

A Message to Parents:

Welcome to *St. David's Learning Place!*

We are grateful for the opportunity to nurture and care for the children of our community. We take the trust that families place in us very seriously. Therefore, we promise to faithfully do our best to teach, love and care for your child. Our goal, and reason for being, is that your child reaches his or her fullest potential as a child of God. Your child's safety, well being and sense of belonging are our top priorities.

Our hope is that your child will have a wonderful experience while enrolled here at *St. David's Learning Place*. Working together, cooperating, sharing, planning, and taking responsibilities with other children and adults are skills that contribute to a child's positive growth and development. Our program is designed to encourage these skills within a safe and pleasant environment. Our staff is dedicated to providing a supervised program that will encourage positive relationships, good citizenship, school readiness experiences, and spiritual growth. We hold that a child's work is their play and we want your child to have fun. As parents, your input and support are critical to the success of this ministry. We welcome the time and talents you can share with us.

This program is licensed through the Department of Human Services and operates in accordance to DHS policy and regulations, a copy of these regulations are maintained in the Director's office.

This handbook has been designed for you, the parent/guardian. It contains the *St. David's Learning Place* philosophies and policies in an easy-to-use format. Please keep it handy for reference regarding our operating schedule, contact numbers and policies and procedures. The director will provide updates as necessary.

INTRODUCTION

A Place for children...

Just as Jesus Christ welcomed the children into his presence and made a place for them, saying, “*Let the little children come to me and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heavens belongs*” (Matthew 19:14-15), St. David’s Evangelical Lutheran Church endeavors to make a place for children by offering this ministry for families in Davidsville and the surrounding community. *St. David’s Learning Place* welcomes all people, regardless of whether or not they are part of this or any congregation. If you already have a church home, we are grateful. If you do not have a church home and would like one, the members of St. David’s Lutheran Church invite you to participate in the life of the congregation.

Our Educational Philosophy

St. David’s Learning Place strives to provide an environment in which children:

- *Experience God’s love through nurturing relationships with staff, strong friendships with peers, and a positive self image
- *Experience a place of safety and belonging
- *Participate in planned, child appropriate school readiness activities
- *Discover and nurture their creative expression
- *Develop vocabulary and meaning through exploration of books, experiences and conversation
- *Cultivate a desire for knowledge and a love of learning
- *Utilize their innate curiosity in opportunities for discovery and problem solving
- *Follow directions, work, and play cooperatively
- *Make the transition from home to the school environment
- *Respond to structure and direction outside of the home

St. David’s Learning Place gears all activities to be **developmentally appropriate** and works to meet the learning style of each child. Teaching will be approached from a perspective that sees each child as one “created in the image of God.”

St. David’s Learning Place recognizes parents as the first and most significant educators of their children. We recognize that this is an ongoing role and strive to support parents in this very important responsibility.

Our Mission

The mission of *St. David's Learning Place* grows from the mission of St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church to families of the community. Our mission is to provide safe and healthful care of the children in an atmosphere designed to promote intellectual growth, creative thinking, active learning, physical skills, as well as social and spiritual development.

A Safe Haven for Children in the Community

St. David's Lutheran Church is a "Safe Haven Congregation," and as such, provides a safe haven for community children, is staffed by caring adults, and uses a curriculum of engaging activities aimed at nourishing children's minds, bodies and spirits.

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I. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

St. David's Learning Place

Director: Mrs. Bekah Adams

Learning Place Phone: (814) 479-7390

Learning Place e-mail: learningplace@stdavidslutheran.org

Service Days and Hours of Operation: 6:45 a.m. – 5:45 p.m. Monday through Friday

For holidays and preschool schedule see annual calendar

St. David's Lutheran Church

Pastor: Rev. Faron Johnson

Church Address: PO Box 427
401 N. Main St.
Davidsville, PA 15928

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Church Office Phone: (814) 479-4110

St. David's Web Address: <http://www.stdavidslutheran.org>

We are a Peanut **FREE** facility.

II. ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION AND ATTENDANCE

A pre-enrollment conference will be scheduled with parents/guardians with the Learning Place Director. This meeting will give you and your child an opportunity to get acquainted with *St. David's Learning Place* and will give us the opportunity to get to know you better. Registration will be done during this meeting. Completion of the following forms is necessary prior to your child's first day: **Service Agreement, Emergency Contact, Sunscreen Permission, Photography Permission, and Receipt of Parent Handbook**. You will be given a **Health Assessment** form which must be completed by your child's medical provider within 60 days of enrollment. Payment of the registration fee is required at the time of registration (for Fees see section IX).

We serve children ages 2 through 11. Families who are currently enrolled in the program will have first priority for enrollment. Members of St. David's Lutheran Church will have the chance to enroll before opening enrollment to the public. If a class is full, new applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Maximum enrollment is based on DHS regulations.

Programs Available:

FULL and PART TIME CHILDCARE

*****Students must be in attendance a minimum of 2 part time days to hold their spot during the school year.*****

Ages 2 thru 11

Year round

Monday through Friday

6:45am to 5:45 pm

Full day and half day care

Preschool age children enrolled in daycare during preschool hours are included in the preschool program

3-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL:

September through May.

Twice weekly, either M/W or T/Th

9:00 am to 12:00 noon

4-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL:

September through May.

Monday through Thursday

9:00 am to 12:00 noon

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Monday through Friday 6:45 am until school bus pickup, from CTASD school bus drop-off until 5:45 pm

All day (6:45 am-5:45 pm) on scheduled CTASD school vacation days

Care is provided for morning delays and early dismissals

Full time school age childcare is offered during the summer

SPECIAL EVENTS/FIELD TRIPS

We will periodically offer special events and field trips as part of our ministry with the children. Families enrolled in *St. David's Learning Place* are invited and welcome to participate in any of the ministries and activities of the congregation.

