



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

EARLY LEARNING

Parent Handbook

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for joining our Early Learning family! This book contains a lot of very important information that you will want to refer to throughout the year, so be sure to keep it in a safe place. The handbook covers payment procedures, field trips, safety measures, health tips, opportunities for you to be involved in your child's school experience, and much more!

If you have any questions or concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact Tonya Schlabach, our Early Learning Director. We are here to serve you!

Mandy Young, TLC Board President

Mission Statement

TLC Early Learning is a Reggio-inspired early learning program where we teach and prepare children through a Christ-centered curriculum that focuses on learning through play, observation, exploration, and investigation. We encourage children to be independent and take a vital role in making choices about their learning. Here at TLC, the natural environment promotes learning and gives the children real-life and hands-on experiences.

TLC Early Learning is a Registered Ministry with the State of Indiana and a **Level 3 Paths to Quality**. Our involvement means we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and professional environment where children can grow and learn. We know that quality child care leads to brighter futures for all children, and we are honored to be entrusted with such an important responsibility.

Schedules/Calendar/Delays/Cancellations

Caterpillar Class	2/3-year-olds	Friday	8:30 to 11:30 am
Butterflies Class	3/4-year-olds	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday	8:30 to 11:30 am
Pre-K Class	4/5-year-olds	Monday- Thursday	8:30 to 11:30 am
Pre-K Class	4/5-year-olds	Monday - Friday	8:30 to 11:30 am

Please note: Ages are as of August 1, 2022. Class sizes are limited based on age group. Once enrollment has reached its maximum per classroom, we will stop accepting registrations and will place requests for enrollment on a waiting list.

School Calendar

A calendar for the current school year will be provided. TLC follows DeKalb Central Schools for holidays and breaks and **weather-related delays and cancellations**.

School Delays and Cancellations

TLC follows DeKalb Central Schools for school delays and cancellations due to weather. In the event of a 2-hour delay announced by DeKalb Central Schools, TLC Early Learning will begin at 10:00 am and will dismiss at 11:30 am. Doors will open at 9:45 am. If DeKalb Central Schools are canceled, TLC Early Learning classes will also be canceled. Delays will be communicated through HiMama App.

Attendance

We ask that if your child will be absent from school, that you contact the school via e-mail or phone (925-6544). If you choose to be gone for an extended period (Example: Vacation), you are still responsible for tuition for that time. Parents may mark children absent in the HiMama App.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Arrival

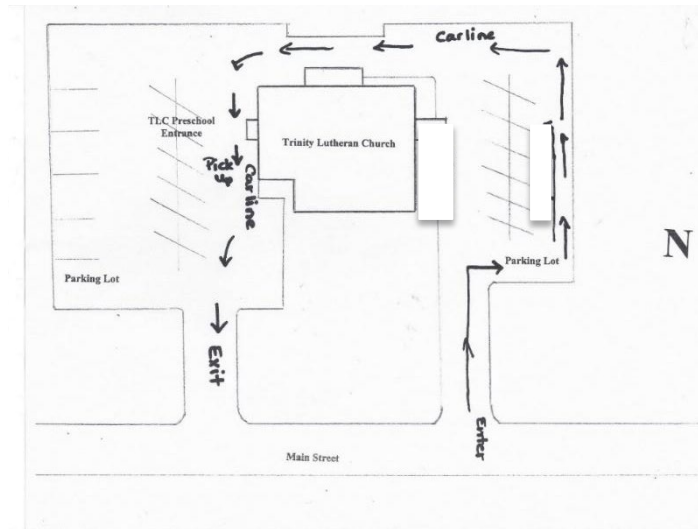
Children should not arrive any sooner than **ten minutes** (8:20 am) before class time. Classroom doors will not open until 8:20 am each day. Children are not to be left until a staff member is present. All children will be dropped off at the curb by the school doors. You will pull around the building (see map below). Then the student will be greeted by a staff member, taken inside to hang up items and wash hands before class. Please stay in the line until it moves forward.

Please call the office if your child is absent so that we know the cause of his/her absence. You can also report an absence on the HiMama App.

Dismissal/Pick-up Carline

Class dismisses at 11:30 am. Students will put on coats and then be taken to the appropriate doors for carline dismissal. It is the same procedure as morning drop-off. Have the child's name card visible in the front window.

