

*Family of Christ Lutheran Church*  
*Child Development Center*

**Parent Handbook**

*16190 Bruce B. Downs, Tampa, Florida 33647*  
**(813) 558-9343 (Office)**  
**(813) 514-0453 (Fax)**  
**[www.familyofchristcdc.com](http://www.familyofchristcdc.com)**

# **CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

CDC Director ..... Jill Hammond

## **FAMILY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Pastor..... David Haara

### **WELCOME To Family of Christ Lutheran Church Child Development Center (CDC)**

We are happy to have you join us as a member of the Family of Christ Community. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

#### **Philosophy Statement**

Family of Christ Child Development Center's philosophy is to foster a Christ-centered educational environment in which children are provided the highest quality of Christian education. The curriculum provides a solid emphasis on academic skills, balanced with Christian teaching of Biblical truths and how they apply to everyday living. Academic and enrichment programs are planned for the child's spiritual, mental, social, emotional, and physical growth while also focusing on the importance of "play" during these developmental years. The entire program offers many opportunities for the child to observe the miracle of God's wonderful world.

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it"*  
*Proverbs 22:6*

## **Family of Christ Child Development Center Mission Statement**

The mission of Family of Christ CDC is to provide a superior Christian education for our students by assisting Christian families to help their children develop their individual gifts-academic, spiritual, social, and physical-in a manner that brings honor and glory to God.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Family of Christ admits students of any race, creed, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally afforded or made available to students.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Family of Christ and our employees will not release your child's information without your consent and knowledge. We will keep confidential any personal and medical information on application and enrollment forms, or otherwise provided. We will not discuss or disclose any concerns regarding your child with other parties.

### **Events**

Weekly chapel services will be held with age appropriate Bible stories and songs. The children will learn about the Trinity; God, Jesus his son and the Holy Spirit. The children will hear and learn about God who made them and about Jesus their Friend who loves them. Parents and family members are welcome to join us for chapel.

Children will experience and learn Christian values through worship and song. The children will learn short prayers and know prayer is a way to talk to God. They will come to know they are part of the Family of Christ community.

All of our classrooms starting at age two have weekly Spanish and Music enrichment programs.

Classes often have events that families are invited to participate in throughout the year. We will send home invitations with more information closer to the time of the event. You may also refer to our calendar for our CDC center-wide events. Please feel free to stop by anytime to visit the classrooms, but please remember that visits can sometimes become a distraction and should be limited.

# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Absences**

No reduction in tuition will be made for holidays or absences.

## **Accidents/Incidents**

The staff of Family of Christ will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately, minor accidents occur. Should an accident occur, an accident report will be completed. When deemed appropriate due to the nature or extent of the injury, the emergency contact so noted on the child's file also will be called.

The accident report must be signed by the parents and returned to the Director. Accident reports will be maintained in the accident file and a copy will be provided to the parents. Minor injuries will be treated with soap, water, ice and Band-Aids.

## **Arriving and Departing**

***Important Policy:*** For safety and security reasons, a parent or designated adult must come to the classroom when dropping your child off and/or picking up. The teachers will sign the child in when you arrive and out when you pick up. You may not drop off any other place (front desk, playground, etc.)

If someone other than the parent needs to pick up a child, they **MUST** be listed on the emergency card **AND** provide a picture for identification.

Occasionally children experience separation anxiety. Should your child have difficulty leaving you, a prolonged good-bye makes leaving more uncomfortable for both of you. The staff will assist you by comforting your child and by directing them to an activity established to begin their day. It is very important that the drop off be quick and consistent to help your child adjust.

## **Birthdays**

Children may celebrate their birthdays at school. Special arrangements must be made and approved by the classroom teacher in advance. Any food brought in to share with the children **MUST** be store bought with the ingredients listed.

## **Babysitting**

As stated in our employee handbook, Family of Christ does not support nor endorse employees babysitting children attending FOC programs. We ask that parents refrain from doing so.

## **Biting**

Biting is very common among young children. In order to help prevent biting, understanding the reasons children bite are an important factor.

Some of the more common reasons and responses for children biting may include: experimentation, teething, social interaction, situational, frustration, attention, and independence/power responses.

At Family of Christ, prevention and intervention are the first responses to biting. Staff members supervise and observe the children in their care. In observation of a situation where biting may occur, they may redirect or provide choices or activities to prevent the biting response.

In the event that a child is bitten, the child who is bitten receives first aid attention. After the cleansing of the wound and application of ice, the child is comforted and given love and attention. The child who has bitten is spoken to and the rules of “no biting” are reinforced. Extra attention is not shown to the biting child. There is then reinforcement of communication skills, where the children are taught to “use their words”, or for preverbal children, expression in other ways such as “jumping like a bunny” or “growling like a tiger”.

