
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Family Handbook

2019-2020 School Year



Revised 04/01/2019

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ABOUT US

Center Information

Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool
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Biloxi, MS 39531

Phone.....228-388-4720

Email.....gslps1956@live.com

Website.....www.goodshepherdlutheranpreschool.com

Pastor/Church Office Pastor James Garnett 228-388-5767

Director Kristi Collins 228-239-8370
mskristi89@att.net

Licensing Information

State of Mississippi Department of Health
Child Care Facilities Licensure
Post Office Box 1700
Jackson, MS 39215-1700
Phone: (601) 364-2827 FAX: (601) 364-5058

DISTRICT IX LICENSING OFFICIAL..... Biloxi 228-436-6770
Pascagoula 228-762-1117

MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (MSDH)
CHILD CARE COMPLAINT HOT LINE (TOLL FREE) 1-866-489-8734

Philosophy & Purpose

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod) operates this school to give children Biblical Christian training, according to the will of God that we bring up our children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)

At Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool (herein after called “GSLPS”), our educational program is structured to educate the WHOLE child – spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.

We believe that every child learns at their own pace, through all of their senses, through active experiences, including play.

We believe that every child should know and be shown the love of Jesus Christ.

We interact frequently with individual children. We express respect and affection for children by smiling, touching, holding and speaking to children at their eye level throughout the day.

We speak frequently with children in a friendly, positive and courteous manner. We ask open-ended questions. Most of the time, we speak with individual children, instead of groups of children.

Home & Church

The first responsibility for a Christian upbringing is within the home. The church offers its services to help parents and guardians in carrying out His important task. Therefore, we anticipate the cooperation and support of the child’s father, mother and/or legal guardian to assist in developing in the child a deep faith in Jesus Christ. As a child’s faith in Jesus Christ strengthens and grows, it becomes the core tool that allows them to meet the problems of life with confidence and success. We invite parents to familiarize themselves with the principles of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. These principles are taken directly from the Bible. We invite you to attend any of our worship services and our Pastor will gladly answer any questions that you might have.

We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children’s classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

We incorporate Biblical teachings, songs, prayers and verses into our lessons daily. Each Wednesday, we have “Chapel Day” in our sanctuary with Pastor James. This experience allows each child an opportunity to express reverence and respect in God’s house. Basic character development traits such as honesty, responsibility, encouragement, friendship, truthfulness, servanthood, compassion and courage are introduced and discussed. A variety of Bible stories, prayers, and songs are shared throughout the year. Parents are welcome to join us for this special time.

Certification

GSLPS is licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health to care for a maximum of thirty (30) children ages three (3) to five (5) years of age.

Hours of Operation

GSLPS PreK4 Program will operate from 8am-2pm, Monday through Friday. Our Mother's Morning Out Program (PreK3) will operate from 8:30am-12pm. We request that you do not bring your child any earlier than the scheduled opening time in order to ensure that the staff and the center are ready for their arrival.

Holidays

The following is a list of dates that GSLPS will be closed for the 2019-2020 school year. We plan to follow the Biloxi School District as closely as possible for the duration of the school year. **School will officially start on Wednesday, August 7, 2019.**

September 2	Labor Day Holiday
October 11-14	Fall Break (Columbus Day)
November 25-29	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 20-January 5	Christmas Holidays
January 20	Martin Luther King Holiday
February 24-26	Mardi Gras Holiday
April 9-17	Easter Break

The last day of school for the school year is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, 2020.

The State of Mississippi requires that each member of our staff attend 15 hours of Continuing Education classes each year. There may be instances that require the staff to attend professional workshops on a day that school is scheduled. However, if we must attend training on a regularly scheduled school day, we will give parents at least thirty (30) days notice prior to the day of closing to make other arrangements.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

Admission & Enrollment

GSLPS is licensed to care for children ages three (3) through five (5) years of age. The class that your child will be placed in will be determined by their date of birth. Children must be at least three (3) years old on or before September 1, 2019 in order to be eligible for enrollment in the center. The following items are **required** for admittance.

- Application for Enrollment
- \$100 Non-Refundable Registration Fee
- Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Tuition Agreement
- Form 121 immunization record (exemptions are not accepted)
- Child must be FULLY toilet trained

Children are admitted without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided. Upon discretion of the Director, it may be determined that the needs of a child may be beyond the program's service delivery capacity and therefore admittance or re-registration will be denied.

