

**First English Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten Handbook :Policies and Information**

Welcome to First English Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten.

**Our mission** is to nurture learning and quality relationships through modeling empathy, creating opportunities for play and exploration of the diverse world in which we live.

## CORE VALUES:

**Social emotional skills.** Teachers offer empathy, authentic communication and foster collaboration as a way to create compassion, cooperation and kindness.

**Play.** Our curriculum gives children time to explore, create, make choices, and solve problems at their own developmental level through child-directed activities as well as teacher-initiated projects

**Inclusivity.** We cherish difference and continuously seek to broaden the perspective of our youth and staff.

Information about our curriculum and classes including schedules and class size are available on the website at [www.felpkids.com](http://www.felpkids.com). This also serves as a place for announcements for events.

Emails to FELP with forms, questions, registration forms, etc, should be sent to FELPkids@gmail.com. Questions to the director can be sent to Jennybarrett@gmail.com.

**Admission**

Applications are accepted equally for children of any faith, race, family structure or ethnic origin. We work to create a gender balance and place children in ​the correct age group by date of birth as outlined on our website. We seek to create a diverse school community in which everyone feels welcome.
Priority is given to children whose families are or have been affiliated with the Church or School. With those considerations in mind, we do take applications in order of date received.

A non-refundable $60.00 fee is required at the time of application. Enrollment contracts need to be signed along with a $500 deposit. (There is a $1000 deposit required for the Kindergarten Program.) These deposits are applied toward the tuition and are non-refundable. Signed contracts are a commitment to the full year’s tuition.

Children entering the 2 year old class must be 2 before beginning school. Children entering Kindergarten must be 5 by December 31.

**August 1st Deadline**

Please Remit the Following by August 1:

1. Full tuition balance or the first payment of tuition payment plan. Checks can be mailed to FELP. Credit cards are accepted with an additional 2.75% service fee.
2. Medical forms including immunization forms with doctor signature. The link is sent via email and forms can be mailed or scanned and emailed to felpkids@gmail.com
3. A child and family survey is sent via email. This must be completed by August 1st. There are required and optional responses on the form and parents are welcome to decide what they would like to answer of the optional questions.

Emergency cards must be completed in full before the first day of school.

**Medical Statement:**

The Maryland State Health Department requires that no child be admitted to school without complete medical forms. All children are required to have a complete physical and updated immunization records prior to attending school. We prefer that each year, medical forms are sent in with updates. If your child has medical forms on file, and your child is not yet due for a checkup, you may simply provide the updated immunizations and any updated information after the appointment.

Some of our children in our preschool have been diagnosed with food allergies. FELP requests that parents who have children with food allergies, meet with us to develop an individualized plan to keep your child safe. We will do our best to create a plan that meets the needs of your child and to communicate with families any specific restrictions and requests in this effort.

If your child has a fresh cold, cough, or other persistent symptoms, we ask that you keep your child at home. If your child has or has had a fever, diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours, they must stay home from school. If your child is ill at school, we will call you to pick them up. If you are not reachable, we will call the numbers on your emergency card. If you are in doubt about your child’s illness, we ask that you consider keeping them home to help prevent the spread of the virus as well as to allow your child to rest and get better. School can be fun and also tiring!

Medications

Any parents who need to send medication to school to be administered to their child during the school day, must follow Health Department ​Regulations. All medications at school require a ​Medication Administrative Form signed by the doctor. This includes over the counter medications.

**School Hours:**

Full Day Kindergarten Oaks: Mon-Thursday 9 to 2:20, Friday 9 to 12

½ day Kindergarten Oaks: Mon-Fri 9 to 12

Raindrops and Sprouts (5 day 4s): Mon,-Fri 9 to 12

River Rocks (4 day 4s): Mon-Thurs 9 to 12

Dewdrops and Buds (3 day 3s): Mon, Wed. & Fri. 9 to 11:45

Pebbles (2 day 3s): Tues. & Thurs. 9 to 11:45

Seedlings (2 day 2s): Tues. & Thurs. 9:15 to 11:15

**Pick up and dismissal Policies**:

Children in the 2 day 2s class are brought by parents and caregivers to the classroom at 9:15 and picked up from the teacher in the classroom or Fellowship Hall.