Parental permission is required for any *St. David's Learning Place* off-site events.

Attendance:

A calendar noting the days of operation for each program option will be provided prior to the start of the school year. Holidays, teacher in-service days, and other important dates will be included.

In the event of an emergency closing there will be an announcement on local TV (WJACTV) and radio (WFGI 95.5, WKYE 96.5). See appendix for more detailed emergency procedures. If we would have an emergency closing there will be a center wide One Call sent out, and a center wide email giving details about what is going on and how we will be handling the situation.

Willful Termination

If you no longer need childcare and/or preschool services at *St. David's Learning Place*, we require that you provide **three** weeks written notice of your child's last day in the program.

You are responsible to ensure that your fees are paid up to date of your child's last day of services. We may request to have an exit conference with you.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

If there would be a recurring behavior problem, the Director and St. David's Learning Place Board would follow our policy below.

It is our desire to provide a stimulating and worthwhile program for all children interested in participating in *St. David's Learning Place* (see appendix for civil rights statement on services). **There are times, however, when enrollment in the program may be terminated, persistent inappropriate or harmful behavior.**

In the event of a reoccurring behavioral concern, we will address it by taking the following steps to rectify the situation:

1. Teachers will have a conference with the Director to bring up the issue.
2. Teachers and the Director will document the behavior over a 30-day period.
 - a) What, if anything, triggers the behavior.
 - b) Positive behavior strategies will be implemented.
 - c) Professional Development trainings will be provided for the teachers to give the teachers more information on how to better handle the behavior.
 - d) Once the given time frame is finished, the teachers and Director will meet again to discuss the documentation.
3. The documentation will be presented to the parents in a meeting.
 - a) If there are referrals that the staff think need to be made, they will be brought up in this meeting.
 1. Including by not limited to:
 2. Early Intervention, IU8, Mental Health Services
4. Within a 10-day period, an initial call from the referral service must be made to the school to know an appointment has been made.
5. Teachers and Director will then meet with parents to discuss the Action Plan that has been set in place. If no referral contact has been made after the 10-day period, we will continue to the next step.
6. The documentation and notes from the meeting will be taken to the Governing Board.
7. A second meeting will be held with the parents, Director, Board members, and teachers to discuss what further actions need to be taken.

If the situation hasn't been resolved, the suspension and/or expulsion will be implemented. St. David's Learning Place will contact OCDEL (1-800-CONNECT) before notice is given.

Adult Conduct

Parent misconduct may also result in program termination. For Example:

- Persistent late pick-up of child at the end of the day
- failure to pay tuition/fees on schedule
- Persistent non-adherence to policies and procedures as outlined in the Parent Handbook.
- Persistent inappropriate or harmful adult behavior.

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

St. David's Learning Place Curriculum Philosophy:

1. The curriculum will be developmentally appropriate, relevant, active and engaging for children.
2. The curriculum will provide opportunities for learning and social interactions and encourage children's faith growth and provide learning and fellowship through positive relationships in a safe environment.
3. The curriculum will be accomplished through programming which encourages their success, and which includes music, creative art, stories, drama, games, recreation, guided homework time for school age children, chapel time, and a nutritional snack.
4. The curriculum will provide a framework for engaging children's learning through active exploration, problem solving, discovery and conversation. The activities provided will engage children in a wide range of meaningful experiences in an effort to prepare them for kindergarten and beyond.
5. *St. David's Learning Place* is a ministry of St. David's Lutheran Church and as such will provide children appropriate worship opportunities and Christian faith formation activities as part of the curriculum.

The Preschool Curriculum

We use *Creative Curriculum* with our 3 and 4-year-old Preschool program. It is based on the most current knowledge of how children learn best and what skills they need to develop to achieve success both in school and in life. Our goal is to provide a program that offers kindergarten readiness in a developmentally appropriate manner within a Christian environment. Planned activities will encompass:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Social Skills | Creative Art |
| Dramatic Play | Music |
| Fine Motor Skills | Math and Science |
| Gross Motor Skills | Self-help Skills |
| Literacy | Technology |
| Language Arts | Faith Development |

During the school year (End of August through late May) we only serve students who attend Conemaugh Township School District. This includes all breaks, school closings, delays, early dismissals, etc. To attend our program during these months, a student must be enrolled in either our Preschool program or our before and after school program. If your child is enrolled in before and after school care, they must be attending Conemaugh Township. Any other student is welcome to be a part of our summer programs.

Communication with the School System

We continue to be in communication with the local school district on issues of curriculum to assure that what we offer is consistent with the needs of preschoolers in terms of kindergarten readiness. We also believe that for preschool children, their play is their work. Our programming will be respectful of their developmental needs.

Before and After School Program

Our Before and After School program will provide creative and educational activities in a Christian environment which encourages and supports learning through structured play, recreation, homework assistance, and quiet time.

Learning within a Christian Environment

As a ministry of the congregation, *St David's, the Learning Place* will offer faith-based activities for the children consistent with the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith. While children will not be separated from an activity such as chapel time or prayer before meals, we strive to respect each person's faith tradition. We will work with parents to ensure the inclusion that is best for their child. Our goal is to encourage faith development through story, prayer and song.

Snacks and Meals:

We ask parents to send in snack once a month. Each month your child will be given a snack calendar, and the number of children that snack will need to be provided for. For those children who participate in full day/part day childcare, and are with us during the noon hour, lunch must be supplied by parents.

We do not provide meals, so be sure to provide a lunch with your child's nutritional needs in mind and supply everything that is needed: Spoon and/or fork, napkin, and drink or water bottle to fill up. Drinks must be sent in a sippy cup or water bottle. We do not accept baby bottles. We ask that you label your child's lunch and reusable containers.

