Zion Lutheran Church

Early Childhood Center



Parent Handbook and Policies

2018-2019

5050 E. Sam Houston Pkwy South

Pasadena, TX 77505

Phone: 281-991-8600

[www.zionpasadena.org](http://www.zionpasadena.org)

ECC Director: Meredith Helm

**Goals and Objectives**

The mission of Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center is to nurture the souls, minds, and bodies of God’s children through songs and play, Bible stories and chapel, and prayer.

The Early Childhood program was established as an outreach to those in the community in need of a part time caregiving program. ECC gives parents the opportunity to have some free time, work part time, do house work, run errands, etc…while giving the children a chance to interact with children their own age. The program provides children with a safe and loving Christian environment. All children will be accepted and loved, in a place where laughter and play are cherished, and where children are given a warm response.

In the Early Childhood program, Christian education is taught through the everyday activities of snack time, indoor and outdoor play, along with daily circle time and chapel twice a month. Songs and music are presented every day for the children to participate in and enjoy. Children are met on their level, and teachers show, by example, Christ’s way of love, acceptance, and forgiveness.

We believe that children learn by doing. They will learn through discovery and social interaction. While circle time is a place for singing songs, discussing Bible stories, and learning basic number and letter concepts, children will have a chance to have free play with our centers. We have kitchens, blocks, puzzles, etc… in every classroom. Manipulatives will help children develop their fine motor skills while going outside will help with their gross motor skills.

Social skills are a very important part of being a preschool child. The activities in the classroom and interaction with teachers and other children will help in the teaching of sharing, listening, working in groups, and taking turns.

**Enrollment**

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Your registration fee will hold a position for your child. EEC fall registration is opens March 1st.

Our EEC program believes in small class sizes in order to provide the best setting for your child/children. We strive to keep our staff/child ratios and our class sizes small.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class | Staff/Child Ratio | Max. Class Size |
| 12mo/18mo | 1/3 | 8 |
| 18mo/Young 2s | 1/4 | 12 |
| Older 2s/Young 3s | 1/7 | 12 |
| 3s | 1/9 | 14 |
| 4s and 5s | 1/12 | 16 |

* Note: we only care for infants 12 months and older. It is preferred your child is not bottle feeding at time of enrollment.
* Nursing moms – we offer a place for nursing in the infant classroom.

**Tuition/Registration Fees**

**Tuition is based on the number of days the school is open, taking into consideration holidays and/or PISD closures. Zion ECC is intended to be a school year commitment and for your convenience in budgeting, tuition is divided into 9 equal monthly payments\*\*. Tuition is due the first week of each month, no later than the 15th. Credit is neither given for a child’s absence, including vacations, illness, teacher workshops, nor is credit given if the school must be closed due to inclement weather, national emergencies, or any other events beyond the school’s control. Teachers have been employed on a nine-month contract; thus, our income must have continuity. Checks and cash may be used to provide tuition for your child. Checks should be made out to Zion Lutheran ECC, with your child’s name in the memo section. Payments made later than the 15th of the month will incur a $10 late fee.**

**Option #1 (one day a week)**

1 CHILD 1 DAY = $90.00

2 CHILDREN 1 DAY = $160.00

3 CHILDREN 1 DAY = $240.00

**Option #2 (two days a week)**

1 CHILD 2 DAYS = $170.00

2 CHILDREN 2 DAYS = $305.00

3 CHILDREN 2 DAYS = $460.00

**Option #3 (three days a week)**

1 CHILD 3 DAYS= $250.00

2 CHILDREN 3 DAYS= $450.00

3 CHILDREN 3 DAYS = $650.00

**Supplies**

Upon enrollment you will receive a supply list for your child. These supplies help with our daily and weekly activities. You can bring them during Meet the Teacher or the first week of school. Each supply is greatly appreciated.

