

NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL
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Parent Handbook

"Celebrating God's Love, Transforming Lives!"

Our Mission

The purpose and goal of Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool is to minister to the young people of our community by providing quality education in a Christian environment. Jesus is central in the functions of the school. The staff implements, teaches and encourages biblical principles, values and morals, while helping the children develop good learning habits and disciplines. We believe that this balance of an academic education and the development of strong Christian values will help to guide our young people throughout their lives.

Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool admits all children regardless of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

NATIVITY'S PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool has been serving our community since 1966. Its bright, air-conditioned rooms provide a safe and pleasant atmosphere for your child's early learning experience.

Our well-qualified teachers love and understand children and their individual needs. They know that no two children are alike, in growth development, personality or learning ability.

As we are a Church-sponsored school, a part of each day is devoted to simple Christian stories, songs and prayers; moral and spiritual values are presented to all the classes. Once a week, we meet in the church for a brief chapel service.

REGISTRATION DATES:

Priority registration is given to members of Nativity Lutheran Church, returning students and their brothers and sisters. In February, registration opens to the public provided openings are still available.

4-year-olds (VPK) must be 4 by September 1st and 3 year-olds must be 3 by September 1st; 2 year olds must be 2 by September 1st.

All children must be potty trained. "Pull-ups" are not acceptable.

All students must be re-registered annually.

CLASSES: DAYS AND TIME

All classes are from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon.

Four-year-olds (VPK) - 5 days

Three-year-olds may attend 5 days or 3 days (TWTH)

Two-year olds may attend 5 or 3 days (TWTH)

Early Care is available for children every school day beginning at 7:30 a.m.

After Care is offered every school day from 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.

SCHOOL CALENDAR:

Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool follows the Palm Beach County Public School calendar for holidays and vacations, including teacher planning days. Nativity remains open on half days.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL:

School begins at 9:00 a.m. for all classes. Our teachers are ready to greet your child at 8:55 a.m. We cannot be responsible for children brought to school before this time. We do offer an early care service beginning at 7:30 a.m. All children must be walked to their classroom each day giving you the opportunity to make contact with your child's teacher. Do not let your children walk alone.

Dismissal is at 12 noon. Please pick your children up at their classroom. This is another opportunity to make contact with your child's teacher. Please use caution when exiting our parking area.

It is the responsibility of the parent/authorized person to sign the child in and out daily including time of arrival/ departure, according to the school clock.

All visitors to campus must first sign in at front desk.

Late charges will be imposed for late pick-up of students. Student dismissal is 12 noon. Any child remaining after noon will be transferred to the After care program, and billed according to our late policy on page 8.

AFTERNOON ENRICHMENT PROGRAM:

Our school offers an afternoon enrichment program 5 days a week from 12 noon to 5:30 p.m. During the afternoons we have playtime, arts & crafts, story-time, playground or movies, depending on weather conditions. Children are to be picked up promptly by 5:30 p.m.

FIELD TRIPS (IN HOUSE):

Throughout the school year, various field trips are planned to reinforce a particular curriculum unit. A permission slip is included as part of our registration packet, which is signed, notarized, and becomes part of your child's file. Notices are always sent home prior to a field trip. These field

trips are "in-house", the attraction will come to the preschool center.

NEWSLETTERS:

You will receive news from the school each month, included in the church newsletter, "The Nativity Carol." Please read this carefully, as it informs you of your child's study units, field trips, special holidays and other school activities.

The "Nativity Carol" newsletter keeps you up to date on activities of the church. We welcome you, as a part of our Nativity family, to come and share in worship, and activities.

DISCIPLINE:

Children in preschool must be disciplined in a constructive manner. They will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest or bath-rooming. Spanking or any other forms of physical punishment is prohibited.

Discipline is implemented in forms of guided redirection; empowering each child to discover the effectiveness of their own spoken word. Acting in Godly ways to promote a cooperative environment is our key focus. Providing the best teacher/child ratio allows us to observe moments of conflict in the early stages. At that point the teacher will redirect the child to a calm state in order to allow reflection and resolution.

Aggressive injurious behavior, such as biting or fighting in a disruptive manner will not be permitted. Parents will be informed and the child will be removed from school for the remainder of that day. Any recurrence of this behavior will result in the dismissal of the child for a limited time (fees will not be refunded).

It is understood that the Director has the right to ask for the withdrawal of any child the Director feels is not ready for the school program.

UNIFORM SHIRTS /CLOTHING:

Nativity's children dress in uniform logo shirts. Pants, skirts, and skorts do not have to be purchased through our uniform provider. They do have to be solid in color. Denim is appropriate to wear. We play outside as part of each day. Sandals or any other open-toed shoes are not permitted for safety reasons. Tennis shoes are recommended.

Each child will need an old shirt for painting purposes. One of their parent's old T-shirts will be just fine. The plastic paint aprons are fine also, but an unnecessary expense. We would like to have these shirts brought to school as soon as possible after opening day.

