

Kindergarten Handbook



2022-2023

Bethlehem Lutheran School
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

The Mission of Bethlehem Lutheran School



Dear Parents,

This is an important time in the life of your child. Soon your child will have the first experience with formal education. To be effective, this education should be complementary to the efforts of the home in directing development.

At Bethlehem Lutheran School, your child will have the benefits of church, home, and school working together. Your child's full God-given potential can be developed through Christian education. A child will grow in faith and love and continue in an interaction of Christian fellowship within the classroom throughout the day.

Your child will also have the added advantage of modern means and media to develop fully as a child of God. As parents, you have made an important decision. You have chosen who will join you in caring for the greatest gift God has given you. That gift is your own child.

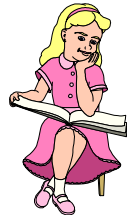
May the Lord bless your home and family.

In the Name of Christ,
Patrick Vanic
Principal

YOUR CHILD

In this handbook, kindergarten teachers suggest some ways parents can prepare a child for kindergarten in six vital areas of development: physical fitness, language development, intellectual learning, emotional adjustment, social living, and spiritual development.

1. The child should be given a wide background of experiences. In order to achieve satisfactorily in school, the child needs a number of experiences covering many areas. In the acquisition of skills such as reading, the child is translating a symbol on the page into a mental picture of something that is within his experience. If he does not possess familiarity with the things the teacher is talking about or that are being read, there can be but little understanding. It is very important that parents provide the children with a number of things to see and do.
2. The child should be acquiring desirable character traits. A very important ability, which all people must learn to possess, is the ability to socialize, to get along with other people. Parents should attempt to help their children to adjust well to other people, to share, and to be courteous and thoughtful. The new experience in kindergarten makes it imperative that the child who has been accustomed to the confines of the family must learn to adjust himself to many other people, some of whom are quite similar and all of whom are different. He must learn to follow as well as to lead.
3. Reading to your child is the very best means of preparation. He will learn to listen, which is so important, and it will increase his knowledge and interest in new things. The non-reading child is dependent upon those who can read.
4. Provide books for your child. Subscribe to children's magazines, visit the school and public libraries and check out books for him, let him browse in book stores, and give him books and tapes as presents. Although he may sometimes forget, he will learn to care for his own books. Let your child "read" picture books to you. The desire to read is strengthened when he is surrounded by reading.
5. Give your child rich firsthand experiences by taking him on "listening and looking" trips to parks, zoos, libraries, museums, and places of historical interest. He needs these direct sensory experiences to broaden his concepts, which will serve as foundations for future learnings.
6. Don't force him into learning, but encourage and stimulate him by providing him with interesting resources and materials. The young child is extremely anxious as he investigates and makes discoveries in his environment of man-made things, living things, and natural phenomena. Give him a magnifying glass. Let him be a collector. Help him observe and detect likenesses and differences in sizes, shapes, uses, colors, sounds, and textures. Let him experiment with a wide variety of art media. These art activities also serve to strengthen his eye-hand coordination.
7. Encourage your child to take his turn at "table talk". Listen to his contributions with interest. Respecting his ideas and helping him to express them is very important. The better he is able to express himself and to speak clearly, the smoother will be his transition to reading. Discourage baby talk, but don't make an issue of it. Explain new words. Answer his questions patiently, and help him find answers to others.



8. Sometime during the summer months, arrange to spend time during the day away from your child, to let him develop a feeling of independence and self-confidence without you being "right there." Let your child experience the supervision of other parents.
9. Give him regular chores to do so he learns to take responsibility and to know that he is a helper.

10. HOW CAN YOU HELP HIM DEVELOP GOOD HEALTH HABITS?

He should:

- *use the bathroom regularly, independently, in a sanitary manner*
- *brush his teeth after eating*
- *wash his hands thoroughly with soap and water after play, before eating, after going to the toilet*
- *use only his own towel, face cloth, toothbrush*
- *take an overall cleaning bath daily*
- *cover his nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing*
- *keep his hands away from mouth, ears, nose, and eyes*
- *wear clothing suitable for the weather*
- *play out-of-doors daily when weather permits*
- *have 10-12 hours sleep each night*
- *go to bed at a regular hour*

11. HOW CAN YOU PROVIDE FOR HIS SAFETY?

At school your child will learn more about safety. Before he comes to school, he should be encouraged to learn his first and last name, name of parents, address, phone number, and be willing to give them when asked.