Car-line Directions: Turn into the north entrance parking lot and circle the back of the church to the south parking lot. Children will be exiting at the south church entrance. Please pull forward to the end of the sidewalk. Form a car line and when you reach the south entrance door, we will escort your child(ren) to and from the car. We will release 4-5 students at a time. You will be given a laminated sign with your child's name on the first day of school. Hold up the name card we have provided when you reach the door and your child will be sent out to your vehicle. If more cards are needed, please notify your child's teacher. Please assist your child in entering, buckling up, and closing the door. If you feel that this may take some time, you may pull into a parking spot after your child is in the car with you. Wait until the line moves to pull forward. Please drive slowly in the parking lot. If you need to communicate with your child's teacher, notes, phone calls or a message on HiMama are best.



A \$5 fee will be charged if the child is not picked up within 15 minutes after dismissal time. In case of extenuating circumstances, the family should contact the Director. If a change in transportation is necessary, the person picking up your child(ren) must be on the pre-approved list on file in the office. It is the responsibility of the school to make sure that no child is picked up without a staff member's knowledge and that no child is released to any unauthorized person. The school cannot be responsible for false or incorrect information given at the time of registration.

Locked Doors

We lock our doors 15 minutes after class begins. The doors will always remain locked during school hours to control access to the school and ensure the safety of students. If you need to enter the church, please ring the bell at the south entrance so that staff can let you in.

Enrollment

Eligibility

Registration is open to all children ages two (Birthdate July 31, 2020, or after) through the year before entering kindergarten.

Tuition and Fees

A non-refundable registration fee will be charged for each child at the time of registration. The registration fee must be paid for the spot to be secured for your student. Tuition will be set for the full school term (September through May) and may be paid monthly or one payment for the entire year. No refunds will be given in the event of weather-related delays or cancellations, family vacations, illness, or withdrawal.

Tuition is the same rate for each month, based on the school schedule. Payment schedules for the tuition and fees for the current year can be obtained from the Early Learning Director. For more information regarding payment procedures, see the section labeled "Payment Procedures".

Required paperwork

Parents are responsible for providing TLC Early Learning with an accurate record of the child(ren)'s health including vaccinations, allergies, diet restrictions, medications, illnesses, and disabilities. Upon enrollment, a current physical (first-year students only) and a current record of vaccinations will need to be completed. TLC is not responsible for any incorrect information it may receive concerning a child's health.

Pick-up Policy/Authorized person to pick-up

Upon enrollment, the parent(s) is to provide TLC with a list of persons who are allowed to pick up their child(ren). Children will only be permitted to leave with pre-approved persons. If you need to make arrangements for a different person to pick up your child(ren), you must communicate this in writing to the school in advance.

Restricted Information

If you need to restrict the distribution of information about your child to another family member for any reason, you must communicate this to the school in writing indicating the names of the persons that are not to receive information about your child(ren).

Early Withdrawal

Parents are asked to give a month's notice before the withdrawal of their child(ren) from the school.

Anti-Discrimination Statement

TLC does not discriminate based on race, color, age, national origin, sex, marital status, or disability.

Book Bags/Folders

All students will be provided with a TLC tote bag as part of their registration fee. Each child should bring his/her tote bag to school every day. A folder will be provided at the start of the school year and needs to remain in your child's tote bag. The teacher will place all important papers in this folder for your review. Please check the tote bag each day. If you need a duplicate copy of all information sent home, please inform your child's teacher. We are asking that you only use the provided tote bag and wash it as needed.

Notes to the teacher must be placed in the folder or handed directly to the teacher. The folders will be checked each day and notes not placed in the folder could be overlooked. You can also leave a note on the HiMama App or send an e-mail to the teacher.

Inclusion Policy

TLC Early Learning will work with parents to make adaptations to the activities and environment to assist children with special needs. If children need special services, open communication will be maintained with parents and service providers, including school programs. If desired, service providers are welcome to come to serve your child.

Communication/ HiMama

E-mails

TLC Early Learning/Director preschool@trinitylutheran-auburn.org

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/TLCEarlyLearning>



HiMama QR code



HiMama

We use a software program called HiMama. HiMama will help staff with attendance, health reporting, lesson planning, activity reporting to families, communication to families, billing, and more. You will receive an e-mail to those provided on the enrollment form. Please register so you can receive notifications. We recommend downloading the HiMama App to your device. You will receive reports from the teacher through HiMama. This report may include health, mood, activities from the day, notes, reminders, and more. You can communicate with the teachers and director using the program. You can find out more at www.himama.com



Website

Our website is www.tlcearlylearning-auburn.com. Check out the Resource tab. There are reminders about important policies and you can access the handbook too.