Each Child should bring one complete change of clothing to be left at school. Clothing should be clearly labeled and stored in a zip-lock bag. Parents should periodically check to make sure clothing still fits and is weather appropriate.

SHOW AND TELL:

Children are encouraged to bring items of interest (educational toys, specimens of nature, items made by the children, books, etc.) to share with the class. This fosters the home/ school relationship and helps all children to develop language skills. Children are not allowed to bring guns or weapons of any kind to school. Sharing days differ for each class and a special time is set aside for this important learning experience.

SNACKS & SPECIAL REFRESHMENTS:

A snack time is scheduled every day before outdoor play. **Snacks are to be provided by the parents daily.** We encourage the use of drink boxes and a *healthy* snack such as fruit, crackers or pretzels. If your child is staying for the afternoon, a lunch must be provided, along with an afternoon snack if staying past 3 p.m.

Children whose birthdays fall during the school year may celebrate their birthdays here at school. You may bring in special cookies or cupcakes. Some parents send special napkins, party hats and other little favors, but they are not necessary. The party would only be for the child's individual class. No presents shall be exchanged during school hours.

We greatly appreciate parents volunteering to provide special treats for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter, as we like to celebrate these holidays with special festivities.

PIZZA Friday - Purchase a pizza card and your child will receive pizza and a drink every Friday. Pizza cards are \$30 and allow for your child to have pizza for 10 Fridays. These are punch cards and we will notify you when it is time to re-purchase.

HURRICANES & DISASTERS:

At times of emergencies, we will observe the same procedures as the public schools in relation to being closed. Listen to your radio or TV for announcements from the office of Civil Defense, Palm Beach County.

SUMMER CAMP:

Our preschool offers an on-site summer camp, with a different theme each week, featuring a special guest, activity or event. We end our program with a special event or surprise guest.

The Summer Camp continues our Christian emphasis. Our daily activities include playtime, arts and crafts, outside recreation, snack, games, stories and movies.

Registration begins mid-April, and ends when our limited number of openings have been filled. A non-refundable fee is required at registration and the balance is due no later than June 1st to hold

your child's place.

FEES-TUITION:

A **registration fee** of \$250 is payable when you enroll your child. This fee is non-refundable and renewed each year at a rate of \$200.

TUITION for each program is payable in 10 equal installments beginning August 1 and ending with the May payment, therefore tuition remains the same each month, regardless of the number of school days per month or absences due to sickness, holidays, vacations or other factors. Tuition checks should be made payable to: Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool, and are due the **first day of the month**. To break the annual tuition agreement, a month's notice is required. If you break the agreement after March 1, the remaining months' tuition is required to be paid.

A \$30 late fee will be charged if payment is not made before the 10th of each month. **This policy will be strictly enforced!** Nonpayment of tuition will result in your child not being able to attend school until your account is brought up to date. Special arrangements can be made by speaking to the Director in advance. A \$25 fee will be charged to your account for any returned check and future payments will be required in cash or a money order. Tuition checks should be placed into the designated box located in the front office.

Annual Tuition**

Monday - Friday 4's (VPK)	FREE
Monday - Friday 3's	\$4500
Tue., Wed, Thur. 3's	\$3500
Tue., Wed., Thur. 2s	\$3500

** payable in 10 equal payments Aug.- May.

* non-refundable

EARLY MORNING DROP-OFF: 7:30 a.m.: \$100 per month
AFTERNOON ENRICHMENT until 2:30 p.m.: \$150 per month
AFTERNOON ENRICHMENT until 5:30 p.m.: \$300 per month

LATE FEE SCHEDULE

Fees for Late Pick Up are as follows.

0 - 5 minutes late:	Grace Period
5 - 15 minutes late:	\$20 late fee
After 15 minutes:	\$1 per additional minute

Fees shall apply for all contracted pick up times: 12 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The clock above the Reception Desk shall be designated as official school time.

HEALTH, SAFETY & ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES:

Health examination and immunization

Every child entering the school for the first time shall present a certificate (original 3040 form) from a licensed physician to attest to their physical condition. Every child shall present an immunization record (original 680 form) as required by law. Each child's folder shall have a signed copy of the "flu" brochure issued by the health department.

At no time will a teacher or staff member of Nativity administer any medication of any type. Children are not permitted to carry or keep medication with them at any time. With prior written notice, children may receive prescribed medication administered by the parent from a properly labeled container.

Attendance

The parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the school when their child will be absent. It will be helpful for planning purposes if you notify the school as soon as you know that your child will be absent. No child is permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless he/she is met at the school by their parent/guardian or a person authorized to act on their behalf.

After Care is not available for children who were not in school in the morning.

Returning to School

A student returning to school after a three (or more) day absence due to illness must have a note signed by his/her parent/guardian stating the dates and the reason for the absence. Students who have been absent because of contagious or infectious disease or conditions must present a certificate of recovery from a licensed physician.

In Case of Illness

If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student must be picked up by the parent/guardian. When parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student shall remain in school, and with supervision, be excluded from others until the close of the school day. In case of extreme emergency, when school personnel are unable to reach the parent/guardian, or the persons authorized by the parent/guardian on the emergency card, the Director acting in place of the parent is responsible for arranging transportation to the source of medical attention by calling an ambulance - at the parents' expense.