1- can of Lysol

1- composition book (will be making a scrapbook throughout the year)

1- foaming handsoap 1- 500 count of 20lb white or colored copy paper

1- plastic two pocket folders (any solid color) 1- 2 pack glue sticks 1 – liquid glue

1-kleenex box

**Snacks**

Snacks are not provided by Zion ECC. Parents will need to supply their child's snacks daily. We encourage you to send nutritious low sugared items for snack. You will need to label their snack daily and place it in the snack bin provided outside your child’s classroom. A sipper cup or sports bottle of water will need to be sent daily as well. Note: We are a **peanut free facility**.

**Lunches**

Lunches are not provided by our facility. **Children will begin lunch with a prayer. Each child must bring a nutritious lunch with a clear or light colored drink in a spill proof cup. Some suggestions for lunch treats: cheese, crackers, lunchmeat, sandwiches, raisins, cut up fruit, celery, carrot sticks,** and with a drink in a sipper cup or juice box. Sodas are not acceptable. Teachers will place leftover lunches back in the child’s lunchbox to allow parents to be aware of their child’s intake for the day. If hotdogs or grapes are sent in the lunch it is encouraged to have them cut up to prevent any choking accidents. (Please label their lunch kit with their name on it.) **Please no peanut butter or peanut related items in their lunches.** **We are a peanut free facility.**

**Potty Training Policy**

**ALL CHILDREN TURNING 3 ½ YEARS OLD MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY TRAINED. CHILDREN TURNING 3 YEARS OLD MUST BE IN THE PROCESS OF ACTIVE POTTY TRAINING. Children must stay in a pull up or diaper until COMPLETELY potty trained. Accidents happen and are understandable; however, children should be aware and capable of using the toilet by this age.  Repetitive accidents often affect self-esteem in children and as childcare professionals, we are concerned for your child’s social and emotional wellbeing.**

**Birthdays**

Birthdays will be celebrated during the child’s birthday week. Parents may send a special store bought snack to share with the class. Cookies, brownies, or donut holes are encouraged options. Please do not send cakes or cupcakes, they tend to be messy. If your child’s birthday is in the summer we would be glad to celebrate their half birthday.

**Parties**

EEC will have a party for special occasions. We will have a sign-up sheet for parents to volunteer special snacks and supplies for these parties. Parents are also encouraged to attend if able. Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines, and Easter are all fun occasions to look forward to attending,

**Staffing**

**ECC STAFF:  Zion Lutheran ECC staff are warm and caring individuals, striving to cultivate a positive, loving, Christian environment. Criminal history checks and FBI fingerprinting are conducted on all ECC and church staff persons.  The Safe and Secure Program, CPR and first aid are also required.  Other training includes 24 hours of various workshops designed for Early Childhood Providers.  For information about local licensing offices, look on the Protective and Regulatory Services website at:** [**www.tdprs.state.tx.us**](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/)**.  The Child Care Information line at 1-800-862-5252 also has information about local licensing offices.  We will be happy to let you review a copy of the minimum standards provided by Child Care licensing.**

**Child Placement**

Your child will be placed in a classroom according to his/her age. Promotion to another class will be based on the needs of the center to accommodate enrollment shifts and the appropriateness of the move for your child. You will be notified of any change. In many cases we will use a transitioning time to ensure a positive adjustment for your child.

**Child Release Policy**

Parents are required to sign their child in every day on the sign in sheet posted outside the classroom door upon arrival. Your child will not be released to anyone who is not authorized on the child’s enrollment form. Anyone not recognized will be asked to show proper ID and will be verified as an authorized person. A parent should inform Zion EEC in advance of anyone other than themselves picking up their child.

**Discipline**

**Zion ECC has a Christ-centered atmosphere of love and acceptance of individual personalities. In order to provide a safely structured environment, general rules are established and are reviewed frequently so that children will learn expected behaviors.  Inappropriate behavior is treated as an opportunity for teaching. Teachers will first re-direct children, then anticipate and eliminate potential problems, providing positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. Warnings and time outs are used when necessary. Biting cannot be tolerated and is considered inappropriate behavior. When necessary, we will discuss the situation with the parent and agree upon a strategy to help the child resolve the problem.**

**Early Release /Suspension From Zion ECC**

**Parents need to be aware that Zion ECC does have the right to suspend or release a child from our program for the following but not limited to the listed behaviors. We do not tolerate excessive biting, hitting, screaming and kicking type behaviors. Parents need to be punctual with paying their monthly tuition and daily pick up. Too many late pickups of your child may result in suspension from our program.**

**Clothing**

When your child arrives, they should be fully dressed and ready to begin the day. At Zion EEC we create many different activities, these can be very…messy. Clothing should also allow children the ability to run and play.