Children in all other classes should arrive between 8:50 and 9:00. We cannot accept any children prior to 8:50 unless you have signed up for Early Drop Off. While younger classes will not begin the carpool and lobby drop off immediately, all classes other than Seedlings offer carpool line as an option. If you arrive between 8:50 and 9:05, your child may be escorted to class from your car in carpool line or from the lobby if you walk them to the door. If you arrive after this time and staff is no longer in the lobby or by the door to greet your child, please walk your child directly to the classroom. Children should not be left in the lobby to come up the stairs without staff to greet them and ensure they get to class safely. If you are using the carpool line, please stay in the car and allow the staff to bring your child to class. If you or your child prefers you to bring them into class, please do park on the street and walk up together.

Similarly, for pick up, if you child’s class has begun to use carpool line, pull into the driveway up to the sign and wait for your child. As there are staggered dismissal times, please allow time for this process. Carpool line procedures and a sign for the car are sent home in the fall. If you do not use carpool because you choose to walk in or the class is not ready, do park on the street. Please arrive on time to pick up your child. It can be distressing for the child to wait and frequently, the teachers need to get to their classrooms to clean up, to eat lunch or to care for children at lunch. There is a fine of $25 for late pick up. It is very helpful to receive a call if you are running late due to an unexpected problem.

**Carpools**

If you use a carpool, please give us a list of the drivers, their days, and their phone numbers. ​If someone else is to pick up your child we ​MUST have a note from you. Our teachers will not release a child to another person without permission from the parents. See carpool procedures for safe and effective pick up and drop off. Share this with the people who pick up your child.

**Early Drop Off, Lunch Bunch/Extended Day and Aftercare**

We **offer Early Drop Off** in the library with FELP teachers beginning at 8:30.

**Lunch Bunch/ Extended day** is offered for 3 and 4 year old classes from the time classes end until 2:15 Monday through Thursday. Children pack their own lunch. They play indoors and out in mixed aged groups.

The **Aftercare** program is an extension of the day for children in lunch bunch or full day Kindergarten from 2:15 to 5:00 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. It includes rest, a snack and play indoors and out.

Early Drop Off, Lunch Bunch and Aftercare have limited spaces. Information, cost, and sign up sheets are available on the website for the current semester. Parents/guardians may sign up for these additional programs by the semester: Fall (September thru December) and Winter/Spring (January through May). Spaces are filled on a first come, first served basis when registration becomes available. By May, we will provide the exact summer date registration begins for fall, and repeat that process in the fall for the following session. We cannot guarantee spaces. Lunch Bunch typically fills quickly, and we do all we can to accommodate families.

**Absences**

If your child is absent, please notify the office via a phone call or email. Parents often email the teacher as well. This is welcome but not required. If your child is absent for 3 days or more, please send a note letting us know your child is healthy enough to return to school. In addition, if your child has a communicable disease, please notify us. You will be notified if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. In addition, you will be required to sign periodic attendance forms.

**Weather Policy**

Please note: In the event of inclement weather, we usually follow Baltimore County Schools’ closing policy. If Baltimore County Schools are open one or two hours late, classes will start at 10:00 a.m. If Baltimore County Schools are closed, we will be closed. When inclement weather develops while the children are in school, it may be advisable to close our program early. Closings, late openings and early closings will be put in emails, posted on our website and left on our outgoing school phone message (assuming power and internet are functioning).

If the school is closed due to a weather event, the school has determined that it is not practical to provide for make-up days because of the various class schedules in our program. Our primary concern is for the ​safety and well-being of our children and teachers.

**Clothing**

The children are involved in lots of hands on art and other messy activities. Please allow for spills. We suggest play clothes that are comfortable and shoes with nonskid rubber soles. Boots are helpful for inclement weather. Send your child ready for the playground with coats when needed. Labeling coats and other clothing helps us not to lose it. We have a lost and found basket in the upper hallway.

**Cubby Contents**

Each child has a cubby. All children are required to have a change of clothes at school that is appropriate for the weather, including socks. Please mark all of it with your child’s name. Children who are in diapers should have extra diapers and wipes at school.

**Field Trips**

Field trips are usually part of the preschool curriculum, Often, parents are asked to drive to the field trips. Chaperones are asked to make other arrangements for siblings on field trip days. We typically take one trip via bus and chaperones are limited. When parents drive their children or other children on field trips, children must be securely in car seats or boosters. Parents must sign permission slips and there is often a small fee. There are usually only 2 or 3 trips per school year.

**Our Library**

We have a growing collection of books in our library. Parents are welcome to read the books with children. We do not check out books, however you are welcome to come and read with your child. Teachers pull books for classroom use and at times, read in the library. We continue to grow our library and are committed to ensure that the books we have and share represent the diverse world in which we live.