Children have to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to Nativity.

In Case of an Accident

CPR/First Aid trained teachers and staff shall be responsible for administering first aid. In all cases the parent/guardian will be informed when first aid has been administered. When the nature of the injury appears in any way serious, every effort shall be made to contact the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is unable to be reached, the staff will contact the person designated to act in behalf of the parent/guardian. Parent/guardian or person designated to act in behalf of the parents shall be requested to pick up their child. In extreme emergencies the Director may make

arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured/ill students by calling an ambulance, contacting the parent/guardian in advance if at all possible.

Please note: It may not be possible for the ambulance to transport your child to your hospital of choice.

At no time will a Nativity Lutheran Church & Preschool staff member transport a student in a private vehicle for a medical emergency.

The staff member who is responsible for the student at the time an accident/illness occurs shall complete a written report within 24 hours on an official form providing details about the accident and obtain the parent/guardian signature.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

In spite of the excellent educational record of good early childhood education there are still some people who think that "the children *only* play and don't really LEARN anything." Studies have shown that the best way for children ages 0 through 5 years is to learn through play. Nativity implements the High Reach Learning Curriculum, a well-rounded approach for competitive students of tomorrow. Through language, expression, socialization, problem solving and critical thinking, the emphasis taught at Nativity is as follows:

Quantitative Concepts:

The teacher carefully guides the children into systematic number thinking: through counting blocks or each other, through taking turns, etc. They gain understanding of cardinal and ordinal numerals.

Children learn to understand more, less, bigger, smaller, taller, shorter, heavier, lighter, etc., through practical situations.

They learn before, after, soon, now, morning, afternoon. They learn the days of the week, months and seasons of the year.

Language Training:

Children are encouraged to talk with the teacher and with each other, thus learning new words and skill in communication. Vocabulary is also built through group discussions, language games, and the telling and reading of many stories.

An interest in and desire for reading is cultivated; attractive and age-appropriate books are made available for the children's enjoyment.

Scientific Information and Habits:

Children learn much about the physical properties of things, about themselves, their bodies, and "how things work".

They learn about the needs, habits and life cycles of various plants and animals and about wind, weather, heat and other natural forces.

They learn about God's wonderful creation, our earth, and its place in the universe.

The children become aware of the five senses through experiencing seeing, listening,

touching, smelling & tasting.

Christian Education:

Singing Christian songs and learning Bible stories such as Noah, Daniel, the Good Samaritan, and the Life of Christ.

Prayer - "talking with God" - and instilling Christian values and morals.

Celebrating important holidays such as Christmas and Easter.

Other Learning:

Music: Children learn to enjoy singing songs, playing simple instruments, and responding rhythmically to music.

Art: They learn to handle various art materials creatively and expressively. They learn to use crayons, scissors and paints and clay.

Sensory Training and Visual Perception Development: We have integrated into our class programs many of the skills and activities recommended in developing visual perception and motor coordination necessary to begin reading. Through guided observation children learn to recognize similarities and differences, color, shapes, sounds, etc. Eye-hand coordination is taught through music, language and special listening activities.

Memory is cultivated through discussions of past events and through learning of finger-plays, poems and songs.

Social Studies: Through a variety of units, children study about their homes and families, their community and its helpers, the early Americans - Indians, the different seasons, other lands, transportation - today and yesterday, life under the sea, and the animals.

Social Attitudes: Children learn favorable attitudes toward one another, toward the teachers, and toward learning. They learn to function in a group, to listen to others, to wait one's turn, to cooperate, to assume responsibility, to concentrate on a task and complete it, and most importantly to listen and follow directions.

Along with religious emphasis, our program consists of two or more units of study a day. Parents can usually tell which units we are studying by the artwork, crafts, and papers the children bring home. We hope you will find a spot in your home to display your child's work; it will please him/her so much.

The **VPK (four year old)** classes experience hands-on activities, including use of computers, art media and resources for learning the alphabet and numbers. We have had many compliments from parents and teachers of children who have gone on to other schools after attending Nativity. It is very important that all four-year-olds be in school on time each day. All studies prepare our children for kindergarten.

The program for **Pre-K 3 (three-year-olds)** shares many of these general objectives. Our children recognize and name simple shapes, colors, letters, numbers, similarities and differences. They are given the opportunity to grow in their ability to express themselves through words, art and music. Three year olds are given the opportunity to enjoy both independent and group play, which for some children is a new experience. Students build a solid foundation to continue in our VPK program.

The **Pre-K 2 (two-year-old)** program has been designed with the active nature of your child in mind.

Activities focus on encouraging social interaction and using language to express themselves. They explore new skills in thinking and talking in a safe, nurturing environment. Similarities and differences are playfully introduced through games and art. As in any age group, the teacher focuses on the whole child, planning an array of teacher- and child-initiated activities.

*"Train a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn from it."*

Proverbs 22:6

School Director:

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