When biting occurs, the teacher completes an incident/accident report. A report is given to the parent(s) of the child who has bitten, and one to the child who was bitten.

Continued biting will require a conference with the parent(s) to discuss the biting and choices to help avert continued biting. However, if in the event that Director and parent/teacher intervention does not stop a chronic biting child, the following will be required:

One-week absence from the Child Development Center (payment will still be required). During that period, the parent will work with the child and we will assist in providing information and/or guidance.

If the situation is still occurring, we will then require:

A two-week absence from the Child Development Center (payment will still be required to hold your child’s placement). During that period, the parent will work with the child and we will assist in providing information and/or guidance.

Should the biting continue on a consistent basis, we will then require dis-enrollment of the child.

Dis-enrollment will be the final option. We will work through every positive interaction and alternative before dis-enrolling a child.

## **Children's Clothing and Personal Items**

Children are encouraged to show responsibility for their personal items. Labeled storage areas are provided to facilitate organization. Each child must have a weather appropriate change of clothing. Parents are to mark their children's personal belongings with their name for easy identification. Please label all bottles, sippy cups, nap items, extra clothing, etc with your child's name. Family of Christ is not responsible for lost items.

You will be notified by the Staff of accidents and the need to replace clothing on your child's daily communication form. If your child is in the potty training stage, please be sure to supply extra training pants and an extra change of clothes, including socks.

Children attending the fulltime 3 and 4 year old class, 3 and 4 year old preschool, and the VPK programs must be potty trained.

Dress your child in washable, sturdy play clothes. Clothes that are durable, comfortable and easy to remove for toileting are very helpful. We go outdoors everyday, weather permitting; therefore dress your child accordingly.

Family of Christ encourages children to wear smocks when painting. However, clothes do become soiled during arts and crafts activities.

To prevent injuries during outside play, open toe shoes are strongly discouraged. Tennis shoes with socks are ideal for outside play. Flip-flops/sandals are only acceptable for summer water play activities.

## **Complaints**

Please direct your complaints and/or concerns to the Director. We have an open door policy and encourage you to ask questions whenever you feel the need. We are here to work as a team with you and your family and have your child's best interest in mind. Communication is very important and although we cannot make every parent happy, we do value and respect each comment, question, concern, and/or complaint that might be brought to our attention

# **Discipline**

## **Family of Christ Lutheran Child Development Center Discipline Policy**

The Hillsborough County Ordinance 97-3, as amended by Ordinance 99-17 Section 1.6, and 95-58, as amended by Ordinance 99-18 Section 6.02(b) “Child Discipline” requires that parents are notified in writing of the disciplinary practices used while in care prior to admission. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest or toileting. Children shall not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating or frightening.

The goal of discipline is to help children see the sense in acting a certain way. Of course, this is a time consuming task and it is important that we remain realistic in the expectation of the behavior of each child. His/her developmental age and stage must be taken into consideration.

One year olds will not be taken out of the classroom for discipline. Having rules of the classroom helps children to understand and recognize what appropriate behavior is expected. The rules are few and simple to understand. For the younger children the rules will be accompanied by pictures, which describe the rule or expected behavior. Consistency in the enforcement of the rules and discipline system is required in order to be successful.

### **Positive Reinforcement/Praise/Recognition**

First, we will recognize and praise those children who make good choices and exhibit positive behavior. This means of complimenting appropriate behavior provides a model for the other children to follow.

### **Redirection/ Communication**

Second, we will suggest and/or move the child to another activity. Redirection allows the child to become involved and focused and helps to encourage appropriate play. Part of redirection includes good communication. Teachers will communicate with children in a caring and loving way. They will communicate at eye level and talk with, not at, the children. We encourage the children to always “use their words” in conflicting situations such as sharing toys, wanting to play with a friend, needing space, etc.

### **Quiet/Thinking Time**

Sometimes it becomes necessary to give the child time to regain control. If that is necessary the child will be asked to sit in a chair quietly and will rejoin the class when he/she is ready. If a specific period of time is imposed, it will not be excessive and will not exceed a minute per age in years. Asking a child to place their head down quietly on the table for a short time, or for the 3 and older children, loss of playground time for two to 3 minutes while they sit on the playground bench may be appropriate.

If continued unacceptable behavior occurs, the parent(s) will be scheduled a conference to discuss a team approach to remedy the problem.

## **Conferences**

Our VPK teachers will schedule conferences twice during the school year for all children in their class. At anytime, a parent of any age child may request a conference with their child's teacher.