**Children’s Chapel Service**

Fridays at 11:35, the school includes a Christian Chapel experience. Children of all faiths are welcome. Parent should know that the chapel service will refer to Jesus Christ. If any families choose not to participate in this service, they will make arrangements to pick up their children at 11:35 on Fridays. In this case, please let the teacher know of your plans. Parents are also welcome to attend. In addition, the Pastor visits each classroom monthly in the early part of the daily schedule. Please see the lesson plan schedule for more information. Parents and guardians may, for any reason choose to be late on the day of the pastor visit or stay and listen to find out more. The Pastor welcomes any questions.

**Developmental Screening**

As required by MSDE, parents are asked once ​or twice a school year to complete the ASQ3 developmental screening form. Teachers score this evaluation to inform decisions regarding needs or further evaluation.

**Conferences**

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for all students in the program. The entire school will be closed for 3d3s,4s and K conferences. ​There is a fall conference day and a spring conference day for 3D3s, 4’s & K. For 2D3s and 2d2s there is only 1 conference day, in the winter. On the day of their conference there will be no school for that class. Additional conferences may be arranged by teachers or parents on an individual basis. If you have a concern, you do not need to wait until conference day. Every conference is preceded by a written report.

**Social Media Policy**FELP maintains a website as well as having a social media presence. Photos of students are ​only posted on the website, brochures or social ​media with a signed permission form. We ask that as parents you do not post pictures of other children from school events without the permission of the parents/guardians.

**Discipline Policy**

The First English Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten staff believes that children will do well if they can. We work to teach children how to communicate effectively and help them to build social emotional skills. By providing developmentally appropriate practices, guiding children to develop strong social emotional skills, as well as setting clear boundaries, we reduce behavioral challenges and best prepare our students. We also ensure safety by having clear rules and consequences. We work to ensure that each child is physically and emotionally safe.

**Termination**

If the school, after a reasonable length of review and discussion with parents, feels that a child’s behavior is unacceptable and/or the staff is unable to meet the needs of the child, the Director retains the right to require the child’s involuntary withdrawal.

**History and Building information**

In 1964, a member of First English Evangelical Lutheran Church created this program enhancing the ongoing growth and development of ​young children of all faiths. In the early days of ​the Protestant Reformation in Germany, Luther encouraged the establishment of schools for boys and girls alike, and we are proud to carry this tradition.

Over the years, this school has established a strong reputation, thanks to the devoted work of teachers and staff. We are justly proud of them and our entire program. The congregation’s Church Council is pledged to continue to support the standards of excellence in this learning experience for your children.

First English Lutheran Church built the educational wing in 1968. Since then, numerous up- dates and improvements have taken place. The school maintains an asbestos management plan. While most tiles in the building have been abated or sealed, information and plan is available in the office.

**Scholarship Program**

FELP offers need based scholarship funds as they are available to us. For 10 years, the Muller Foundation has donated to this fund. In addition, parents of current students and alumnae donate to this fund each year. Parents may apply for this support by requesting the application form from the office. Donations are welcome at all times and are accepted via check or credit card through the office or the website. If your company donates or matches gifts, this is another wonderful way to help.

**School Administration**

The school is administered by the Director, who is responsible for reporting to the church council The Director prepares each year’s budget, which is then approved by the treasurer and church council. The Director may form a school advisory board as he/she sees fit to support and to lead effectively.

**FELP Parents Association**

The Parents Association is composed of First English Lutheran Preschool and Kindergarten parents. All parents are welcome and encouraged to be involved at any level. The aim is to support the school through parent volunteers and fundraising efforts. It aims to:

1. Foster a greater sense of community within the school.
2. Help the school financially through fundraising
3. Strengthen communications among parents, faculty, the school board and the church community.

**Volunteers**

Parents are encouraged but not required to participate in our program. We welcome you to help plan events, assist in the classroom, come and share talents, help on field trips and join committees.

**Suggestions**

Parents sometimes like to send special treats to school for a child’s birthday or a special occasion. Please discuss this with your child’s teacher in advance to avoid conflicts or allergies.

Making homemade playdough for the class is a wonderful gift to FELP. Teachers often set up schedules. Not only does it provide so much to the time in the classroom, children love carrying playdough into school for their class!

While our students frequently like to carry a toy to school in their bag, please help them understand that others may touch it or pick it up. Do not send in anything that would be tragic if lost. And there are no toy weapons or weapons allowed in the school.