Payment Procedures/Fees

Tuition Payments

- Tuition payments are due on the **5th of each month** or one payment may be made for the entire year.
- Payments may be made by check or money order to **TLC Early Learning** or use the HiMama App.
- **If using the online payment there will be a \$0.60 convenience fee for each category. You can only pay using ACH withdrawal.**
- Enclose your payment in a sealed envelope marked with the student's name and class. Place the payment in the student's folder or payments can be mailed to:

**Trinity Lutheran Church
ATTN: TLC Early Learning
1801 N. Main Street
Auburn, IN 46706**

- Current Fees Check or Cash HiMama
 - 1-day class \$50 monthly \$50.60 monthly
 - 3-day class \$150 monthly \$150.60 monthly
 - 4-day class \$180 monthly \$180.60 monthly
 - 5-day class \$205 monthly \$205.60 monthly
- Sibling Discount - \$10 off monthly tuition for the second child enrolled at TLC during the current year.

Late Payments

TLC Early Learning expects that all payments be made on time. **If scheduling recurring online payments, set them for the 1st of the month so that payment will be in by the 5th.** In the case that under extenuating circumstances, a family is unable to make timely payments, they are responsible for contacting the Early Learning Director to arrange an alternative payment plan. If the family does not communicate their circumstances to the Director, and no alternative payment plan is made, the following procedures will take place:

1. Following the first missed payment, a communication will be sent home to the parents requesting that the payment be made in full within the next five business days.
2. If payment has not been received within 5 business days from the date of the first communication, a late fee of \$10.00 will be applied to the delinquent account. A second letter or phone call will be made to the parents informing them that their account is overdue and that payment in full, including late fees, will be expected within the next five business days.
3. If payment has still not been received within fifteen business days, the child(ren) will be removed from the school roster and will no longer be allowed to attend classes until payment of the delinquent account, including all late fees, is paid in full.

Returned Checks

A check returned with non-sufficient funds (NSF) will be considered a late payment. Parents who submit NSF checks will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 and are responsible for reimbursing the church for any NSF bank charges. If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, it must be replaced by a money order. If a second NSF check is received within the same school year, the charges stated above will apply and all future payments must be made with a money order for the remainder of the year.

Scholarship

Scholarship applications are available from the Director. Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. A limited number of scholarship dollars are available.

Safety Measures

Clothing

Children learn through their play (sometimes messy) and by exploring the world around them. Please have your child dressed in clothing that is made for the exploration of materials such as paints, sand, dirt, etc. All the materials we use are non-toxic and washable, but we cannot guarantee that children will not get messy. Have children ready for active play with play clothing and shoes that are conducive for running, tumbling, and climbing. **Children should be dressed for outdoor activities.**

For your child's safety, we ask that wear closed-toed closed-backed shoes (no flip-flops).

Children will be spending LOTS of time outside. We ask that you send a spare change of clothes. Rainboots or "play shoes" are recommended. If it is light rain, they may still go outside.

Winter Play

During the winter months, we will go outside if the wind chill is above 20^oF. Send water-proof gloves, hats, boots, and snow pants in a separate water-proof bag. Please label items. Remember to take items out daily to dry.

Objects from Home

It is recommended that students do not bring items to school from home. If they do, they may be asked to keep it in their bag for the school day.

Any object which a child brings to school that a teacher deems dangerous or otherwise inappropriate (toy guns, sharp or breakable items, knives, matches, unauthorized medications/drugs, etc.) will be held by the teacher and returned to parents at the time of pick up.

Emergency Contact information

We must have emergency telephone numbers for parents while children are in our care. Whenever parents are not at work, they must notify us of an emergency number where you can be reached and at least one alternate emergency contact number other than a parent or legal guardian.

Child Protection Policy

TLC Early Learning and Trinity Lutheran Church have adopted a child-protection policy to help ensure the safety of your children. As part of this child protection policy, all teachers and assistants have passed a criminal background check.

Child/ Staff Classroom Ratios

Age of Youngest Child in Group	Max number of children supervised by one caregiver	Max number of children in one group
2 years	5	10
30-36 months	7	14
3 years	10	20
4 years	12	24
5 years	15	30

Fire

Monthly fire drills will be conducted. Children will be evacuated out the nearest exit. In the event of an actual fire or emergency, parents will be contacted immediately and will pick their children up. Students and staff will make their way to the parsonage located on the north side of the church.