## **Discounts**

Families with 2 or more children attending receive a 10% multiple child tuition discount on all children after the 1<sup>st</sup> child. This applies to children registered with Family of Christ either in the Day Care, Pre-School or K-8 School and applies to the youngest child(ren). A church member discount is available to members of Family of Christ congregation who submit an annual application. Upon application approval, church members will receive a 15% tuition discount for all children. NO REGISTRATION OR SUPPLY FEES ARE DISCOUNTED.

## **Emergency Procedures**

We will have regular fire and disaster drills monthly. The children will be taught to listen to the teachers' directions. Each child will be monitored and cared for while participating in our drills. We have specific risk management plans that we follow during any type of disaster to ensure the children's safety is given top priority at all times.

Please make sure we always have current emergency contact information on file. This should include parents' contact information and additional contact information for another party in the event we are unable to contact the parents. You may check what we have on file and/or update your information at the front desk.

## **File Updates**

Your child's records will be kept confidential and opened when necessary by the Director and your child's lead teacher. Should there be any change of address, phone numbers, places of employment, legal guardianship or other pertinent information, please inform the Director or your child's Lead Teacher.

## **Health**

We are concerned about the health of every child in the Child Development Center. We need to ask your help in keeping everyone healthy. If your child is showing any of the following signs, **please keep your child home until the symptoms are gone:**

**Fever, Excessive Pain, Excessive Coughing, Excessive Nasal Discharge, Conjunctivitis, Chicken Pox, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Ear Drainage, Rash**

If your child shows any of the above symptoms while at the CDC, we will call you or the person named on the emergency form to pick up your child. There are no exceptions to this rule. This is to protect the health of your child as well as every other child in the center. We appreciate your help in this matter.

Contagious diseases must be reported to the center as soon as the illness has been diagnosed so that other parents can be notified. A letter will promptly be sent out.

After your child has been ill, it is important that you adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school:

- Mood, appetite, pain, behavior and activity are back to normal
- No fever for 24 hours
- Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours; 48 hours in the case of strep
- Vomiting, diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved
- Chicken Pox are completely scabbed over
- Period inspections for head lice will be carried out. The “nit free” policy will be followed for the child to be able to return

Your child may not return to the Child Development Center while on antibiotics without a note from your physician stating that the child is no longer contagious. This rule is for the protection of all students. We are not qualified to make decisions about childhood illness.

If your child has any type of allergy, please be sure to note this on the registration form. We keep a list of allergies in the classrooms and it’s important you let us know if your child has a allergy and/or any special medical condition we should be aware of.

## Hours

### Day Care

6:30 AM to 6:15 PM

A late pickup fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged after 6:15.

### Part-Time Pre-School/Part-Time VPK

M-F VPK 8:30 AM to 12:30PM

MWF VPK 8:30 AM to 1:30PM

T/TH Prek 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

MWF Prek 8:30 AM to 12:30PM

Because of the structure of our classes all children in all classes (except infants) should be in their classroom **no later than 9:00AM**. This helps keep the children on schedule and allows the teachers to complete all lessons. You may come in at anytime to visit your child as long as it is not during a time that is disruptive to the class and/or other children. We have an open door policy but please remember that the teachers are here to care for all of the children in their class and cannot always make time to visit one-on-one with a parent if they just drop in.

Our full time classes are year round and only closed the following 7 major holidays: Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving.

Our Part time preschool follows Hillsborough County School Calendar for days off and our part time VPK follows Hillsborough County for most of the days off but there are a few days our MWF VPK class is in session when Hillsborough County is closed. Please refer to your child's calendar for days off.

## Immunization Requirements

Hillsborough County Department of Health and Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing require every child to have current physical examination and immunization forms in file. This information is required within 30 days of the enrollment start date. The physician will indicate an expiration date on the form and you will be required to submit updated forms by their expiration date.

A reminder will be sent when your child's immunization records are approaching expiration. These notices allow plenty of warning to take your child to your pediatrician. Children with out-of-date immunization records will not be allowed to enter the CDC until the situation is resolved. *Children with immunization exemptions will not be enrolled/accepted.*

## **Inclement Weather**

We urge each family to plan what you would do if a disaster strikes during the day when you and your child are separated at work, childcare center, school, etc. We will remain with your child/children until you or someone you have designated can safely pick your child up. We have flashlights, a weather alert radio, first aid supplies, food and water. There are on-site staff who have training in the areas of First Aid and CPR.

The Elementary/Middle School and Pre-School will automatically close if Hillsborough County schools close due to inclement weather conditions.