Children who arrive before 8:00 a.m. may bring a breakfast. We ask that you follow the same procedures as with a lunch.

We ask that parents only send water in sippy cups and water bottles. If milk or juice is sent, it must be in the unopened original container/box. If your child has milk with breakfast, once they are finished with breakfast the leftover milk will be dumped out. Once milk or juice has been taken out of the refrigerator, whatever is left in the cup/water bottle will be dumped out per our state regulations.

We are a Peanut/Nut **FREE** facility.

Transitioning through our Program

As our students grow and transition through our program, we try to make this time as easy as possible. Throughout the day our students get to spend time with all of our teachers. If it's early morning drop-off or later afternoon pick up, they will get to spend time with all of our teachers. As our day progresses, we combine age groups, as numbers drop, and teachers leave for the day, the student interact with different teachers every day. This gives the students a chance to be with other age groups as well as teachers. The students also get a chance to be in all of the rooms. As we combine our classrooms we move to different rooms. Once it is time for a child to transition, they have already been in the room, and know what to expect. As your child grows through the program, and it is time to transition to the next room, they will already have a relationship built with their new teachers.

Before the school year starts, there is an orientation for the classrooms. This is an evening where the families come for a quick meeting. While the parents are meeting with the Director, the students are in their classrooms meeting their teachers and other classmates. The parents get paperwork for the school year and a copy of different policies that we go over during the meeting. Students get their folder for the year on this day as well. Their folder is filled with all kinds of information that they will need for the first few weeks.

In order for a child to start in our program, they must be 2 years of age. A family may register their child before they are 2; however, they will not be able to attend until their second birthday. This classroom starts the foundation for preschool. Our students start to learn how to sit for circle time and start to learn their letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. We also work on our social emotional skills. We talk about sharing and taking turns. We practice how to hold a pencil, use scissors and how to color in the lines. For our 2-year-old students still in diapers, we do diaper changes every 2 hours per our state regulations, and more often if needed.

In order for a child to move on to our 3-year-old preschool classroom they must meet the age requirement, and birthday cut off set by the Conemaugh Township School District. If a child turns 3 while still in the 2-year-old room, they may NOT move to the 3-year-old classroom until the next school year. We highly encourage students to be potty trained by the time they enter the three-year-old class. This is something that will be worked on; however, families must be willing to also work with the teachers on potty training. Students in our 3-year-old preschool start to dive into the academics. We start to write our letters, numbers and first and last names. We start to introduce the sounds that each letter makes. Conemaugh Township Elementary School has given us the top 16 things that our students need to know when going into Kindergarten. The students learn how to sit at the table, sit for a longer circle time, and raise their hand. This classroom has a more structured schedule for the day. Each class has chapel once a week.

For a child to move on to our four-year-old class, they must meet the same requirements of moving to the three-year-old room. 4-year-old students should be bathroom independent. We understand that accidents happen and have no problem helping with those. This class is the heaviest on academics. They work hard on their letters and letter sounds. They start to work on one-to-one correspondence with their numbers. They have a longer circle time and work on the days of the week and months of the year. The students work on putting letters together to form words. The class continues to work on writing their first and last name. The teachers also work with the students on learning their parents' names, phone number, address and birthdate. Later on, in the year students will start to work on simple rhyming words and sorting different objects.

St. David's Learning Place has a partnership with Conemaugh Township Elementary School. We work closely together to make sure that our students are prepared as possible for Kindergarten. The Director and Principal communicate to make sure that our curriculum is meeting the requirements that they have set for their students. Four-year-old students get the chance to go to the elementary school for a "Kindergarten Experience Day" where they get to see a day in the life of a Kindergartener. As this is life transition for our students, we work closely with parents, teachers, and CTES to make this as smooth as possible.

St. David's Learning Place also offers a school age program. All school aged students **MUST BE FULLY POTTY TRAINED.** If not, we must have a copy of the IEP or note from a medical doctor stating why they are not. With our school age students in the summer we talk to them about self-help skills in case they will be home alone during the school year. We talk about when and how to call 911, and about police, firefighters, and other EMS workers. The students are told about strangers and opening the door to people they don't know and answering the phone. Families are also offered information on the book *Stay Safe*. This is a small book for school aged students who will be staying at home by themselves that gives them tips on how to be safe at home.

Approximate Daily Schedule:

6:45 – 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Structured Free Play
8:15 a.m. Before School Children prepare for and go to the bus
9:00 –12:00 noon Preschool
Opening Group Activities
Story Time
Weekly Chapel Time
Discovery/Learning Centers
Snack
Guided Thematic Activities
Gross Motor Activities
12:00 noon Preschool Program pick-up
12:15 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Quiet/Nap Time
3:00 p.m. Snack
3:30 p.m. Structured Free Play
3:50-4:00 p.m. After School Children arrive from the bus
Time for homework and a snack is provided
5:45 p.m. Service hours are ended

Hours of Operation

Please note that our hours of operation for childcare begin at 6:45 a.m. and end at 5:45 p.m. We will be prepared to care for your child beginning at 6:45 am. Your child is to be picked up no later than 5:45 p.m. A late pick up fee will be charged if you and your child are not out of the building by 5:45 p.m. This fee will be \$15 dollars for every 5 minutes that you are in the building past 5:45 p.m. This fee will be due once you come into the building.

Preschool begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon. Any child who arrives prior to 8:50 will be charged the \$5.00 before school rate. Please be prepared to pick your child up promptly at 12:00 noon, unless you have made arrangements for afternoon childcare. A fee will be charged for late pickups (see section IX for Fees).