Lockdown/Shelter in place

In the event there is a threat within the community by a person or persons to commit harm, TLC Early Learning will go into lockdown. The TLC Early Learning entrance doors will be locked along with classrooms and all interior access points of entrance to the church building. Children will only be released to parents or authorized adults when it is safe to leave the building.

Tornado/Severe Weather

In the event of a tornado warning during school hours, all children will be evacuated from the classroom and proceed to the women's restroom, school office/library, and/or school restroom. All doors will remain closed until staff members receive the "all clear" from the Director that weather conditions have improved, and children may return to the classroom.

All children must immediately return indoors when lightning is observed.

Power Failure

The school has enough light and should not be impacted in the event of a power outage. Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes. If the building is deemed too cold for the children to remain at school, parents will be contacted to arrange early pick up.

Safety Policy

TLC Early Learning has established the following precautions to help ensure your child's safety:

- No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised. Children will always be within sight and sound
- Monthly Fire drills are performed
- During times of emergency, all staff will remain in the facility until the danger has passed
- Staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions (UP)
- Only persons who are named as authorized will be able to pick up children
- The Director is responsible for maintaining all interior and exterior surfaces, including walls, floors, ceilings, equipment, toys, furnishings, in a safe condition, free of sharp points or jagged edges, splinters, protruding nails, or wires, loose or rusty parts or materials containing poisonous substances

Indoor Safety Policy

Children's curious nature and their inability to determine potential risks require that their environment be safe. Coupled with good supervision, this allows children to explore more freely and test their abilities. A safe environment reduces the risk of injury to children and staff.

- Staff will regularly do safety checks in the rooms.
- The Director will be notified of any hazards that the staff person is unable to resolve.
- The Director will immediately address the hazards and act upon a resolution based on the importance of the issue so that the correction can be made as quickly as possible. The Director will ensure that the hazards are removed, made inaccessible, or repaired immediately to prevent injury.
- Staff will assist children with cleanup of all activities before moving on to another to prevent injury.
- Equipment, materials, and furnishings will be sturdy, safe, and in good repair.
- All broken, damaged items will be removed to prevent injury.
- All toys that are mouthed during play will be thoroughly washed and disinfected before another child plays with the toy.
- Art materials will be non-toxic for general use.
- Electric fans, if used, will be inaccessible to children.
- The water heater temperature will not exceed 120 degrees F to prevent scalding unless a scald prevention device is installed to regulate the temperature at the handwashing sink.
- Electrical outlets will be inaccessible by the use of safety covers. Electric cords will be placed out of children's reach.
- Water play will be supervised and emptied after use.
- Exits will not be blocked to allow quick emergency evacuation.
- A well-stocked first-aid kit will be in each classroom for emergency use.
- All injuries will be documented on an Accident/Injury Report form and handled according to the injury policy.

Outdoor Safety Policy

Outdoor play is an important part of a child's physical development and provides learning opportunities different from the indoor environment. Adequate supervisor in a safe environment allows children to explore more freely. Play in a safe outdoor environment promotes good health and reduces the risk of physical injury to children and staff.

Procedures and practices, including responsible person(s):

- The playground will be checked regularly. This includes checking for standing water, debris, glass, beehives/wasp nests, tripping hazards, other injurious material, or damage to any equipment. Loose surface fill will be evenly distributed and removed from sidewalks/pathways.
- Staff will be responsible to ensure that sidewalks and entrances are free of standing water, ice, and snow.
- The Director will be notified of any hazards and act upon a resolution based on the importance of the issue so that the correction can be made as quickly as possible. The Director will ensure that the hazards are removed, made inaccessible, or repaired immediately to prevent injury.
- Basic rules that all children and staff are aware of will be enforced to ensure safety on the playground.
- The playground equipment will be developmentally appropriate, in good repair, anchored, and installed according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- The impact-absorbing ground surface will be installed below play equipment at the appropriate depth for the height of fall according to the type of surface fill the Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines.
- Sandboxes will be covered when not in use.
- Helmets will be used for all riding toys with a wheelbase of more than 20". Helmets will meet CPSC or American Safety for Testing Materials guidelines.
- Riding toys will be capable of being steered, sized appropriately for the child, have a low center of gravity, and be in good condition and free of sharp edges and protrusions.
- Shaded areas are provided to provide to protect against overexposure to heat and sun.
- Parents need to bring their children dressed appropriately for outdoor play every day. Outdoor time may not occur or be shortened due to weather conditions. This includes a wind chill at or below 20 degrees F and a heat index at or above 90 degrees F as identified by the National Weather Service. The Director will be responsible to determine if any limitations on outdoor play need to be considered.
- A first aid kit will be taken out for use on the playground. Special medication will be ready to access for children with asthma, bee allergies, or other conditions that may require immediate treatment.
- The Director will inspect the playground regularly.
- All injuries occurring during outdoor play will be documented on an Accident/Incident report.