Inclusion

GSLPS believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

We treat children of all cultures, religions and ethnic groups with respect and consideration. We provide boys and girls with equal opportunities to take part in all activities. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Director	Bachelor's Degree, CDA or Director's Credential	5 years
Teacher	Associate Degree, CDA, High School Diploma or equivalent	2 years

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate educational practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by GSLPS.

Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. In accordance with MSDH regulations, we maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff Ratio (maximum class size)	Maximum Group Size
3 year olds	14 to 1	14
4-5 year olds	16 to 1	20

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. Notes may be placed into your child's folder at the end of the day from center staff will keep you informed about your child's activities and experiences at the center.

Bulletin Boards. Bulletin boards that provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc. are located in each classroom.

Newsletters. Weekly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, menu, etc. These newsletters are attached to your child's folder on Monday of each week.

Facebook. We encourage you to join the private Facebook group available only to current parents and staff of GSLPS. Please provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

Text Messages. The Director will occasionally use text message to remind parents of upcoming events, deadlines, or information you may need. Please provide a valid cell phone number on your enrollment application.

Family Visits. Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, or come along on a field trip. Signing in and signing out are required for the safety and protection of all of our children.

Conferences. Family & teacher conferences occur twice a year, in December and May. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

Publicity/Facebook

We will not use pictures and names of children for publicity or post pictures to our private Facebook group without express authorization from the parents/guardians. If you wish to be included in the Facebook group, please indicate this on the back side of your enrollment application.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in our center. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on, and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Our curriculum includes a daily Bible lesson, reading and writing readiness, math skills, science, art, and music. Since hands-on activities encompass a large amount of our daily schedule, you

may not “see” the results in the form of hand-outs coming home, however your child is learning in the best possible environment to foster their individual growth.

Curricula & Assessment

As part of our curriculum, we gather information about each child’s developmental abilities and evaluate progress in order to modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom to enable us to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

Outings & Field Trips

We try to plan educational field trips for your child as often as possible. There will be times when our field trips come to us. If you have any ideas that you would like to share for a field trip or an in-house activity, please let us know and we will try to find a way to fit it in.

Transportation to the field trips is the parent’s responsibility. If parents cannot transport their own child, they are responsible for making carpool arrangements with another child. Once the children are at the location of the field trip, parents must sign their child in and out as per normal procedure. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child’s parent or legal guardian.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. We request that all children wear their “Chapel Shirt” for any field trips in order to be able to keep up with our group more efficiently. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking.

Transition

Your child’s transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure that the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Prior to your child’s first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child’s peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Although you may want to stay longer for the first few weeks that your child attends, we strongly suggest that you do not linger. Our staff is well trained in separation issues, and it is often easier on both the child and the parent if you implement a short drop-off routine and exit quickly.

Electronic Media/Television

We do not allow any television viewing in our center; however a phone, laptop or iPad may be sparingly used in conjunction with a learning activity. Since the children are with us for such a short period of time each day, we do not employ the use of computers in our facility for the children’s use.

Birthdays & Celebrations

We love to celebrate birthdays at GSLPS! However, due to MSDH Nutritional Guidelines, we are unable to have individual birthday parties at school. We will set aside one Friday each month for our “party day” where all of the children with a birthday that month will be honored. Please feel free to sign up to bring a snack component for that day, if you are willing and able to do so. If you would like to invite any of the students to a party outside our facility, we request that you either include the entire class or all of your child’s gender so that no one is excluded.

Our holiday celebrations include: Halloween/Fall Festival, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter. We will provide a list of items needed for the party in each classroom to allow parents to volunteer to bring an item. All food items must be store-bought and pre-packaged according to the State Nutritional Guidelines. **NO HOMEMADE GOODIES.**

Toileting

One of the requirements of enrollment is that your child be FULLY toilet-trained (i.e. is able to undress, use the restroom, wipe him/herself, redress and wash hands). However, we understand that toilet accidents are natural events in the lives of young children. We never criticize or punish children for toilet accidents. Parents are required to maintain an extra set of season-appropriate clothing in a Ziploc bag in your child's backpack for such cases. The soiled clothes will be placed in the bag after the child changes his/her clothes. We will help them change their clothes with as much help as is needed. If your child does not have an extra set of clothing in their backpack, we will provide extra clothing if it is available. We ask that any clothing loaned to you on behalf of your child be washed and returned to us as soon as possible.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