Parent Participation:

We welcome the involvement of parents in the program. There are a variety of ways that you may support your child's experience. These include:

*Volunteering – we welcome volunteers from our congregation and from parents/guardians. Volunteers **must** have appropriate background clearances and will serve in accordance with church policy concerning individuals working with children and DHS regulation.

*Talent sharing - many adults have hobbies and talents that would be interesting for our children. If you have a special hobby or skill that you would be willing to teach or present to the children, we invite you to make arrangements with the director to schedule a time to share your gifts. We would enthusiastically welcome your willingness to participate in our program in this special way.

Participation with in-home activities

From time to time, teachers may send home activities or learning ideas for parents and children to do together. We encourage parents to take advantage of this time to spend with their preschooler. It is irreplaceable time spent in mentoring, guiding, supporting and bonding with your child, setting patterns for the love of learning as they grow older. Besides, it is fun!

Providing appropriate dress

Your child will be playing outside and will be participating in some "messy" creative activities. Your child should come to school with clothing appropriate for these activities. Please provide a large zip lock bag containing a complete change of clothes, including socks and underclothes, in the event your child's clothing becomes soiled. Please label each item of clothing with your child's name. If your child needs to change clothes and there are none available, we will call you to either bring clothing or take the child home. As the seasons change and weather gets colder, children should wear appropriate clothing for playing outside.

Footwear should be appropriate for active play. Sandals are to surround the foot, no open backs. Flip-flops are not to be worn.

Prized Possessions

Your child will bring home “work” that they do while at *St. David’s Learning Place*. We suggest that you and your child discuss how to celebrate and/or display these examples of their work at home.

Treasures from Home

With the exception of show and tell items, and those items that provide comfort, we ask that your child not bring personal belongings or toys from home. If your child chooses to bring

a particular item from home, *St. David’s Learning Place* is not responsible for loss of or damage of the item.

Book Clubs

Monthly you may purchase books from Book Clubs. We will send information home each month about these opportunities.

IV. PARENT COMMUNICATION

We value regular and timely communication with parents and guardians. Please note that at the beginning and end of each day the staff is responsible for the direct supervision of the children and may not be able to speak with you at length at that time. We encourage you to ask for an appointment for another time to discuss any questions or concerns about your child.

Open House

We will hold an open house at least once a year. Invitations will be sent home with the children.

Parent Conferences

We will schedule parent conferences in late fall and spring for **all** children including school aged students. We will schedule parent conferences for school age children at the request of the parent. Staff or parents may request additional parent conferences at any time throughout the year. Meetings will be set up at the convenience of both parties. If a conference is not wanted, parents will be required to sign a waiver to be kept in the child’s file.

***Ages and Stages is a research-based screening tool that will be completed within 45 days of enrollment. This will be used to identify strengths or developmental delays and will be shared with parents at our first Parent Teacher Conference. This will be completed as the students move from program to program. ***

School/Home communication

During orientation students are given a school folder. This is how the teachers communicate with parents. Monthly newsletters, and other important information is sent home in the folder. It is vital that this folder is checked daily.

Accident Reports

At St. David's Learning Place, we are always in motion, and accidents do happen. We have systems in place to make sure that we are able to take care of these accidents. Each staff member is trained in first aid and CPR. For small cuts, scrapes, and bumps a staff member will fill out a "boo-boo report". This is for less severe injuries that can be taken care of with basic first aid. For more severe injuries we have a state mandated injury report that the staff will fill out. If the injury is severe enough to need an injury report parents will be notified. If it is necessary St. David's Learning Place staff will call 911 and have a child transported by ambulance. The child will be accompanied by a Learning Place Staff member.

Parent's Bulletin Board

A bulletin board calendar will be available with up to date information about ongoing activities and programming.

Visitors

Visitors must check in with the director immediately upon arrival and must sign-in. Parents of enrolled children are welcome to visit at any time. If you wish to have lunch or participate in an activity with your child, please notify the director. Please note that the staff is responsible for the supervision of the children during programming hours and may not be available to speak with any visitor at length.

Updating Information

Each family when they register will be asked to fill out paperwork for the center. Each 6 months we will ask families to fill out this paperwork again so that we can make sure that we have the most updated information in our system. If there are changes that need to be made before the review, you need to see the Director as soon as possible to update your information.

Permission Forms

There are many instances when we need a parental permission form, i.e. field trips, for administering medicine. These will be provided to you for your signature and must be returned by the due stated on the form. **Failure to do so could result in your child not being able to take part in the activity.**

Confidentiality

We respect the confidentiality of each child and family. We will discuss information about children with only the parent or legal guardian. This may involve a phone call to speak with you if someone other than the parent picks up your child. If you have concerns of a confidential nature, please make an appointment with the Learning Place Director. At no time will confidential concerns be discussed in the presence of the children or others in the classroom or hallway.

Records concerning your child: enrollment forms, health records, observation records and written parent-teacher conference reports and all other information about your child is confidential and will only be accessible to you, the Learning Place Director, your child's teacher, and a person designated by the state of PA licensing department to review your records for licensing purposes. The church secretary will have access to only that information needed for mailings.

Feedback/Suggestions/Grievances

Feedback from parents is very important to us and will be sought on a regular basis. If you as a parent have a concern or a complaint, we ask that you contact the director or your child's teacher immediately to address the situation.

V. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival and Departure for Preschool

Arrival: For your child's safety, we require that you or another authorized adult bring your child into the building and to the drop-off area in the hall. A teacher will then accompany your child to their classroom. We ask that you sign your child in on our sign-in sheet.

If you are going to be at a location or phone number different from what we have on file, please note that in the sign-in book.

Departure: When you pick up your child, we ask that you wait in the designated pick-up area. Children will prepare for departure with teachers and will be brought to the pick-up area to meet their "pick-up person."

