

Martin Luther Preschool

Parent Handbook

(Revised March 2022)



**MARTIN LUTHER
SCHOOL**

**Shepherd of the Valley Church,
801 E Denver Ave., Bismarck, ND**

**Zion Lutheran Church,
413 E Ave. D, Bismarck, ND**

**Martin Luther Preschool is operated by the
Bismarck-Mandan Lutheran School Association
For more information call: 224-9070**

Welcome

Welcome to Martin Luther Preschool, a ministry of the Bismarck-Mandan Lutheran School Association, Bismarck, North Dakota.

The staff at Martin Luther Preschool work together to make each day, month, and year a special, positive learning environment for your child while they are in our care. We also enjoy having the wonderful opportunity to share the Savior with your child. In return we ask that you work with us in making your child's time here at Martin Luther Preschool the best it can be. Please read this short handbook and become familiar with the policies and procedures of the Preschool.

All Preschool families are welcome to participate in worship services and Bible Study groups that are offered through our churches. If you presently do not have a church home, we invite you to consider our congregations in Bismarck and Mandan. To find out more about the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, there are adult information classes led by our Pastors throughout the year. You may contact the school office for congregation information.

Philosophy

The mission of Martin Luther Preschool is to *enrich lives and share Christ through quality Lutheran education*. Our goal is to provide a Christian atmosphere of rich learning opportunities in which all students are led to develop themselves spiritually, academically, socially, and physically.

The role of Martin Luther Preschool is to satisfy the needs of children in these areas:

- I. Spiritually:
 - a. Bring an awareness to God's will in all situations
 - b. Instill Biblical principles through Bible stories, songs, and Bible memory verses
 - c. Participate in daily prayer together
 - d. Attend Chapel once a month
 - e. Teach them about God's love for them and all mankind
 - f. Instill a love of self and for others

- II. Academically:
 - a. Integrate all subject areas through a thematic approach
 - b. Teach age-appropriate academic materials by a ND licensed teacher
 - c. Equip students with problem-solving and thinking strategies
 - d. Teach with a variety of learning styles of each child (visual learners, auditory learners, kinesthetic learnings, reading/writing learners) to allow for individual growth
 - e. Provide hands-on activities that promote cognitive growth and academic achievement
 - f. Utilize play as an important way of learning

- III. Socially:
 - a. Nurture appropriate social interactions by modeling and teaching sharing, taking turns, using good manners, and showing respect for others
 - b. Teach skills necessary for self-regulating and managing emotions
 - c. Help students become aware of the world around them

- IV. Physically:
 - a. Provide opportunities for kinesthetic growth through free play, outdoor playground activities, and gym/movement time
 - b. Encourage healthy/balanced food and beverage choices
 - c. Promote life choices of physical health awareness

End Result

In acknowledging these needs, Martin Luther Preschool will provide your child with an atmosphere of consistency and growth all within a balanced educational setting. Your child will develop a genuine interest and joy in learning. This leads to your child feeling confident and successful which can set the tone for future years of education.

Tuition

All tuition, registration/supply fees will be transacted through our online payment program. You will receive an email from Martin Luther School with a direct link to this program. All your financing will be set up through this link. All financial matters are to be directed to Martin Luther School office, not to Martin Luther Preschool teachers.

****Past Due Tuition Policy:*** If at any time during the enrolled school year a tuition account becomes more than 3 months delinquent, the student will be removed from our enrollment. Attendance for that school year may begin again when the account is current. There will be no make-up days or tuition discount for time lost.

Enrollment

Admissions to our preschool program will be made through our online enrollment program. There will be a registration/supply fee that will be due upon enrollment. Our classes are filled by a first come, first serve basis when the registration fee is received.

The registration fee is non-refundable except in the case that the child cannot attend due to illness or the family moving to another city.