The opening or closing of the Child Development Center will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Please call the center for a pre-recorded message detailing the arrangements the CDC has made in the event severe weather is approaching. Though the closing of the CDC will be handled on a case-by-case basis, it is strongly recommended that you keep your child home as a safety precaution. For possible closures, you may call in after 6 p.m. and listen to a recorded message.

## **Mealtime & Snacks**

Lunch will be provided daily except to the Infants and part-time Pre-School classes. Snacks will be provided once in the AM and once in the PM daily except to the Infants.

Lunch menus will be posted weekly. Please review the menus carefully. Should your child have a food allergy or be displeased with a specific type of meal for a specific day, you will want to provide a healthy alternative from home.

Parents of infants are responsible for bringing their child's formula. All formula should be premixed and ready to serve. Clearly mark your child's name on all bottles and food items. Please notify your Staff Members about all food so it may be properly stored in the refrigerator. Bottle warmers will be provided in the infant room.

Breakfast is an important meal. We do not have the facilities or the staff to serve breakfast. Please do not send breakfast with your child in the morning. Breakfast must be eaten at home.

We are unable to microwave individual meals. If you are packing an item that needs refrigeration, simply place a freezer pack in the lunchbox to keep it cool. Questions or concerns regarding the food menus can be addressed to the Director.

## **Medication**

The child development center believes a child on medication needs to be home. However, in situations where a physician has prescribed medication over a period of time, it can be administered only if the following guidelines are followed:

1. Permission slips authorizing the center to administer the prescription must be filled out with a beginning and an ending date.
2. Permission slips need to be given to the Lead Teacher in your room.
3. All over the counter medicines, ointments, etc. require signed permission slips. \*Note: We will not normally give Tylenol, Motrin, or other fever-reducing medication included in cough medicines or other treatments. Check with the Director or Assistant Director regarding administration of fever reducing medicines.
4. Medication must come to the center in its original container, labeled with the child's name, name of drug, dosage, and directions for administration, current date and physician's name and phone number.
5. Medication must be given directly to the child's classroom teacher and NOT placed in the box.
6. The following will not be given to any child: cough drops and pedialyte.

After medication has been completed, the permission slip will be placed in the medicine binder in the Director's office.

## **Nap Time**

After lunch, a naptime is scheduled for the children. As a parent, you may want to furnish a crib sheet labeled with your child's name. Small blankets are allowed, if they fit into the child's backpack or cubby. All nap items must be taken home weekly for laundering. To protect the health of your child, we will provide a sanitized mat or crib for your child. Because of space, we do not allow children to bring pillows.

## **Registration Fees**

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$150.00 due at the time your child is registered with Family of Christ CDC. After 6 months of enrollment there is a annual \$100.00 supply fee which holds your child's spot in the next age appropriate class due in January.

## Tuition/Fees & Return Fees/Late Pick-Up Fees

All weekly and monthly tuition payments are processed through Tuition Express, an automated payment processing system. Weekly tuition will be processed on Monday of each week; monthly tuition will be processed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

A \$5 processing fee per billing cycle will be charged for all non-Tuition Express accounts. Payment must be made in cash or by money order. **NO CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** A \$20 late fee will be applied for all weekly payments received after Monday and for all monthly payments received after the 15<sup>th</sup> (regardless of attendance dates).

Returned Tuition Express payments will be assessed a \$20 fee. This documentation will be placed in your child's personal file. If two or more payments are returned for non-payment, you may be required to pay in cash or money order (subject to the processing fees) or your child(ren) may be withdrawn from our program.

There will be a late pick up charge of \$1.00 per minute past 6:15PM. Consistently arriving late may result in the possible dismissal of your child. This documentation will be placed in your child's personal file.

## Vacation

Each child in our fulltime day care programs is allowed one (1) week of vacation per year (based on enrollment) in which payment of tuition is not required. Vacation cannot be applied before a 3-month waiting period has expired. Written notification 1 week prior to vacation is required. Vacation dates are not applied for random days. They are to be consecutive dates but can span from one calendar week to the next. The child must not be in attendance to receive the vacation week.

## Withdrawal

We request a two-week notice if you are withdrawing your child. **Should you withdraw your child/children for the summer months the classroom opening for the fall is NOT guaranteed.** You will be required to pay a new registration fee if you withdraw in the summer or for other reasons. There is a registration period for the fall Preschool and VPK; announcements are made through the Church Sunday Bulletins and CDC's Monthly Newsletters. It is the responsibility of the parents to stay in touch or contact the center to know about the registration period for the fall.

## **Parent Statement of Acknowledgment**

I have received a copy of the parent handbook and have read it. I agree to adhere to the policies set forth by Family of Christ Child Development Center.

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_