GSLPS is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness. Each student has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers, and sometimes among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

We will contact the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change. However, according to Federal Law, we cannot divulge the names of any child involved to anyone other than their own parent/guardian. Please do not ask us to do so.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. As a Christian school, foul language is expressly prohibited on our campus. If these behaviors occur, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

For financial support of the school, we depend on the Christian generosity of our church members and the student's parents. We receive no support whatsoever from the government. We are confident that parents, in appreciation of the value of a Christian education, will faithfully comply with the schedule of tuition payments.

- The PreK4 rate is ten (10) equal monthly tuition payments of \$350.00, August through May. The total amount of tuition for the year is \$3500.00.
- The Mother's Morning Out Program (PreK3) rate is \$2500.00 per year, split into ten (10) equal monthly payments of \$250.00 each. However, we do offer a shortened week option of either 3 days (W/Th/F) or 2 days (M/T) for the discounted rates of \$150 (3 days) per month and \$100.00 (2 days) per month.

Payment is due on the 1st of each month. Late payment fees in the amount of \$30.00 will be applied to your account if not paid by the 5th of the month. There are no deductions for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control.

The school will send home envelopes with the children for your convenience. Please make your check payable to **GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL**. Please give your payments directly to one of the staff so that your account gets credited correctly. Receipts showing the center name, tax ID number and the payment amount will be given to you for income tax purposes.

Registration Fees & Chapel Shirts

A non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 is due with your application for enrollment. This fee is waived if the entire year tuition is paid in full by the first day of school. "Chapel Shirts" are to be worn on Wednesdays for "Chapel Day" and for any field trips that we may attend. Chapel shirt cost is included in your registration fee.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Your child should be picked up at their dismissal time each day. **Late fees of \$5.00 per minute will be assessed beginning 10 minutes after dismissal** and are due upon picking up your child.

Special Activity Fees

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event. We also offer a graduation cap & gown package to our preschoolers completing our PreK4 program. The amount will be announced in January.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received by the 5th of each month, a **\$30.00 late fee** will be added to your account. We are willing to work with parents regarding your tuition payments; however, delinquent accounts will be referred to the Board of Education. Your child may be dismissed if your tuition account is more than one (1) month delinquent, and no steps have been taken to resolve the delinquency. If not paid, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3rd party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees. All fees and tuition are due in full prior to graduation.

Returned Checks

All returned checks will be charged a fee of \$40.00. Two or more returned checks will result in requiring your account being paid with cash, a money order or cashier's check.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence & Tardiness

If your child is going to be absent or arrive more than 15 minutes after class is scheduled to begin, please contact the director via phone or text message. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you. If your child is absent for five (5) days without notifying the Director, your child may be withdrawn and his/her slot given to a child on the waiting list.

Withdrawals

A written notice, two (2) weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to give notice will result in additional fees.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water, etc.) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on our Facebook private group page and/or via text message. In general, we will follow the Biloxi School District decision for any area wide occurrences.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 8:00am for our PreK4 Program & 8:30am for our MMO Programs. Children will not be accepted prior to opening & unless signed in by an authorized adult. Your child must be picked up by an authorized adult at the appropriate time to avoid additional fees.

Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the center.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you, or those persons you have listed on your enrollment application. If you want a person who is not identified on your application to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the individuals listed as Emergency Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one (1) hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency Contact, we are required call the local child protective services agency.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency Contact pick-up the child, or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

In the event of an accident, please bring at least one change of clothing including pants/shorts, underwear, shirt, socks, and shoes placed in a Ziploc bag and kept in your child's backpack. Please label all items brought from home with your child's name to help prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost.

PreK4 students are required to bring their own nap mat and will have a quiet, comfortable place to rest. Cloth mats will be sent home on a weekly basis for cleaning. Plastic mats will be disinfected and stored for you on weekends. Children are not required to actually take a nap, however they must lie down and remain quiet and still as not to disturb other children. They may bring a blanket & small pillow as well.

