the classroom. Recommendations are carefully considered and gently communicated to parents. A trusted list of professional resources is available for parents and SLLS will work with parents offering assistance and advocacy, if requested. Parents are encouraged to consider the school's suggestion.

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Community Therapy Services

Children at SLLS may receive services in their classroom within the school day; SLLS will make decisions for in-house services on an individual basis, taking into consideration the child's class as a whole. Parents must sign an agreement giving permission for their child to receive services from the county or private business on school property. Therapists must have a verified background check and agree to follow SLLS staff policies. Teachers, the school administrator, parents and therapists will work together to determine scheduling, location, and other aspects of classroom services, including regular communication regarding any changes, updates, or transition of such services. SLLS reserves the right to discontinue providing space for classroom services at any time. Likewise, SLLS reserves the right to ask that a child be withdrawn from SLLS if services are discontinued, and the school cannot properly meet the needs of the child.

Speech and Language Screenings

Annual screenings will be offered onsite during school hours by licensed personnel for a small fee. A thorough written assessment will be provided.

FINANCE

Tuition

Saint Luke's Little Saints is a non-profit school. A quality education for your child is made possible by pre-paid tuition. No refunds will be made for short or long absences or withdrawal. With extended absence or illness, monthly tuition must be paid to retain your child's place in the class. As long as your child is enrolled in a class, tuition is required.

Unscheduled School Closings

In the event school is closed due to events beyond our control, SLLS, a not-for-profit organization, will not make up the days nor refund for days closed.

Scholarship Fund

Families that are undergoing financial hardship may apply for scholarship funding by contacting the Director. We have two sources of funding: the SLLS Scholarship Fund and the PW Fund given by Presbyterian Women, a Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church organization that donates a partial scholarship.

CLASSROOM

Curriculum

Saint Luke's Little Saints is a Christian preschool that provides a "learning through play" practice as defined by the award-winning program *The Creative Curriculum*. The framework for kindergarten lesson planning is the Georgia Standards of Excellence. At all age levels, we honor the individuality of the child as we prepare each student for elementary school.

Standards of Conduct

SLLS teaches The Golden Rule as well as four basic school rules (listening ears; inside voices; walking feet; hands to yourself.) Our teachers gently correct inappropriate behavior by teaching better choices, utilizing positive reinforcement of good behavior and by redirection. If necessary, time out to "take a break" will be used. Biting and spitting are not tolerated; parents will be notified and child will be sent home for the day.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Scheduled conferences are held twice a year, in Fall and Spring, for 2-year-old classes and older. At any time during the school year, additional conferences may be arranged if either the parent or teacher believes it to be beneficial.

Photo Consent

Saint Luke's Little Saints Preschool requests your permission to publish your child's photo/image. Photographs will be used to celebrate your child and the experience he or she enjoys during time spent at school. Your consent to photos/images published in this manner does not allow the publication of any personally identifiable information including student last names, residential addresses, e-mail address or phone numbers. This consent does not allow the publication of photos/images on any form of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, personal blogs, etc.) utilized by any member of the SLLS staff without permission from parent. Photos are shared on the private SLLS Instagram account at @saintlukeslittlesaints.

Terminations

The school reserves the right to ask that a currently enrolled child be withdrawn if we feel our school cannot properly meet his or her needs. Additionally, the school reserves the right to deny or renounce enrollment if we feel we cannot meet the needs of a child in the upcoming school year. The parent will be informed and the school will work with the parent, if requested, in seeking other arrangements and/or offering referrals for other professional resources.

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12-24 MONTHS ~ PRE-K

Arrival and Pickup

9:15 ~ 12:15 M-F

At SLLS, drop off and pickup take place at your child's classroom, allowing daily communication between teachers and families. Pickup is promptly at 12:15 p.m. for preschoolers. A late fee of \$5 per 5 minutes will be charged, payable on the spot in cash, for continued tardiness. Your child will not be released to anyone other than you unless we have a written note stating the name of the designated person. A photo I. D. of that person must be provided at pickup.

Gentle Adjustment Release for Youngest Children

To provide a smooth transition from home life to school life and to lessen anxieties, during the first two weeks of school children in the 2-year-old classes and younger will be released at 11:00. Most often, we are able to begin regular hours for all children after the two week period as they have settled in to their new surroundings. Please consult the Parent Calendar for specific dates.

Potty Training

Children enrolled in the 3-year-old classes and older must be potty trained by the time school starts in September.

Snacks

A mid-morning snack of crackers is offered. All children bring a drink from home to enjoy with snack; please do not send boxed drinks with attached straws. Your teachers need to be aware of any allergies or food restrictions. When snacks are provided by parents for parties, please remember that we do not allow nuts or nut products.

Lunch Bunch

Our 3's classes through Pre-K are invited to stay on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays for lunch with their friends until 1:15 p.m. Potty trained 2's are invited to stay after Christmas. Lunch Bunch is \$7; parents purchase lunch tickets which serve as a reservation for their child. Children bring their own lunch. Tickets do not carry over and must be used during the school year of purchase.

Enrichment

We offer two after-school enrichment opportunities for 3's and Pre-K children. Participants in the classes bring a lunch and a drink from home to enjoy during the class.

Friday Stay & Play

This program is a "parents' morning out" from 9:15-12:15 for children ages 2 and older who do not have school on Fridays. This fun, non-academic morning is available for a fee of \$25. Lunch Bunch is available for an additional fee. Days do not carry over and must be used during the school year of purchase.

KINDERGARTEN

Arrival and Pickup

9:15 ~ 1:15 M-F

One of our K goals is preparing for a smooth transition to 1st grade. It is important that prompt arrival be observed so that students learn the value of a timely start and begin their day calmly. Drop off and pickup take place at your child's classroom; however, in the Spring we will practice carpool pickup in preparation for 1st grade. A late fee of \$5 per 5 minutes will be charged, payable on the spot in cash, for continued tardiness. Your child will not be released to anyone other than you unless we have a written note stating the name of the designated person. A photo I.D. of that person must be provided.

Kindergarten Snack & Lunch

Each day, Kindergartners will be offered a mid-morning snack. Lunch and a drink from home is to be provided by parent. Please inform teachers of allergies or food restrictions. When snacks are provided by parents for parties, please remember that we do not allow nuts or nut products.

Kindergarten Early Release

Occasionally Kindergarten will release at 12:15. Consult the Parent Calendar for specific dates.