Health Policies

Health History

All children are required to have a physical for enrollment. This must be completed and signed by a physician and on file within 30 days of school starting. Yearly vaccinations need to be submitted for the student's file. Each child is required to have a current and accurate Enrollment form on file with the school detailing their personal health information including allergies, diet restrictions, medications, illnesses, and disabilities. TLC Early Learning is not responsible for any incorrect information it may receive concerning a child's health.

Medications

If your child must receive prescription medication while at school, the parent must drop the medication off with the teacher in its original container. Original containers should be placed in Ziploc bags. A "Medication Authorization Form" is required to be completed for all medication administered during school hours. All medication must have a doctor's note to be administered at the school. No over-the-counter medication brought from home will be administered without a doctor's note.

By signing the Parent Handbook acknowledgment, you are permitting TLC to use sunscreen, insect repellent, A & D ointment, or petroleum jelly as needed. You may also send these items from the home to be applied as needed.

Child/Staff Illness

Our priority at TLC is to provide a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. Children or staff members will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom, or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100.4 or greater, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication.
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing.
- Nasal discharge other than clear.
- Diarrhea.
- Vomiting.
- Blood in stools.
- Persistent abdominal pain.
- Mouth sores, unless a health care professional determines the sores are not contagious.
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until the treatment has been initiated for 24 hours.
- Head lice from the end of the day until after treatment.
- Hand foot and mouth until sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).
- Strep throat until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- COVID symptoms:
 - Has a fever of 100.4 degrees or above
 - Begins to exhibit shallow breathing and/or shortness of breath
 - Persistent cough
 - Chills or Muscle pain
 - Sore Throat
 - New Loss of taste and/or smell

A child who becomes ill at TLC must be removed from the classroom to limit exposure of other children to communicable diseases. An ill child will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director until the child is picked up. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized persons on the Authorization and Consent Form will be called.

TLC reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness.

Parents are required to call TLC when their child will not be in attendance due to illness or for any other reason (i.e. doctor appointments, dentist, etc.)

If your child has asthma or any other underlying health plan please seek a “health action plan” from your child’s doctor that we can implement at school if needed.

If your child’s regular teacher is unavailable or becomes ill during the day, a qualified substitute will be available.

Snack Time

Snacks are provided for the whole school by one student each day. The number of snacks needed will be located on the snack calendar. The calendar will be sent home monthly and can be accessed on the HiMama App. The school furnishes water as a drink. Simple birthday and holiday treats may be sent to the child's classroom. All families will be required to sign a Safe Food Transportation policy. Food cannot be homemade. All fruit and vegetables MUST be pre-washed and pre-cut/ready to serve. You may send 2 healthy snack choices. They must be from 2 different food groups. When you are assigned a snack, 1 week prior you will need to e-mail the school to notify us what you will be bringing.

We practice family-style dining. The children are encouraged to serve themselves. Staff is expected to engage the children in conversation. Children are encouraged to try foods but never forced to eat foods they don't like. All food must be disposed of after snack time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DELICIOUS NUTRITIOUS SNACKS

animal crackers	crackers	pretzels
apples	fruit slices	pudding
applesauce	grapes	raisins
bananas	vegetables and dip	yogurt
cheese	mini muffins	trail mix
granola bars	graham crackers	

Special Diets

Children requiring special diets (i.e., allergies, food sensitives, supplements, or other changes outside of state guidelines) must have an allergy/intolerance on file.

Discipline Procedure

TLC seeks to foster a caring environment in the classroom that is conducive to the education of all children present. A child's development must be nurtured through caring, patience, and understanding. However, while caring for your children, we may have to respond to your child's misbehavior. Hitting, kicking, spitting, hostile verbal behavior, and other behaviors which will hurt another child are not permitted.