Your child must be:

- Independently toilet-trained (This includes NO Pull-Ups.)
- 4 years old before July 31 of that school year

Paperwork/Documents to be completed and attained prior to attending:

- Parents' Statement of Health of Child
- Child Information Sheets
- Certificate of Immunization (Can use form provided by Martin Luther Preschool or Immunization forms are on hand at your clinic or you may copy your child's current immunization card/print-out.)
- Photocopy of Birth Certificate
- Current picture of child

Martin Luther Preschool is licensed by the state of North Dakota and is required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. (North Dakota Century code, chapter 50-25). Parents of Luther Preschool students who may have a program complaint, suspected licensing violation, or suspected child abuse or neglect may contact Burleigh County Social Service at 224-9070.

Termination of Enrollment

Two (2) weeks-notice is required when terminating enrollment. If our director feels it necessary to terminate enrollment you will be given a 2 week notice. We reserve the right to make immediate termination if we feel that continuing enrollment in any way endangers our staff or the other children enrolled in our program.

Termination of Enrollment Policy

Luther Preschools reserves the right to terminate enrollment for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with program policies
- Serious illness of child
- False information given by parent/guardian either verbal or written

Late Enrollment Policy

Martin Luther Preschool will enroll a student into the program after the school year has already started on a case by case basis only. A late enrolled student will be on a 30 day probation period. If after 30 days it is agreed by director and teacher that the student is adjusting and progressing and parents/guardians of the student have complied with all program policies, that student may continue on with the remainder of the school year. If however, the director and teacher agree that the student has not adjusted or progressed or parents/guardians of the students have not complied with all program policies, enrollment will be terminated. Late Enrollment of a student will require the payment of a

prorated registration fee and tuition along with completing **ALL** other required forms **prior** to the student attending class.

**As a private program, Martin Luther Preschool holds the right to deny enrollment of a child into their preschool program if that child's allergies or physical/mental disability cannot be reasonably accommodated by the present staff and facility without posing an undue burden on that staff and/or facility or if it would fundamentally alter the nature of the existing program or the care/teaching of the other children enrolled.*

Communication

Conferences

Opportunities for parent/teacher conferences for 4/5 year-olds will be offered twice a year in the fall and spring. Fall and Spring conference dates are on the school website and calendar. Two weeks prior to conferences, your teacher will provide you with a link in which you will be able to sign up for a conference time slot.

Teachers and/or parents may request conferences at any time throughout the school year if additional communication is needed.

Calendar

You will be provided a school-year calendar informing you of any holiday schedules, days off, and any other special activities.

FOOD

Snacks

Arrangements for providing snacks for your child's class will vary by your child's teacher. Your teacher will explain how that will be done in his or her class. Regardless of how snacks are done in your child's class, **all snacks must be in original packaging and labeling and may not be homemade.** Snacks must be peanut free and not processed in a facility with nuts. Additionally, please speak to your teacher about birthday treats.

Drinks

We promote students staying hydrated throughout the school day. Students should bring a water bottle to school for water only, please. Spills are inevitably going to happen, and water spills are easy to clean up. Juice and colored beverages are more difficult, in addition to not be healthy on teeth enamel. For this reason, we ask that juice of any kind or other colored beverages, **NOT** be brought to school. Water fountains are available for refilling water bottles throughout the day. Martin Luther Preschool will also provide milk during snack time (full and half day students) and at lunch time (full day students).

Hot Lunch

Students in the full day program at the Zion location may participate in the hot lunch program or bring a lunch from home. The cost for each lunch is \$3.15 and can be arranged in the school office. There is no lunch option at the SOTV site. We currently do not offer a breakfast option at either location.

Food Allergies

If your child has any type of food allergy, you may choose to provide the daily snack for you child. If the allergy is severe enough for an Epi-Pen use, the Epi-Pen **MUST BE** with the child when he/she is attending class. Parents are to instruct staff on the proper use of this medication and the child must also be prepared for this procedure. If you wish to have any type of “Benadryl” type medication on hand for allergic reaction you will need to sign a medication release form. **Emergency procedure for severe allergic reaction will be: Epi-Pen, 911 and then a call to the child’s parents.** We will not call parents to administer the Epi-Pen or for their consultation on whether to call 911 or not. Emergency personnel will make the judgment on whether or not to transport the child to the hospital after they assess the child’s condition.