The doors at the Learning Place are always locked! No one is able to get into the building without having a security Fob, given to them by the Director, or they are buzzed into the building. Only the persons listed on the student's paperwork are able to pick up. If there is an emergency and no one on the child's emergency contact form can pick up, a parent must call into the school to fill out a Verbal Release from with the Director.

Arrival and Departure for School Age Program

Arrival: School age children should be accompanied by you or another authorized adult into the 4-year-old classroom. We ask that you sign your child in and be sure that a staff person is aware of your child's arrival before you leave. If you are going to be at a location or phone number different from what we have on file, please note that in the sign-in book.

Departure: When you pick up your child, we require that you come into the school age classroom and sign your child out. Be sure that a staff person is aware that you are departing. If there is an emergency situation and your child will be picked up by someone other than the names indicated on your registration form, you must call Learning Place and notify the staff of the name of your "pick-up person." A "Verification of Oral Designation" will be completed by the staff person taking the call. A Photo ID and sign-out signature will be required of this person at the time of child pick up to verify the identity of that person. If there are any changes in regular designated "pick-up persons", we ask that you inform us so that your registration form can be updated. If your child is scheduled for after school care and there is a change in plans, please contact us to let us know he/she will not be getting off of the bus.

School bus stop

If your child attends school in the Conemaugh Township Area School District, and your child is enrolled in our before and after school program, the school bus stop is at the entrance of the upper parking lot. The schedule is set by the school district. The upper entrance to the parking lot will be blocked off in the morning and afternoon in order to safely assist children on and off the buses. Please use the lower parking lot entrance for drop-off and pick-up. If your child is not scheduled for After School Care, but you plan on picking your child up from the afternoon bus at Learning Place, **you must meet them when they walk off the bus.** For safety reasons children will not be permitted to walk to their parents' cars alone.

Bus Stop Safety

For the safety of the children the entrance to the upper lot will be roped off when buses arrive. Please enter through the lower parking lot during these times. If your child is not scheduled for care on a given day and you wish to pick him/her up at the bus stop, we ask that you park outside of the safety zone and meet your child as they walk off of the bus.

If you are planning on picking your child up from the bus, it is extremely important to arrive on time. However, if you are delayed and are not present at the time of drop-off, our staff will receive your child into the care of St. David's Learning Place and the after-school rate will apply.

You are urged to use extreme caution while driving around the facility to ensure that all persons entering and exiting the premises are safe. At no time should your speed exceed 10 mph. In the event that staff observes careless driving or excessive speed, services may be terminated.

Important Transitions

Bringing your child to preschool is a time of mixed emotions for both you and your child. There is excitement and expectation as well as the uncertainty that goes along with encountering a new situation and new faces. It is our goal to make those daily transitions as comfortable as possible for you and your child. It is very important for your child to arrive on time to get their day off to a good start. If your child is having difficulty saying goodbye to you, the best thing to do is to reassure your child that you love him/her and that you will return at the end of their day. Then say goodbye. Having a specific "farewell" routine helps the child adjust to this new experience.

VI. SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

General oversight for St. David's Learning Place is provided by the Director of St. David's Learning Place in conjunction with the Pastor, governing board and council of St. David's Lutheran Church. The Director is responsible for the daily operation of the program.

a. Similar age level

| Similar Age Levels | Staff | Children | Max. Group Size | Total # of Staff Required for the Max. Group Size |
|--------------------|-------|----------|-----------------|---|
| Two Year Old | 1 | 6 | 12 | 2 |
| Preschool | 1 | 10 | 20 | 2 |
| Young school-age | 1 | 12 | 24 | 2 |
| Older school-age | 1 | 15 | 30 | 2 |

Staffing and ratios for each of our programs will follow PA DHS requirements.

When children are grouped in similar age levels, the following maximum child group sizes and ratios of staff persons apply:

b. Mixed age level

When children are grouped in mixed age levels, the following child group sizes and ratios of staff persons apply:

| Mixed Age Levels | Staff | Children | Max. Group Size | Total # of Staff Required for Max. Group Size |
|-------------------------------------|-------|----------|-----------------|---|
| Preschool/young or older school-age | 1 | 10 | 20 | 2 |

*No more than 50% of each group may be of the older age level.

St. David's is a Safe Haven for Children:

In 2002 St. David's Lutheran Church was designated as a Safe Haven for Children by the Allegheny Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This distinction affirms the congregation's commitment to the health and safety of the children within its walls and within the community. As a condition of this commitment, the congregation's council approved a Policy and Procedures Statement for Adults Involved in Ministry with Youth and Children. A copy of this document may be obtained from the Director of Learning Ministry.

Emergency Preparedness Regular fire drills will be part of our program. We will address various safety issues with the children in a developmentally appropriate manner. In the event of an emergency our staff is trained to administer first aid and CPR. (See Appendix for information on our emergency plan.)

Mandated Reporting As childcare and ministry professionals we are mandated reporters. As such, we are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

VII. HEALTH AND SPECIAL NEEDS CONSIDERATIONS

Illness/Injury

St. David's Learning Place follows the guidelines and care plans set by the American Academy of Pediatrics in *Caring for our Children*. We use the care plans for children with medically necessary conditions (asthma, food allergies, etc.)

"When a child becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination must be made regarding whether the child should be sent home (i.e., should be temporarily "excluded" from childcare). Most illnesses do not require exclusion. The caregiver/teacher should determine if the illness:

- a. Prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities
- b. Results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
- c. Poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others."

To make sure that we are following these policies, here are some reasons why your child could be sent home, and if your child is sent home, **we ask that they stay home for 24 hours until they are symptom free:**

Fever: must be 101 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures will be taken under the arm. The student must also have other symptoms such as change in behavior, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, or not be able to comfortably take part in daily activities.