In addition, our PreK4 students must bring their own sack lunch each day. Please see the Nutrition section of this handbook for nutritional guidelines that must be followed for these lunches. Each child is served their individual sack lunches at their table. Teachers will sit with the children and also eat their lunch. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged

Cubbies

Upon enrollment, each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home. Their backpacks and coats should be placed in their cubby each morning for storage.

Backpacks

Each child should bring a backpack to school each day. The backpack should be large enough to house their daily folder without folding or bending. This backpack should also contain an extra set of clothing as described above.

Lost & Found

Any found items will be held by the Director for two weeks. We are not responsible for lost property.

Items from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys, jewelry, food, blankets, etc. from home. The exceptions are "Show & Tell" each week & our PreK4 students "rest time" items.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE/PHOTOGRAPY & VIDEOTAPING

Video Surveillance

Video surveillance may occur on school property. Video surveillance shall be limited to preschool classrooms, school grounds and other areas deemed appropriate by the Director. GSLPS reserves the right to place cameras in a location known to require a greater need for surveillance. Video surveillance shall not occur in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.

The video surveillance system and all resulting recordings shall be located in a secure area and access to the system and recordings shall be strictly limited by the director or designee. Video images obtained by GSLPS shall be viewed by authorized personnel as necessary. GSLPS may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of school policy and other applicable law, including, but not limited to, student and staff discipline proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images or recordings may become subject to disclosure in response to a lawfully issued subpoena or court order. The video recordings may be erased as necessary or recorded over at the discretion GSLPS.

Photography/Videotaping

During school related activities, children may be photographed or videotaped. To respect the privacy of students, parents, teaching staff and administration, we strongly discourage parents from posting school related pictures or videos on any social networking sites. If you do not wish for your child to be photographed, please indicate this preference on your enrollment application.

Please be advised that GSLPS cannot be held responsible for photographs posted on any social networking site by a parent/guardian or any other person.

NUTRITION

School Provided Snack

Your child will be served a nutritious snack each day as part of the normal schedule of activities. This cost is covered by your tuition. We strive to exceed all of the Mississippi Department of Health standards for nutrition with the snacks we serve. We include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grain, and low-fat dairy products. If your child has any allergies that we should be aware of, please notify us immediately so we do not serve him/her any foods that would cause a problem.

We ask that your child does not eat any food from home upon entering our facility. Gum and candy are strictly prohibited.

Foods Brought from Home (PREK4 STUDENTS ONLY):

Sack lunches brought from home must meet the same Nutritional Guidelines outlined by the Mississippi State Department of Health. The following conditions must be met.

- Each individual child's lunch brought from home shall be clearly labeled with the child's name, the date, and the type of food.
- All food shall be stored at an appropriate temperature until eaten.
- The food brought from one child's home shall not be fed to another child.
- Children shall not share their food.
- If a child's sack lunch does not meet the minimum nutritional standards for child's age the facility shall be required to supplement the lunch with items that meet the nutritional requirements.
- Parents shall be notified in writing if a child's sack lunch does not meet the nutritional requirements for the child. The notice shall contain instructions as to what foods are proper for a sack lunch.
- **Components are required as follows:
1 meat/meat alternate, 2 fruit/vegetables, and 1 grain
Milk and Water will be provided by GSLPS**

FOODS THAT MAY CAUSE CHOKING

Sausage shaped meats (hot dogs)*	Popcorn
Hard Candy*	Nuts
Chips*	Grapes (must be cut into pieces)
Dried Fruits	Marshmallows
Chunks of peanut butter	Gum*
Raisins (must be cut into pieces)	
Thick Pretzels Rods* (Thin pretzel sticks and rounds would be allowed)	

*Not allowed to be served

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

At meal time, the food is placed on individual disposable plates and with disposable flatware. Everyone sits at their tables with each other. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly snack menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers as well as listed on your weekly newsletter. Parents will supply a sack lunch for the PreK4 students with their name clearly marked on the lunch box or bag.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

Meat/Meat Alternate Cooked Meat, No Bone Cooked Dry Beans/Peas Low Fat Cheese Egg Peanut Butter Fat Free Yogurt/Cottage Cheese	1 ½ oz. 3/8 c. 1 ½ oz. 1 medium 3 Tbsp. 6 oz.=3/4 c.
Fruit or Vegetable: Must include 2 different foods- 1 vegetable/1 fruit OR 2 vegetable OR 2 fruit	½ c. total ¼ c. of 2 foods
Grains/Breads Enriched, Whole Grain Bread OR Enriched Dry Cereal OR Enriched Hot Cereal OR Enriched, Whole Grain Pasta, Noodles, Rice	½ slice 1/3 c. OR ½ oz. 1/3 c. 1/3 c.
Milk (Must be fluid, skim/fat free), or 1% milk	¾ c.
Water	¾ c.