Arrival & Departure

Prompt arrival and departure of children makes for a good feeling for all concerned. If you will be late in picking up your child, please contact the school office or your teacher as soon as possible. Your child can only be released to authorized persons listed on the Child Information Sheet. Please do not drop your child off sooner than designated class times as this is part of our staff’s prep time.

Half-Day Classes

Class begins promptly at 8:15 am. Doors open at 8:10 am. Dismissal is at 11:30 and your child should be picked up at this time.

No child will be allowed to arrive or depart unattended. Each student will be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the classroom door. It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the preschool if your child will not be attending class that day.

Before school care is available beginning at 7:30 at the Zion site. Before school care is free of charge. ABC Care (**All ‘Bout Christ**) after school care is available for students at the Zion site. The cost for ABC Care is \$3.50 per hour and is billed in 15-minute increments and is available until 5:30 PM.

Dress Code

Comfortable and simple play clothes are recommended – ones that can easily be pulled up and down for “quick-trips” to the bathroom, and ones that can easily be washed since, no matter how careful we try to be, paints, markers and snacks sometimes get on them. Well-fitting running shoes are needed for jumping, walking, skipping and running. Please, no open toed shoes, heeled boots or clogs – these can be very dangerous in active play.

Appropriate clothing for the day’s weather is a **must**. Make sure your child has mittens or gloves, hats, boots, snow pants, etc. when needed. We cannot keep one child in the classroom because of inadequate clothing while the others go outside for recess and we will not keep all students indoors because of one child. All children must be with the teacher.

Please do not allow your child to attend class wearing play or real make-up or to bring it to class. Even though this is a preschool we consider it an age appropriate classroom setting.

Personal Belongings & Toys from Home

- Each child is assigned a personal coat cubby.
- They are also asked to bring a personal backpack, folder, and water bottle each day they are in class. With daily use and instruction by the staff, students become accustomed being responsible for their belongings.
- We request that you leave toys at home, with the exception of 'Show & Share' and other special days in which requests may be made by the teacher allowing specific items to come to school for the day.

Absences due to Illness

Please use good judgment and keep your child at home if he/she shows signs of the following:

- A. Eyes, ears or throat inflamed or have discharge
- B. Signs of fresh cold, such as running nose or temperature
- C. Skin rash or eruption
- D. General appearance of listlessness, irritability, flushed or pale

Please use the "24 Hour" rule when judging your child's health in coming to school. If your child has vomited, had a temperature, or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours, please keep him/her at home. This means if your child has not been able to eat solid foods, if he/she has had more than two loose stools or if his/hers temperature has been over 100 degrees in the last 24 hours. **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL.** Must be symptom free without the use of medications.

Other reasons for exclusion from class are:

- *Pink Eye* with white or yellow discharge until 24 hrs. after treatment. This includes the quick drops at the doctor's office. You must wait 24 hrs. after that treatment as well.
- *Scabies* until treatment has been completed.
- *Lice/Nits* until checked and cleared by the County Nurse.
- *Strep throat* until 24 hrs. after treatment and no fever.
- *Chickenpox* until 6 days of rash or all lesions crusted.
- *Impetigo* until 24 hrs. after treatment.
- *Cold Sore/fever blisters* until sores are scabbed in a child who cannot control drooling.
- *Rash* with fever or behavior changes.
- *Ringworm* 48 hours after the first treatment.

All teachers at Martin Luther Preschool are given permission to assess your child's health. If it is the teacher's opinion that your child is not well enough to continue to participate in the day's activities, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. If you need to give your child Tylenol or cough syrup before school, please reassess your child's health. Keeping them home while sick helps germs from being spread throughout our remaining students and subsequently, their families.

Since this may be your child's first exposure to a school setting, you may feel they are "picking up" every little bug that is going around. This is an important reason to keep an

already ill child home. This lessens the exposure and/or re-exposure of the illness to the other children. Rest assured, we have good health habits at Martin Luther Preschool and are learning to wash hands, cover sneezes, etc. but often this is a time for building up our immunities for the following school years.

Zion location students, please contact the school office (224-9070) should your child be sick and unable to attend. SOTV location students, please contact the classroom (258-1095) should your child be sick and unable to attend.