Children should be dressed according to the weather. Shoes must be worn at all times. Sneakers and soft soled shoes are preferred. Flip flops, open toed sandals, and backless shoes are never allowed for safety reasons.

Every child needs a change of clothes to be left in their backpack for unpredictable mishaps. (Please make sure your child has his/her backpack marked with their name.)

**Health/Medication**

Your child’s health is of the utmost importance. In the event your child runs a fever of 100 degrees under the arm, 101 degrees orally or becomes ill while in our care, you will be notified and advised to pick up your child immediately. If your child is running a fever prior to arrival, please allow a recovery period of at least 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medications. We work diligently at helping our children stay healthy and happy. We reserve the right to send any child home who cannot comfortably participate in the daily planned activities including outdoor play.

Prescription medication needs to be given at home when possible. We do not give medication at ECC.

**Application of Sprays and Lotions**

Parents are allowed to send bug spray, sunscreen, and diaper cream to school with their child if they would like it applied during the day. Please let your child’s teacher know if you would like any of those applied and make sure you have signed the agreement to for our facility to be able to apply such products.

**Immunization**

To protect the health and wellbeing of the children in the Early Childhood program, all children must show proof of current immunization records prior to enrollment. These records must be kept up to date, and kept in our files throughout the year. You can receive a copy from your pediatrician.

Note: Zion ECC does not have a policy for our staff to have immunizations on record nor are they required to have the flu vaccine on file.

**Hearing and Vision Screening**

Parents of children ages 4 and older please note that your child needs to have a vision and hearing screening complete within 6 months of them turning 4. Due to child care licensing we are required to have a copy of their screening in our files. You can get this from your child’s pediatrician.

**Injuries**

Every effort will be taken to ensure your child’s safety. Accidents do happen with young children. For minor injuries you will either be contacted by phone or informed at the end of your child’s day. In the event of a more serious accident, you will be contacted to pick up your child for medical attention. In an attempt to contact you and you cannot be reached, or there is a need for emergency care, Zion ECC will seek appropriate medical attention. Emergency numbers must be kept current in your child’s file at all times.

**Emergency Preparedness Plan**

Please note that our facility does have a plan in place for each type of emergency which could occur. If there is a fire, tornado, hurricane, etc… we do have a plan in place and all teachers are made aware of how we will care for the children. If you would like to take note of the plan please let the director know.

**Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting**

All staff are trained yearly on signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. Please note that they have the ability to report such concerns such as noticeable behavioral changes, bruises, or other indications of such neglect or abuse. Our staff is not required to contact the parents prior to contacting the abuse hotline.

**Centers**

Zion Early Childhood Center offers various hands on centers for exploration for each child. Our program is full of fun, finger plays, storytelling, drama, cooking, art, manipulatives, and music. Children learn best through repetition and hands on learning. Teachers will provide developmentally appropriate activities and play experiences for your child.

**Hours of Operation and Holidays**

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center is opened Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Please note we will observe all Pasadena ISD holidays. You will be notified of these dates. Zion ECC will be closed for weather-related problems and any other reason Pasadena ISD closes. Tune into local TV or radio stations if weather is threatening.