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.	
½ turkey sandwich Celery sticks Raisins	Chicken strips Roll Orange wedges Broccoli
Peanut butter on graham crackers Apple slices Carrot sticks	Yogurt Crackers Sugar snap peas 100% juice

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. MSDH regulations require an up-to-date copy of your child's Form 121 be on file at the center at all times. If your child's form is scheduled to expire, we will give you advance notice and a deadline for which we must have a new Form 121. If we do not have a current Form 121 on file, your child may be dismissed from our program for non-compliance.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- **They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.**
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the child's classroom and where food is prepared. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

Staff will not administer medications to any child, except in extreme emergencies. If your child requires medication, please make sure he/she receives the dosage before or after hours. The only exception to this policy will be a prescribed Epi-pen for a child with allergies or an inhaler for asthma emergencies.

Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., sunscreen, bug spray) are also considered medications and are therefore not to be administered by any staff member. If you wish to apply either sunscreen or bug spray to your child, you may do so prior to school.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits. We do ask that your child wear their “Chapel Shirt” on Wednesdays for Chapel Day as well as to any field trips.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children’s clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children’s clothes should be removed as a precaution. We also ask that children do not wear dangling jewelry (long earrings, necklaces) that can easily get caught in equipment and cause injuries.

Sandals, flip-flops, Crocs, Jellies, oversized boots, platform shoes, and high-heeled shoes are not appropriate for center play, and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. All shoes should be non-slipping, closed-toed, closed backed and fit well.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 95 °F (including heat index) or less than 40 °F degrees (including wind chill). Additionally, outdoor play will be canceled if the playground is deemed too wet for safe play after rain or other inclement weather.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an accident report outlining the incident and the course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling, or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children’s developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center’s premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center’s premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated, and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with fire alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis. Additionally, we have an annual Fire Safety Inspection by the Biloxi Fire Department.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency at or around GSLPS, we have an Emergency Evacuation Plan in place.

Depending on the location of the emergency, we will transport the children either to Popps Ferry Elementary, 364 Nelson Road (436-5135) or North Bay Elementary, 1825 Popps Ferry Road (435-6166). In either event, we will immediately contact our parents/guardians as soon as we have all of the children secured in the emergency location.

The children will be transported to these locations by Coast Transit Authority. Parents should go to the designated area as soon as possible to pick up their child. Preschool staff will remain with the children at all times.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted, and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

Insurance

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd maintains a comprehensive facility insurance plan through a policy with State Farm Insurance. This policy includes both liability and medical coverage insurance for the preschool. The coverage is not intended to be, nor is it, a substitute for individual or group health insurance. Its purpose is to provide for the limited payment of medical care should your child receive a significant injury while attending our preschool or church during regular hours of operation.

POLICIES

Transportation Policy

GSLPS and its staff DO NOT transport children for any reason. In the event of an emergency, the children will be transported by Coast Transit Authority to the emergency sites listed in the Emergency Evacuation section of the handbook.

Student Termination Policy

A child may be terminated from our program for several reasons. The parents will be notified in writing if termination has occurred and the reason for termination. These reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Unpaid fees/tuition
- Required forms not received or not up-to-date
- Behavior problems that need special attention
- Absenteeism beyond five (5) days without an explanation to the Director
- Hostile or aggressive behavior by family towards staff members

Generally, prior to termination, the Director will attempt to make contact with the parent by telephone and in writing to discuss the matter. If there is no resolution, a three-day (3) suspension of the student will take place. After the suspension, if the situation continues, termination will take place.

Immediate termination with no prior suspension of the student may be deemed necessary by the Director in extreme cases. If this determination is made, the Director will contact the parent by telephone & in writing to notify them of termination.