Diarrhea: If a child has two or more diarrhea type bowel movements above normal in a day. If a diapered child has two bowel movements that come out of the diaper, or two or more bowel movements above normal in a day that are diarrhea type stools.

Vomiting: If a child vomits two times in the previous 24 hours.

Rash: with fever or behavioral changes, until determined by the primary care provider has determined that the illness is not contagious.

Strep throat, Lice, Pink eye: until 24 hours after treatment has been started

To make sure that we are following these policies, here are some reasons why your child could attend the school:

Common Colds

Coughs without fevers

Fifth Disease

Thrush

For Before/After-Care, in most cases, if your child has been absent from school or is sent home early due to illness, he/she should not attend here that day.

If your child becomes ill while in attendance at the center, the staff will contact you to pick him/her up. You have ONE HOUR from the time you are contacted to pick up your child from school. In the meantime, he/she will be made as comfortable as possible while separated from the other children to prevent the spread of germs and will be watched over by an adult. In the event your child becomes injured during program hours, you will be notified.

Medication

If a child needs medication while in the care of St. David's Learning Place, a medication log must be filled out by the parent or guardian. Medication must be prescribed by a medical doctor and brought in in the original bottle with the child's name, dosage amount, and way to administer the medication clearly seen on the bottle. If these rules are not followed, the medication will not be given to your child. NO over-the-counter medications will be given to the students while they are in the care of St. David's Learning Place.

Sunscreen

The children will participate in outside activities. We provide a permission form to apply sunscreen and ask that you provide the sunscreen of your choice, labeled with your child's first and last name. Each year sunscreen will be sent home, due to the fact that it expires every year.

First Aid and CPR

Our staff is trained and will provide basic first aid and CPR as needed.

Children with Special Needs:

If your child requires accommodations due to any special needs such as food allergies or physical, emotional or learning disabilities, the staff is willing to work in partnership with parents to adapt the program to meet the needs of your child. If your child has been assigned learning support services in his/her school setting, it will be expected that such services accompany your child into the center. A special conference will be arranged with the director to discuss specialized programming prior to your child's enrollment. Despite all efforts, however, there may be times when, participation in the center will not be in the best interests of your child. In the case of food allergies, if the child has particular dietary needs, the program will work with the parent to determine allowable substitutes. Depending on the severity of the allergies, parents may be asked to supply food substitutes.

St. David's Learning Place Inclusion Policy

David's Learning Place does not discriminate when it comes to enrolling children. We welcome all students to our school. Students with exceptionalities are welcomed into the classroom with all of the other students. The teachers will work with the student to make sure that they feel accepted into the classroom.

The teachers are willing to work with different agencies in order to make sure that students get the best early childhood education that they can. Teachers will integrate students so that everyone feels part of the classroom. Every student is given the same opportunity to take part in activities that are going on in the school, and classroom. Our staff will work with the student to make sure that they feel comfortable with whatever activity is being done.

Families have a huge part in this partnership. If it is seen that a meeting other than a parent teacher conference is needed that can be set up. Together as a team we will work together to make sure that there is a plan in place to best meet the needs of the student. This can also be done if the teachers are seeing a difficult behavior that they feel needs to be brought to the parent's attention.

Classrooms will be adapted to the best of our ability to fit the student's needs, including but not limited to:

- sight words
- adaptive aids
- language rich environment
- adaptive toys and toys showing diversity

IEP/IFSP

At *St. David's Learning Place*, we are open and willing to work with outside companies to help students reach their full potential. If your child has an IEP/IFSP coming into *St. David's Learning Place*, we will uphold it while they are enrolled with us. They are welcome to have their therapies completed while they are in our care. Our Director and teachers are open and willing to work together with therapists to make sure that all of your child's goals are met.

If the teachers see behaviors that raise awareness that your child might need services, they will be brought to the Director, and then talked through with you during Parent Teacher Conferences. It is the parents/ guardian's choice then if they would like information about where to get the child screened. Once services are in place with the child, a copy of the IEP/IFSP will be kept in the child's file and the Director will review it with the teachers throughout the school year to make sure that it is being followed correctly.

In the event that your child has an IEP/IFSP but do not want *St. David's Learning Place* to have a copy or to be involved with it, please see the Director for an IEP/IFSP sign off form.

St. David's Learning Place staff will sit in on all IEP meetings with the parent consent.

VIII. BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Our Philosophy:

At *St David's Learning Place*, we create a Christ-centered environment in which children can develop emotionally and socially while experiencing success. In doing so, we provide the children with consistent and understandable rules and limits to encourage them to learn to control their own behavior. To guide behavior, the staff has arranged the environment, daily schedule and activities to promote positive group interaction and cooperation. The staff aims to prevent most problems by channeling behavior in acceptable ways and by providing interesting and appropriate activities and structure. Because we are committed to a safe, comfortable and caring environment, we take every opportunity to guide behavior using positive means. **Behavior limits are necessary to maintain safety, protect health and guard the rights of others.**

St. David's Learning Place will follow the behavior plan set by the Conemaugh Township Elementary school. This will make the transition from school to school much easier on the students as well as parents.

Each classroom will have their classroom rules posted in the classroom that were made by both students and staff inside of that classroom. Along with the rules posted the class will also have a color chart posted. Each student will have a clothes pin with their name on the chart. Each day the students will start their day on the color green. Throughout the day the student will have the chance to move both up and down the chart. A calendar will be colored in every day to show the students behavior.

Moving up the chart

The students will move up the chart for positive behavior and choices. After showing this behavior three times the teacher can have the student move up to the next color on the chart. Once a student reaches the top of the color chart a note will be sent home with the family along with a small reward, to congratulate the student for having such a great day.