In response to misbehavior, we will:

- Respect your child
- Establish clear rules and be consistent in enforcing rules
- Remove the child from the situation and talk to him or her about the behavior
- Use positive language to explain desired behavior
- Speak calmly while bending down to your child's eye level
- Give clear choices
- Redirect your child to a new activity
- If the behavior continues, the child can sit with the Director until they calm down
- If the child cannot calm down after a reasonable amount of time, the parents will be called

In response to these behaviors, we will not use:

- Threats or bribes
- Physical punishment, even if requested by the parent
- Deprive your child of food or other basic needs
- Humiliation or isolation

Recurring disciplinary problems will be addressed with parents and documented in the child's record. In extreme cases, a child who is habitually disruptive to the class and whose behavior has not improved satisfactorily may be suspended or expelled from the school for the remainder of the school year. Resources may be provided to the family when dealing with a suspension or expulsion from school.

Curriculum/ Learning Goals

Curriculum

TLC curriculum is a Reggio-inspired, emergent, play-based program that incorporates the standards established by the Indiana Early Childhood Foundations.

Throughout the program year, all children will gradually learn to maintain an increased attention span; develop self-regulation and independence; and develop age-appropriate fine and gross motor skills. Children will be introduced to safety rules, good health and nutrition habits, and healthy interpersonal skills. They will learn about sharing, listening, and the love of God. In addition, each age group will have specific learning goals which align with the Early Childhood Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards:

Caterpillars Class:

Student birthdays are Aug 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020. Classes meet Friday from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Tuition is \$50 per month. This class provides students with the opportunity to become familiar with a school and classroom environment while learning how to cope with the anxiety of being separated from familiar surroundings.

Caterpillar Learning Goals

- Socialization skills
- Active listening/following directions
- Beginning math and language arts development
- Songs & movement
- Potty-training
- Independence
- Creative expression through the arts
- Interaction with nature and science

Butterflies Class:

Student birthdays are Aug 1, 2018- July 31, 2019. Classes meet Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Tuition is \$150 a month. Students are to be mostly potty trained.

Scouts Learning Goals

- Develop self-regulation and independence
- Socialization skills
- Active listening/following directions
- Beginning literacy
- Early Language, pre-reading & pre-writing skills
- Beginning math skills
- Interaction with science and nature
- Creative expression through art, music, and dramatic play

Pre-K Class

Student birthdays are Aug 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018. Students in the Pre-K class plan to attend kindergarten in the fall of the next school year. Students will be working on skills in preparation for entering

Kindergarten. Classes meet Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:30 – 11:30 am. Tuition is \$180 a month. A 5th-day option is available for Fridays for an additional \$25 a month. This day will continue to focus on kindergarten readiness and have additional fine arts enrichment activities.

Pre-K Learning goals

- Personal and social development
- Self-regulation and independence
- Active listening/following directions
- Early reading skills
- Early writing skills
- Age-appropriate math skills and number sense concepts
- Interaction with science and nature
- Creative expression through art, music, and dramatic play

Reggio Emilia

The Reggio Emilia Approach originated in the town of Reggio Emilia in Italy out of a movement towards progressive and cooperative early childhood education. Outside of the town of Reggio Emilia, *all schools and preschools are Reggio-inspired*, using an adaptation of the approach specific to the needs of their community. The Reggio Emilia Approach values the child as strong, capable, and resilient, rich with wonder and knowledge, and is guided by the following fundamental principles:

- *Children are capable of constructing their learning.*
- *Children form an understanding of themselves and their place in the world through their interactions with others.*
- *Children are communicators.*
- *The environment is the third teacher.*
- *We observe the children, listen to their questions and their stories, discover their interests, and provide them with opportunities to explore these interests further.*
- *Emphasis on documenting children's thoughts, works, and progress.*
- *Children have rights.*
- *Children are competent & rich in potential.*
- *Children have 100 languages.*

The Reggio Emilia Approach emphasizes hands-on discovery learning that allows the child to use all their senses and all their languages to learn.

Outdoor Learning Environment and Exploration

Time will be allotted daily (weather permitting) giving children opportunities to explore, discover and learn about the natural world while providing positive and meaningful play opportunities for children. Sometimes the natural world presents learning opportunities that will linger for long periods and other times the opportunities might be fleeting moments. Teachers become facilitators of children's learning about the natural environment by providing materials and embedding the required foundations and skills while engaging children during this outdoor exploration time. The indoor and outdoor exploration opportunities and materials should bridge these two learning environments. Classes will spend time on the church grounds and travel to the "Beyond" (Greenhurst Commons). Students should come dressed for daily time outside. We will be using a weed killer as needed when we spot poison ivy. Students will be taught to identify and report any poison ivy.