ABOUT YOUR KINDERGARTEN CHILD

*Indicates characteristics that apply primarily to 5-year old children. Everything else applies to 3- 4- and 5-year old children.

Physical Development:

1. Period of slow growth. Body lengthens out and hands and feet grow larger.
2. Girls are usually about a year ahead of boys in physical development.
3. Good general motor control, though small muscles not so fully developed as large ones.
4. Eye-hand coordination improving.
5. Activity level high.
6. Attention span still short, but increasing.
7. Left- or right-handedness usually established.

Characteristic Behavior:

1. Stable - good balance between self-sufficiency and sociability.
2. Home-centered.
3. Beginning to be capable of self-criticism. Eager and able to carry some responsibility.
4. Noisy and vigorous, but activity has definite direction.
5. Purposeful and constructive - usually knows what he's going to draw before he draws it.
6. Uses language well, enjoys dramatic play.
7. Can wash, dress, eat, and go to the toilet by himself, but may need occasional help.
8. Individual and lasting traits beginning to be apparent.
9. Interested in group activity.



Special Needs:

1. Assurance that he is loved and valued.
2. Opportunity for plenty of activity, and to play with children in his age group; equipment for exercising large muscles.
3. Opportunity to do things for himself, freedom to use and develop his own powers.
4. Background training in group effort, in sharing, and in good work habits that he will need later.
5. Opportunity to learn about his world by seeing and doing things.

Speech and Language Development:

His speech should be intelligible, although some sounds may still be mispronounced. Most children of this age can carry on a conversation if the vocabulary is within their experience. He should use most pronouns correctly.

Social Emotional Development:

1. Demonstrates a feeling of security.
2. Expects a normal amount of attention.
3. Shows self-confidence.
4. Meets new experiences (situations) with confidence.
5. Shows self-control--Can he wait his turn? Can he control his anger?
6. Accepts authority, suggestions, and constructive criticism.
7. Attempts to solve problems independently.
8. Works and plays well with others.
9. Respects the rights of others.
10. Assumes responsibility.
11. Takes part readily in group activities.
12. Shows enthusiasm.

Academic Readiness - Work Habits:

1. Listens and follows directions.
2. Starts and completes work.
3. Works neatly and carefully.
4. Cleans up after work.
5. Works independently.
6. Works without disturbing others.
7. Approaches work eagerly and tries to do his best.
8. Beginning to recognize and identify capital and lower case letters of the alphabet.
- * 9. Beginning to listen for initial consonant sounds.
10. Recognize and identify numerals 0-20. Practice counting.
11. Recognize and identify basic colors and shapes.

Spiritual Development:

1. A practical interest in God (what He looks like, where He lives).
2. May confuse God and Jesus; may think of God as two separate Persons.
3. May wonder over God's omnipresence and omnipotence.
4. May become overly fearful that God sees whatever he does.
5. Able to say simple prayers, both memorized (table prayers) and spontaneous.



Our Programs:

3 Year old Kindergarten – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8:00am to 11:15am

4 Year old Kindergarten – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and an optional Friday
8:00am to 11:15am

5 Year old Kindergarten – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday Friday 8:00am to 3:05pm

- There is an optional program that goes until 11:30am. For more information please talk with the teacher.

HOW YOU CAN HELP AT HOME

Parents may help their child develop the necessary skills and attitudes for future school success by using the ideas below.

*Indicates suggestions that are most appropriate for 5-year old children. All others apply to 3- 4- and 5-year old children.

Physical Development

1. Balancing and jumping
2. Putting on and taking off wraps and boots
3. Tying shoes
4. Skipping, galloping, running, and marching
5. Identifying parts of the body
6. Cutting, pasting, and manipulating objects (eye-hand coordination)
7. Bouncing, throwing, and catching balls



Reading Readiness:

1. Read to your child often. Ask questions about the stories you read.
2. Listening skills -- tap a series of irregular beats on a covered coffee can. Have your child try to imitate the sequence.
3. Have your child repeat silly sentences exactly as you say them. For example, "Silly Sammy Snake slithers sideways."
- *4. Give directions for a simple act (tying a bow, etc.). Child guesses the act.
- *5. Give a detailed description of an object. Child then draws the object and compares.
6. Play the old game "Simon Says."
7. Say a sentence. Child listens for extra word - "Elephants love to pink eat peanuts."
8. Teach and read nursery rhymes to your child.
9. Cut up a wordless comic strip. Child reconstructs strip, then tells the story.
10. Experiences: Make sure your child has many experiences to learn from and talk about. Take your child to different places, such as mom or dad's place of employment, library, farm, park, zoo, etc. Talk about these experiences with your child.