Moving down the chart

The students will move down the chart for negative behavior and choices. Students will be given three warnings before moving down to the next color on the chart. If a student is on the color yellow they will be asked to sit (one minute for each year old) to reflect on the choices, they have made. A staff member will then go over to the child and talk through what happened and come up with different ways to have a better outcome. If a student lands on the color orange, they will lose a privilege. A staff member will talk to the students about why they lost their privilege and come up with different ways to make sure this doesn't happen again with the student. If a student ends up on red a note will be sent home with the student to the parents. If the behavior continues the parents will be called in to have a meeting with the teacher and director. **STUDENTS ALWAYS HAVE THE CHANCE TO MOVE UP TO THE CHART!!**

In the event that a child's behavior causes or threatens to cause serious harm to him/her or others the child will be isolated from the other children with appropriate supervision and the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child immediately. Continuation of services will be addressed in a parent conference and is at the discretion of the Director. We reserve the right to terminate care immediately should the safety of the children and/or staff is at issue.

IX. FEE SCHEDULES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

Registration Fees

Childcare Registration Fee: An annual non-refundable registration fee of \$25 will be collected for each child enrolled for Summer Childcare and/or the Before and After school care program.

Preschool Registration Fee: An annual non-refundable registration fee of \$50 will be collected for each child enrolled for the preschool program.

Payment forms

Please complete a payment form with your check and schedule. This is to help with proper record keeping, and to insure the correct payment. Extras will be kept by the payment box outside of the two-year-old classroom. Please feel free to make copies and keep at home for your convenience. **PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT A FORM ATTACHED.**

Preschool Tuition

3-Year-Old Preschool: Annual Tuition is \$675 per child and is payable in nine equal installments of \$85 on the first of each month with the first payment due on the first day of preschool. There is an option of paying the entire annual tuition at a discount of \$635. To be eligible for this discount, payment **must** be made in full before the first day of school.

*rates are subject to change

4-Year-Old Preschool: Annual Tuition is \$1,350 per child and is payable in nine equal installments of \$170 on the first of each month, with the first payment due on the first day of preschool. There is an option of paying the entire annual tuition at a discount of \$1,270. To be eligible for this discount, payment **must** be made in full before the first day of school.

*rates are subject to change

A \$2 per day late fee will be charged for each day past the first school day of the month that payment is not turned in.

Tuition for the *St. David's Learning Place* preschool programs covers 1 year of programming. The annual schedule will be set to coordinate with the Conemaugh Township Area School District calendar as much as possible.

Tuition is not reduced for snow days or child absence.

Childcare Fees (amended January 2018)

Young Toddler and Older Toddler:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Full Day: (<i>5 or more hours per day</i>): | \$28.00 per day |
| Half Day: (<i>less than 5 hours per day</i>): | \$17.50 per day |

Preschool Age Childcare when preschool is in session (Monday-Thursday).

These fees include preschool.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Full Day: (<i>5 or more hours per day</i>): | \$26.00 per day |
| Half Day: (<i>less than 5 hours per day</i>): | \$16.50 per day |

*rates are subject to change

School Age Childcare:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Full Day: (<i>5 or more hours per day</i>): | \$25.00 per day |
| Half Day: (<i>less than 5 hours per day</i>): | \$16.00 per day |

*rates are subject to change

Monthly Before & After School Flat Rate Option:

A flat rate of \$200 may be paid at the first of the month for unlimited before and after school care. Holidays are NOT included in this fee. This \$200.00 covers unlimited before and after school care, weather delays and early dismissals. All snow days, school holidays and all-over full day closures must be paid following the child care rates.

Before and After School Care on School Days:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Before School Care: | \$7.50 per day |
| After School Care: | \$7.50 per day |
| Before and After Care: | \$15.00 per day |

*rates are subject to change

A flat rate of \$5.00 will be added to your before school rate on school days with a 2 Hour Delay. A flat rate of \$16.00 will be added to your after-school rate on school days with Early Dismissals either scheduled by the school or due to inclement weather.

Summer School Age Childcare:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Full Day: | \$25.00 per day |
| Half Day: | \$16.00 per day |

*rates are subject to change

Summer Young Toddler and Older Toddler:

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Full Day: (5 or more hours per day): | \$28.00 per day |
| Half Day: (less than 5 hours per day): | \$17.50 per day |

Summer Preschool Age Childcare when preschool is in session (Monday-Thursday).

These fees include preschool.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Full Day: (5 or more hours per day): | \$26.00 per day |
| Half Day: (less than 5 hours per day): | \$16.50 per day |

*rates are subject to change

Late Pick Up Fee

Child Care services conclude promptly at 5:45 p.m. each day. A late pick-up fee of \$15 per every 5 minutes after 5:45 p.m. will be charged. This fee will be added to your next scheduled payment.

Payment Policy

St. David's Learning Place schedules staff according to the number of **expected** students on any given day. It is important as childcare givers to maintain a secure and stable environment for your child. This being said, we must then offer our staff the security of knowing that their employment is secure and stable. Your tuition and childcare payments are what pays our staff salaries, therefore, if payments are made only when your child is in attendance, it does not allow us to guarantee stability to our staff and quality to all concerned. Our goal is to always insure we have enough staff to care for your child without having more staff than needed. For this reason, we require all parents to obligate themselves to their entire payment in full. This has also kept us from requiring a minimum number of days of care for each week.

In this way we are able to ensure that all children are well cared for and State requirements are met without incurring the additional cost associated with excess staffing. For these reasons, payments are expected to be made according to the contract signed at the time of enrollment.

Registration Fees

Annual registration fees are paid at the pre-enrollment conference.