Library Books

During the school year, students in the Butterfly and Pre-K classes will be allowed to check out books weekly. When those books are returned the following week, they may check out other books. Children are not allowed to check out new books until the previous books have been returned. Butterflies may check out 1 book and Pre-K may check out 2 books.

Daily Routines include:

- Choice Time/Centers (Reading/Listening, Science/STEM, Writing, Math, Art, Sensory Play, Dramatic Play, Music, Small Motor/Manipulative)
- Community Meeting (large group)
- Outdoor Exploration
- Gross Motor
- Music and Movement
- Small group/ Individualized Instruction
- Fine Arts Enrichment
- Bible Time
- Snack
- Chapel – twice a month
- Music – weekly
- Library – weekly

Chapel

Chapel is led 2 times a month by Pastor Nack. Teachers will send home a “Bible Story Take-home sheet” after each chapel to review the story with their students. We will focus on a story and theme for 2 weeks. These will be listed in the monthly newsletters. We will also be sending home additional resources throughout the year. Each student will be provided a Bible during their first year at TLC.

Study Trips

TLC offers a variety of experiences both at and away from school. Study trips are a creative way to enrich a theme and expand the learning environment. Study trips are scheduled by the teacher and approved by the Director. All parents must sign a *Study Trip Permission Form* before the trip. In compliance with Paths to Quality, a guardian must attend and drive their student to and from the study trip. If the trip is local, DART arrangements can be made for the student. No student will be transported by TLC Early Learning staff at any time for Study trips. If arrangements cannot be made, the student will stay at school with another class or the Director. The teacher must account for all children before leaving and returning to school.

Teachers may decide and are encouraged to conduct short, unannounced study trips including but not limited to walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and trips to Greenhurst Commons. Appropriate teacher-child ratios must always be maintained. Parents provide permission at enrollment for this type of field trip and do not need to complete a separate form for the above-named instances.

Parent Involvement**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and spring at the TLC. Teachers or parents/guardians may request conferences as needed throughout the year.

Parent Helpers

Several times throughout the year, we will have special class events and may ask for parents/guardians to help. Volunteer forms will be handed out at the beginning of the year.

Parent volunteers are welcome to help with various activities throughout the school.

TLC Early Learning Parent Committee

We have an active parent committee that meets monthly to plan fundraisers and other activities throughout the year. Read the monthly newsletter for dates.

Parent Visitation

Parents are always encouraged to visit their child(ren)'s classroom. You will need to sign-in at the Director's office and receive a "visitor" badge. However, we recommend that parents refrain from visiting the classroom during the first few weeks of a new school year as the children need time to adjust to their classroom environment.

Filing Complaints

If at any point you have a complaint against TLC Early Learning or one of its employees, the following procedures should be observed:

1. Address your concern directly to that individual and try to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, please detail your complaint in writing and contact the Early Learning Director or a board member for a conference.
3. **Please do not post complaints on social media.** We ask that all complaints be handled professionally.

Trinity Lutheran Church & TLC Early Learning Relationship

The TLC Early Learning program is an outreach ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church in Auburn, Indiana. The church and school will work together to provide your children with a quality Christian early learning education. If you have not found a church home, Trinity invites you to join their church family. Service times are posted on our sign in front of the church and on the church website.

TLC Early Learning Board of Directors

The TLC Early Learning Board of Directors meets monthly to support the school and its mission. They guide the Early Learning Director who reports to the board. The board reviews the financials, curriculum, and policies and procedures.

2022-2023 Board Members

Connie Fullerton – President
Pastor Jon Nack

Anna Marr
Stacy Schmidt

TEACHER'S BEST ADVICE

1. *Be on time in bringing your child to school. A child feels uncomfortable and left out when entering a classroom late.*
2. *LET'S COMMUNICATE: Read all notes and emails carefully so you are fully informed of dates, study trips, and school happenings. We don't want you to miss out on anything.*
3. *It is very important that you check your child's tote bag after every class day for notes and projects.*

****All information about admission, health, family, or discharge of a child is kept confidential between the Parents or Legal Guardian and the staff of TLC Early Learning.**