Discipline and Guidance

Teachers at Martin Luther Preschool will use a Christian approach in disciplining and guiding your child in learning age appropriate behavior. Each classroom has a quiet area where a child can go to calm their bodies and minds down when the teacher feels that child needs to regroup. Children are better able to understand and accept instruction/correction about their behavior if they themselves are calm. This time also helps the students learn the independence/responsibility of their bodies and actions while giving them space/time to regain that control themselves.

Teachers will redirect children throughout the class time from an activity that is causing frustration and unacceptable behavior, all the while modeling desired Christian behavior. Martin Luther Preschool staff understands that while students are learning about the world around them, they can have their own behavior challenges which are a normal part of development in a child's life. The modeling of desired behavior, understanding/accepting instruction/correction is always based on each child's stage of development for the best outcome.

Conferences between parent/teacher, concerning a child's behavior does not mean immediate termination of services by Martin Luther Preschool. Many times these conferences are a time when parent/teacher can talk in an undisturbed setting about what is working/not working in the classroom and at home. In working as a team, solutions can be found and results will be more effective. Termination of services by Martin Luther Preschool may occur only when it is clear that a child needs more direct behavioral instructions by a professional trained specifically in that area.

Immunizations

All immunizations **must** be up to date and complete. We feel this is the most responsible way to protect our children. If your child cannot be immunized for medical or philosophical reasons, we must have written confirmation from a doctor for our files. We cannot take a personal note from parents/guardians.

Allergies and Asthma*

If your child has an allergy and that allergy is severe enough for use of an Epi-Pen, an Epi-Pen prescribed for that child **MUST BE** in the classroom at all times. Parents are to instruct staff on the proper use of this medication and the child must also be prepared for this procedure. We encourage you to make arrangements with your doctor for an extra Epi-Pen for the classroom. For safety reasons, if an Epi-Pen will be transported in a child's backpack to and from the classroom, please determine with your teacher the safest and best place for the Epi-pen to be stored in the back pack. We want epi pens to be accessible quickly, but also safely out of sight from other students. At the end of the

school year any unused Epi-Pens will be returned to the parents/guardians. **Emergency procedure for severe allergic reaction will be: Epi-Pen, 911 and then a call to the child's parents.** We will not call parents to administer the Epi-Pen or for their consultation on whether to call 911 or not. Emergency personnel will make the judgment on whether or not to transport the child to the hospital after they assess the child's condition.

If your child has asthma and that condition is severe enough for an inhaler-type medication, an inhaler prescribed for that child **MUST BE** in the classroom at all times. Parents are to instruct staff on the proper use of this medication and the child must also be prepared for this procedure. We encourage you to make arrangements with your doctor for an extra inhaler for the classroom. For safety reasons, if an inhaler will be transported in a child's backpack to and from the classroom, please determine with your teacher the safest and best place for the inhaler to be stored in the back pack. At the end of the school year any unused inhalers will be returned to the parents/guardians. Asthma attack procedures will be: see that the child has used the inhaler and immediately call the parents. Parents will need to physically come and assess the child's health before the child can rejoin the classroom. **If the teacher feels the attack is an emergency, she will: see that the child has used the inhaler, call 911, call parents.**

Medication Policy

Martin Luther Preschool will not administer any medication to the enrolled students with the exception of Epi-pens or inhalers. Having medication other than emergency medication in the facility is a safety hazard.

When necessary for full day preschool students, prescription medications can be administered in the office and must be brought to the office in the original container.

Accident and Incident Reports

All incidents, big or small, will be reported to the parents either immediately or upon pick-up. In some instances, an accident report may need to be filled out which will be reviewed by the parents and signed and returned to the teacher to be kept in student's personal information folder.

All teaching staff at Martin Luther School hold and maintain all First Aid and CPR certifications.

Additionally, any significant behavioral incidents will be reported to the parents upon pick-up. A written report may need to be completed after class by the staff and placed in the child's personal information folder. If parents and/or teacher would like any conferences to discuss these incidents, arrangements can be made with staff.

Dental Emergencies

Dental injuries will be given first aid as required by Martin Luther Preschool staff. Parents will be notified immediately.