Preschool Tuition

Preschool tuition will be paid in advance on the first of each month beginning September. There is no discount in tuition for child absences. If the Learning Place cancels preschool due to circumstances beyond our control, such as inclement weather, we may reschedule the missed day and notify you in writing of the makeup date at the discretion of the Director of *St. David's Learning Place*.

Childcare and Before/After School Care

Childcare and Before/After school fees will be paid in advance weekly according to the contracted amount. Payment and schedules are due Wednesday prior to the week of care. **Your payment is for the scheduled days of care even if your child is absent.** If your child is going to be absent: Please call *St. David's Learning Place* to advise staff your child will not be attending for care. Leave a voicemail message in the event our staff is not available to answer.

Closed

The St. David's Learning Place is closed for the following major holidays, which includes:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Vacation/Holiday Schedule

For holidays (that we are not already closed) we will be handing out an attendance form. If there are less than 5 children signed up to attend, *St. David's Learning Place* will be closed. If there are 5 or more children signed up, we will be open. Dates will be posted with plenty of notice to families if other arraignments need to be made.

Payment Assistance (CCIS or other) and Hardship

Children receiving payment assistance are bound by the terms and conditions of said assistance.

Payment hardships will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Director and the Pastor.

Late Payment Fees

Schedules are due each Wednesday for the upcoming week.

- Payment needs to be made at the time the schedule is submitted.
- A \$2 per day late fee will be charged for each day past Wednesday that the schedule and/or payment are not turned in.
- Because we schedule staff based on the number of children anticipated for any given day, we regret that we are not able to provide refunds or credits for no-shows.
- Late schedules MAY result in St. David's Learning Place being understaffed and therefore unable to care for your child at a time when you have need.

Please include the dates you are paying for on your check or money order when making a payment. Please place payments in the locked payment box on the wall outside of the Director's off. **Please do not remit payment to the staff or director.** If you have any questions about your account, please direct them to our director.

There will be a \$12.00 handling fee for the processing of any check returned to us due to insufficient funds. Upon receipt of the second NSF check, all future payments must be paid by cash, cashier's check or money order.

Reduction in contracted payment of your own accord may result in a late fee being incurred.

Please Note: Our ability to provide a quality program depends on timely payment of tuition and fees. Persistent late payment or failure to pay contracted fees will result in termination of services.



Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is to assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of children attending St. David's Learning Place during an emergency. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- **Immediate Evacuation**-Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
- **In-place Sheltering**-Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may indicate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- **Evacuation**-Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to the relocation facility at Hoffman Funeral Home (the funeral home is located just on the other side of the lower church parking lot).
- **Modified Operation** - May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

Please listen to/watch Froggy (95.5), WJAC-TV and Key (96.5) for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above.

The names provided on the Emergency Contact Forms (filled out and returned with application) will be the names of the people to whom we will release your child. Please ensure that only those people that you have listed attempt to pick up your child. We urge you not to make different arrangements during an emergency, as it will only create confusion and divert the staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to assure the safety of your child and our staff, I ask for your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding your emergency operating procedures feel free to contact any of our staff at 479-7390.

Sincerely,
Bekah Adams
St. David's Learning Place Director



SUBJECT: Limited English Proficiency Access
TO: All Parents and students
FROM: Bekah Adams, Director

Denying access to programs because of Limited English Proficiency is discriminatory under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The Department of Welfare is obligated to ensure all persons with LEP have meaningful and equal access to services and benefits. This includes providing competent, free language assistance services.

If you feel that you or you know someone desiring services from our facility who may qualify for these services, please notify us of your desire to receive these services so that we may begin the process to procure those services for you.

Any individual, parent, guardian or student, who believes that they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Child Development Center
401 North Main Street
Davidsville, PA 15928
1-814-479-4110

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
333 Market Street – 8th Fl
Harrisburg, PA 17101

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Department of Public Welfare
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Bldg
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105



SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination in Services
TO: All Parents and students
FROM: Bekah Adams, Director

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients to *St. David's Learning Place* shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex. Program services shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available.

Any individual, parent, guardian or student, who believes that they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

St. David's Lutheran Church
Child Development Center
401 North Main Street
Davidsville, PA 15928
1-814-479-4110

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
333 Market Street – 8th Fl
Harrisburg, PA 17101

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Department of Public Welfare
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Bldg.
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105



SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination Policy Statement Equal Employment Opportunity
TO: All Staff
FROM: Bekah Adams, Director

An open and equitable personnel system will be established and maintained by St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Personnel policies, procedures, and practices will be designed to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex. Accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available.

Any employee, who believes that they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following:

St. David's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Child Development Center
401 North Main Street
Davidsville, PA 15928
1-814-479-4110

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
333Market Street – 8th Fl
Harrisburg, PA 17101

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Bldg
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Photography Permission

St. David’s Learning Place

I _____ give permission to St. David’s Learning Place, as a ministry of St. David’s Lutheran Church to photograph and video tape my child _____. I understand that photos of my child may be posted in public view in the facility, may be used on the website and may be used in publicity.

Permission to Apply Sunscreen

St. David’s Learning Place

I _____ give the staff of St. David’s Learning Place permission to apply sunscreen on my child _____ prior to, and if needed, during outside play. I agree to supply sunscreen for my child.

Permission to Apply Face Paint

St. David’s Learning Place

I _____ give the staff of St. David’s Learning Place permission to apply face paint to my child _____.

Parent Handbook Statement

St. David’s Learning Place

I, _____ have received a copy of the St. David’s Learning Place Parent Handbook and a staff person has reviewed its contents with me. I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures laid out in the handbook. I understand that I will be informed in writing of any changes to the policies and procedures.

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____