Alphabet and Sounds

1. Make and use flash cards.
2. Match capital and lower case letters.

- *3. Say a word or look at a picture. Have child say the beginning sound and letter.
- *4. Cut out pictures in a magazine that begin with a certain sound.
- *5. Have your child find all the things in your house that begin with a certain sound.
- 6. Print a variety of letters on a piece of paper. Give directions as to which letters to identify. "Circle all the B's on your paper in red. Now circle all the g's you see in blue."

Math Readiness

- 1. Count with your child . . . candy, cereal, macaroni, toys, etc.
- 2. Have child compare number of spoons and forks, or chairs, and people, or tables and chairs, etc., and use terms such as "more than", or "less than", and "same as" to describe them.
- 3. Instruct child to give you 3 forks, 5 cans, 2 books, etc.
- 4. Show child various shapes (circle, square, triangle, etc.) and ask how they differ.
- 5. Make and use flash cards to identify numbers.
- *6. Show child a numeral on a card. Ask, "Which number comes before? After?"
- 7. Mix up flash cards. Child puts them in order.
- *8. Play card games in which your child has to add points.
- 9. Number sections of an egg carton from one to ten (or larger). Child tosses object in box and calls the numeral.

Art Experiences

- 1. Keep a junk and scrap box at home. Your child can really create with your throw-aways.
- 2. Have plenty of materials on hand . . . crayons, colored chalk, colored pencils, markers, paints, scissors, erasers, tape, glue, paper, paper bags, magazines, etc.
- 3. Things your child might want to do with paper: mosaics, paper sculpture, stencils, collage, paper chains, paper weaving, paper jewelry.
- 4. Things to do with paint: footprints, fingerprints, fruit and vegetable prints; printing with gadgets and junk; painting a scene on a bar of soap; finger painting or using other tools like a sponge, a comb, a brush, a fork.
- 5. Things to do with cloth: stitching; making lollipops from cardboard and yarn; using burlap to create interesting wall hangings and designs.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

I. Enrollment

Starting school is an important step in the life of your child. To help us do a better job with training your child, we need to know certain information about him and his family. To complete the enrollment process, we need to have a completed online pupil enrollment form and a completed health information form. Parents need to go on our school website at www.ourbethlehem.com and click on the “Sycamore” button to get started..

II. Health

A sick child does not do well in school. To help us know of any possibly physical problems a child may have, a physical examination is strongly recommended for every child entering kindergarten. Our school and the state of Wisconsin also require that a child be immunized before starting school. To avoid problems later in August, we advise that you take care of the physical examination and immunizations as soon as possible.

When a child is ill, he should stay home. A child who shows any of the following symptoms should not be in school:

1. Acute cold;
2. Sore throat or earache accompanied by fever of 99.6 degrees or higher;
3. Swollen glands with fever of 99.6 degrees or higher;
4. Excessively discharging nose;
5. Temperature of 99.6 degrees or higher;
6. Undiagnosed skin eruptions or rashes;
7. General signs of listlessness, weakness, drowsiness, flushed skin, frequent severe headaches.
8. Pink eye



Children should not return to school until temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours.

ALL CASES OR SUSPECTED CASES OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASES MUST BE PROMPTLY REPORTED TO THE SCHOOL.

III. Student Services

Milk and Snacks -- Each day, the kindergarten children have a snack break halfway through their school day. All parents of kindergartners are urged to purchase milk for their child. Children have a choice of chocolate or white milk. If a child is allergic to milk, parents are encouraged to provide juice. Snacks (and 100% juice in 3K) are also provided by the children on a rotating basis.

A STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The staff of Bethlehem Lutheran School believes that a kindergarten program should provide experiences for children which enable them to develop their individual potentials in an atmosphere which promotes spiritual growth and a positive self-concept. The emphasis is not upon formal programs of skill instruction, but upon introducing and developing readiness behaviors in an informal but structured fashion built on the natural inclination and curiosity of children to explore. Accordingly, the purposes of the kindergarten program are:

1. Religion:
to provide opportunities for and develop skills in personal and group worship and prayer; to develop the knowledge that Jesus is the child's personal Savior and that God is the Creator and Giver of everything; to promote living as a child of God; to promote the child's awareness of Bible stories, hymns, songs, and Bible passages as a means of learning about and worshiping God.
2. Reading/Language Development:
to provide experiences with books and the printed word through story time and individual exposure; to promote experience in receptive and expressive use of language and language patterns; to develop auditory perception skills; to provide experiences with the organization of print and discrimination between units of the written word; to develop a positive attitude toward reading, speaking, and the printed word; to correctly identify all capital and lower case letters of the alphabet at random; and to identify initial consonant sounds.
3. Mathematics:
to provide experiences with the concepts of classification, comparison, patterns, and numbers through concrete application and examples.
4. Socialization Skills:
to promote children working together productively in group settings and an organization context.
5. Science/Social Studies:
to promote the child's awareness of the physical environment in terms of their bodies, plants, animals, and the weather and seasons, as well as his/her geographical/cultural environment in terms of the neighborhood and community.
6. Aesthetics (Music, Art):
to promote the child's awareness of cultural and aesthetic value of the fine arts areas.
7. Physical Education:
to provide for development of fine and gross motor skills; to promote good lifetime health habits.
8. Personal Learning Skills:
to develop skills in attending to tasks, completing tasks independently, and following simple directions successfully.

Above all, the concept of providing success for each child at his/her level of development is crucial in developing a positive self-concept that will carry the child forward to continued success in later academic programs.

THE FIRST DAY APPROACHES

WHAT TO WEAR

Children will be more comfortable and happy if they have clothing suitable for active participation.

Comfortable, washable, clothing for girls and boys is best for most school activities. Above all, well-fitting shoes are important for growing feet with all the jumping, walking, running, skipping, and climbing they do. It is imperative that children's feet be well supported.

Most parents appreciate clothes made of easy-care, washable-dryable materials. All clothing and personal belongings should be well marked with the child's first and last name. (Use permanent ink.) Lost and found boxes overflow with children's personal belongings which have not been properly labeled.

THE WEEK BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

The week before school starts, you may want to get your child accustomed to the daily schedule to be followed for the next nine months. Begin by having your child go to bed early and wake at the time normally set to get up for school. Hopefully, your child will not be so exhausted that first week of school. Also, limit Sunday evening activities. Remember, Sunday night is a school night.

WHAT TO EAT

Make sure your child begins each day with a good breakfast; your child will be able to concentrate better and will not get hungry long before lunch.

Serve some of these foods for breakfast, instead of sugary breakfast cereals, doughnuts, etc.:

Cheese - all kinds

Eggs - cooked any way

Yogurt - plain with fresh fruit and honey

Nuts - all kinds

Whole wheat toast with peanut butter

Meats - all kinds, cold or hot



Young children do not always know how to tell time. However, their tummies tell them when it's time to eat. Fatigue and crabbiness set in when children are hungry. When a child is hungry, a nutritious snack is appropriate.

THE FIRST DAY

Try to have a calm, easygoing attitude about your child on that very first day of school. Reassure your child that going to school is a natural thing and will become a way of life for the next 12-16 years.

You may want to explain to a child that going to school is his or her job right now. Just like mothers and fathers have jobs, so do children. Explain that Dad's job may be working in an office. Mom's job may be working in an office or at home. A child's job, which is also an important one, is to go to school and learn.

If you take your child to school, reassure your child that you will be back for him/her. Many children are afraid their parents will not return. Usually, children will say good-bye, move right into the room, and mingle with the other children. However, some parents and children experience separation anxieties. Even after doing everything possible to familiarize a child with the school situation, school may still seem new and scary for the young child. In that case, stay just long enough for the child to become comfortable with the setting. Often a lingering parent makes separation harder. Inform the child that you are leaving and that you will be back to pick him/her up after school. Then leave. Be sure to be on time when you pick up your child. A minute may seem like an eternity to a waiting child.

CONCLUSION

You and your child's teacher can work together to make the school year pleasurable, rewarding, interesting, and fulfilling . . . beginning with that very first day.

Be aware of the different activities at school. Participate whenever possible in school- and church-related functions. Attend parent meetings, volunteer to be a room mother, and participate in church/parent/child activities.

Help create a positive attitude toward school. Keep the lines of communication open between yourself, the teacher, school, and your child.

Remember to give specific praise to your child for accomplishments. Do not offer praise for every little thing, or your praise may become meaningless. Be honest in your praise and constructive in your criticism.

It is our goal to help your child develop his/her fullest potential, to become a well-rounded Christian adult. With a solid partnership between home and school, we can work together as a team in the Spirit of Christ Jesus, beginning with that VERY FIRST DAY.