Suspected Child Abuse

All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective service agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred. Staff members will follow the direction of the child protective agency regarding completion of written reports and notification of the parents or legal guardian.

Martin Luther Preschool is licensed by the state of North Dakota and is required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. (North Dakota Century code, chapter 50-25).

Child Release/Custody

All Martin Luther Preschool students MUST be accompanied to the classroom and depart from the classroom with their parent or authorized person. NO STUDENT SHOULD COME/GO BY THEMSELVES. Martin Luther Preschool staff will only release children into the custody of the authorized persons stated on the Child Information Sheet. You must inform the teacher if someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child. If an unauthorized person is trying to seek custody of the child, teachers will contact the parents before relinquishing the child.

If Martin Luther Preschool staff feel that the person or persons, authorized or unauthorized, is under the *apparent* influence of drugs or alcohol, they will not release the child into that person's custody. *This is for the safety of the child.* The staff will call another authorized person from the Child Information Card and have them come to the facility to help sort out the situation. If no one else can be contacted by the teacher regarding the release/custody of a child, the police will be contacted to resolve the situation.

If certain legal custody restrictions have been made due to divorce, marital separation, etc., Martin Luther Preschool must have a copy of those guidelines for the child's personal information folder. Staff cannot enforce something if they are not aware of the issue. Here again, *the safety of the child* is the most important concern.

Evacuation Plans, Drills and Closings

Martin Luther Preschools comply with regulations by having a set Evacuation Plan posted in each of their facilities. If for some reason either facility needs to be evacuated due to a problem within the building, each facility has a nearby location within a short distance where they are assigned to seek shelter. Our Zion location will relocate to Will-Moore Elementary School. Our Shepherd of the Valley location will relocate to Wachter Middle School. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone of the relocation of the students AFTER the relocation is complete and will be expected to pick up their child immediately. Contacting parents/guardians after relocation will be done to insure the safety of the students first. If that facility needs to remain closed for repairs, parents/guardians will be notified of this and for what length of time. If the program has an alternative site to continue without interruption it will do so, notifying parents/guardians of all changes as they occur.

Through periodic fire and storm drills students become familiar with these plans and procedures. If reentry of the building is not possible after an evacuation, parents/guardians will be called for immediate pick-up. Authorized persons may pick-up

their child anytime during a storm if they feel the need to. School closings due to storms will be announced by radio along with Martin Luther School closings prior to opening hour. If the preschool facility must close during operating hours because of storms, Martin Luther Preschool staff will notify authorized persons by telephone for immediate pick-up.

Referral to outside resources

If at any time during your child's time at Martin Luther Preschool a referral to an outside resource, such as hearing or speech therapy is warranted, Martin Luther Preschool staff will work with the family to get whatever help is needed for the child.

Aquatic Activities

We do not provide aquatic activities.

Curriculum

Your child will participate in a variety of experiences through *Classical Education* to include:

- **Religious experiences** - Daily prayer, Bible stories, memory verses, songs and an overall Christian atmosphere in all that we do.
- **Social experiences** – Oral expression, developing self-esteem and an awareness of the needs of others through a variety of interactions, and learning self-regulation skills in managing emotions
- **Academic readiness experiences** – Working with pre-math and pre-reading skills according to the needs and interests of the child.
- **Indoor play experiences** – Blocks, puzzles, pegboards, Lego's, lacing cards, manipulative, thematic toys and other table toys.
- **Outdoor play experiences** – Climbing, jumping, swinging, running and others
- **Creative experiences** – Using music with singing and actions, rhythm instruments, dancing and art.
- **Language/Literacy experiences** – Rich environment in books and stories, as well as real life experiences, Buddy Reading Partners, guest readers, live story-telling, and a variety of experiences that allow students to read their environment through print and picture cues.
- **Science experiences** – Helping care for plants, using magnifying glasses and balance scales, cooking, experimenting, and learning about the wonderful world God created.
- **Dramatic play experiences** – Using role play in familiar and imaginative experiences to encourage language development, social-behavioral adjustment, positive interpersonal interactions, and nurturing self-esteem.
- **Field trips and guest** – Trips to various points of interest and visits from resource persons such as the policeman or the dental hygienist.