**Child Drop off and Pick up**

Parents are to hand your child over to the teacher when dropping them off. (PLEASE do not enter the room.) Place their belongings in their assigned cubby outside the classroom. Gates must remain closed and classroom doorways must be monitored by the teachers for your child’s safety. Zion Lutheran church policy requires that only trained and screened personnel be allowed in classrooms with children. Please wait in line to drop off your children. This is a safety issue, because sometimes children see their parents at the crowded door and run out, leaving teachers unaware that one of their students has been picked up. Sign your child in on the sign in sheet placed next to the classroom door. You must be able to place an emergency contact number for the day on the attendance sheet as well as who will be picking up your child that day. If the person assigned to pick up your child that day changes please call the office and inform them of these changes. If needing to pick up early, drop off lunch or forgotten supplies, please do so through the EEC office. We recommend that parents do not interrupt the classroom setting.

Zion Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center closes promptly at 2:00 pm. Teachers will begin releasing children at 1:50 pm. **Parents are advised, if you are late, a fee of $1.00 per minute will be charged to your account**. Habitual tardiness in picking up your child could result in dismissal from the program.

**Rest Time**

Children in the 12 month to 3-year-old classes will be sleeping on cots, and are asked to bring a small blanket or pillow for rest period. You may choose to send a nap roll instead. These items will be stored in their assigned cubby.

For the older 3-year-old classes and 4-year-old classes, we ask that you purchase a folding mat for your child. These mats can be purchased at Walmart or Target. Your child may bring a small blanket or pillow as well. Please label each mat with your child's name on it. All children will have to rest (not necessarily sleep) during rest time. Children will be encouraged to rest for at least 45 minutes then they will be allowed to do a quiet activity while others remain resting. Please mark everything clearly with your child’s name.

**Daily Slips**

Parents will receive a daily log at the end of each day as a way of keeping you informed and involved of your child’s daily activities. If your child has had an off day, keep in mind that the situation or concern was handled at school by the teacher. Take this opportunity to remind your child about appropriate behavior, but further punishment is not needed, as this may confuse your child.

**Chapel**

Children will go to chapel at 9:20 twice a month. Pastor David Sawhill will lead this wonderful time of worship for the children. It will be a great time for the children to sit in church and praise God.

**Newsletters**

Parents will receive a monthly newsletter and calendar at the beginning of each month. These include important activities and dates. We will try to have these available on our website as well.

**Two Week Notice**

A PAID TWO WEEK NOTICE WILL BE REQUIRED IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE DISCONTINUING OUR MDO PROGRAM. PLEASE GIVE NOTIFICATION TO THE MDO DIRECTOR. THIS COURTESY WILL ENABLE US ADEQUATE TIME TO FILL THE SPOT BEING VACATED.

**Fundraisers**

We will be participating in a few fundraisers throughout the year. This may include our annual cookie walk during Christmas, our Spring Fling Market, or other fun events to raise funds for our program. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. You will be notified when these events will take place and how you can help volunteer your time.

**Note:**

**\*This is a Drug Free and Gang Free Zone facility.  The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center.  Gang related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of the center is a law violation and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.**

**Please visit our website** [www.zionpasadena.org](http://www.zionpasadena.org) **for all Early Childhood Center information, including monthly newsletters and any updates.  You can also find us on Facebook! You are welcome at any time during the day to call or visit our program and observe the childcare center’s operation.**

**Child’s Name** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Read and sign that you have read the UPDATED parent handbook. Return this to the ECC director prior to the first day of classes. You can find our handbook online [www.zionpasadena.org](http://www.zionpasadena.org) . Look for the ECC tab! Or ask for a copy from the director.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE INFORMATION IN THE PARENT HANDBOOK.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Publicity Permission:**

Do you allow your child to be photographed and photos be placed for use of advertisement, facebook posts (on our ECC page) and/or hallway displays? Please initial the correct statement.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I allow Zion Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center to photograph my child to be used for advertisement/displays.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not allow Zion Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center to photograph my child for the use of advertisement/displays.

**\*note: your child will be photographed throughout the year to create photos for their personal Zion EEC scrapbook.**

**Authorization For:**

I give my permission to Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Care to apply sunscreen, bug spray, lotion, diaper cream, anti-itch cream, and anti-bacterial cream if needed.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\*Items needed upon enrollment: enrollment application, registration fee, immunization record, emergency contact information and handbook agreement.**

\*\*\*revised November 1, 2017