

Parent Handbook



405 N. Highland Ave.
New Ulm, MN 56073
www.mlceclc.com
507-233-9105

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to provide a general overview of the Center's activities and policies. Please become familiar with the handbook and let us know if you have questions. Additional copies are available at the center.

A PARTNERSHIP IN LEARNING

All children are precious gifts of God. They are the next generation and the promise of the future. Many hands join together to foster the growth and development of children. At the Learning Center we recognize that parents have the primary responsibility for nurturing their children. By enrolling your children in the Learning Center parents are enlisting the help of early childhood teachers. Teachers at school and parents at home create many learning experiences for children. These experiences help children learn about God's love for them and about his wonderful world. At the same time parents and teachers learn about child development by observing children and interacting with them. The Learning Center experience is truly meant to be a partnership in learning. Parents are welcome to visit your children and teachers anytime at the Learning Center. You are also welcome to volunteer your talents and share them with the children.

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Parent information sessions will be held during the year. These sessions will explore various aspects of child development and parenting. By enrolling children in the center, parents are committing themselves to attend these sessions as an essential part of the partnership in learning. Parents will learn more about effective parenting skills by attending parenting information sessions conducted by the teachers. Through these sessions and daily contact with parents, teachers will also learn from parents. Children, parents, and teachers all learn from each other. Partnership between home and school is all about understanding children as they make that big transition from home to school and back to home again.

ADMITTANCE POLICY

Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy

Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center exists to provide spiritual growth and quality education to the children who attend. All children are welcome without reference to race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender or ability.

The Learning Center is intended as a service for those families who desire early learning experiences for their children.

Licensure

The Center is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services' (**DHS**) Division of Licensing. Our License Number is **830674**. You may reach the DHS at (612) 296-3971 with any questions. The Center is visited regularly by state officials, and we go through a thorough licensing evaluation every year. The center is licensed for a capacity of 93 children:

60 Preschoolers

21 Toddlers

12 Infants

Insurance

The Center has liability insurance coverage under the umbrella of Martin Luther College. Information about this insurance is available by contacting the Human Resource Department at Martin Luther College.

Enrollment Information

A yearly non-refundable registration fee of \$50 is required with a completed enrollment to register your child. Checks are payable to Martin Luther College (**MLC**). We do require a two week notice if you would like to withdraw your child.

Registration obligates parents to pay the weekly fee whether the child attends or is absent. Fees are **PAID IN ADVANCE**, either weekly or monthly. Our program uses Procure in which you are able to use direct deposit.

OPERATING HOURS:

Mon– Fri. 7:00-5:30

We do not close when the school district closes for snow days or late starts. When bad weather persists, we will contact you to pick up your child as soon as you are able to ensure a safe journey home. When the center is closed for holidays or vacation days, you will not be charged. You are welcome to visit your child at any time.

PROGRAMS

Infant and Toddlers:

Currently we are only accepting full time children (up to 45 hours/week)

Infant: \$175/week

Toddlers: \$155/week

Infants:

Parents of infants will need to furnish diapers, wipes, formula, cereal, and baby food until the child is ready for complete finger foods. Please supply extra clothing for occasional accidents, sunscreen, and diaper ointment if desired.

Toddlers:

Parents of toddlers will need to furnish diapers and wipes (pull ups when ready for bathroom training and extra clothing) along with diaper ointment and sunscreen.

There is fee of \$1.00 per diaper and \$1.00 per day of wipes if not replenished by parents when notified.

Preschool:

Full day (8:00 am- 4:00pm) 3, 4, or 5 consecutive days/week

\$26 per day

\$130 per week

Half day (8:00 am - 11:15 am) 4 or 5 consecutive days/week

\$18 per day

\$90 per week

Preschool:

Please supply extra clothing for occasional accidents. Sunscreen is also provided by the parents as needed.

Families with more than one child at the center will receive a 10% discount off the oldest child.

Additional Child Care:

Additional child care will be provided if needed from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and from 4:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m. An additional fee of \$5.00 per hour is charged for this service. *There is a late fee charge of \$10 for the first offense and \$25 thereafter along with \$5.00 charge for each five minute increments after the 12:00 a. m. half day closing or 5:30 p.m. closing time for each child in our care.*

MISSION OF THE MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER

Martin Luther College has established the Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center as a means to prepare men and women for service in the Early Childhood teaching ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

This center exists as an extended classroom to provide experiences for observation, participation, and student teaching by Martin Luther College students and also as a service for families in the community who desire an early learning experience for the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of their young children.

Philosophy

The Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center program is based on the philosophy that

- God gives parents the primary responsibility for nurturing their children.
- The center assists parents in nurturing the growth of children 6 weeks old to children 5 years old in a Christian environment.
- Children develop best in an atmosphere of Christian love, care, trust, and respect.
- Developmentally appropriate experiences are provided for all children with “hands-on” activities that further their spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development.
- Early Childhood Education Students benefit from student teaching experiences in a model Early Childhood Program.

Goals

Consistent with the mission and philosophy, the Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center seeks to carry out the following goals.

- Children

Spiritual Growth

1. To learn that Jesus is their Savior from sin.
2. To learn that Jesus is also their best friend.
3. To learn of God’s love through Bible stories, prayers, and songs.
4. To respond to God’s love in everyday life.

Physical Growth

1. To appreciate likenesses and differences in God's children.
2. To observe simple health and safety procedures.
3. To develop small and large motor control and coordination.

Intellectual Growth

1. To learn that their abilities are gifts from God.
2. To practice and enjoy their disposition to learn.
3. To make and express choices, plans, and decisions.
4. To experience using different materials in many ways.
5. To develop their language skills.

Social-Emotional Growth

1. To grow in their ability to interact with peers, adults, and their environment.
2. To experience success in working and playing individually and cooperatively.
3. To grow in Christian love, respect, and empathy.

- Parents

1. To understand that God gives them the primary responsibility for nurturing their children.
2. To understand the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of their children.
3. To understand the importance of communication between home and school/center.
4. To become involved with their child's learning through classroom visits, daily consultations, and attendance at scheduled parenting classes.

- Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center Adults

1. To understand the development of young children.
2. To observe and experience a model for nurturing young children and assisting parents.
3. To plan and create experiences within the early childhood setting that meet the child's developmental needs.
4. To student teach in an early childhood education setting.
5. To share the love of Christ with young children and their families.

SNACKS / NOON LUNCHES

SNACKS

Snacks will be served to the children in the morning and afternoon sessions. It is considered part of the learning experience to share, say “please” and “thank you”, and to stop play for a little quiet activity. Snacks will not include pastries, donuts, cakes, chips, candy, suckers, or imitation fruit drinks.

If parents wish to provide a snack for the group, they are asked to notify the Center so any allergies can be addressed. This list of nutritious foods is provided as a guideline for snacks.

fresh fruit	fresh vegetables	milk	sliced cheese
low-sugar cereals	crackers	bagels	hard-cooked eggs
popcorn/pretzels	cheese sticks	dried fruits	trail mix(nut free)
cottage cheese	raisins	granola mix or	whole grain bread
100% Juice	muffins	bars	yogurt

NOON LUNCHES

Noon lunches will be catered by Gut Essen and will provide the following nutritious portions according to USDA meal pattern for your child’s age.

4-6 fluid oz. of milk

1 oz. meat or meat alternate

1/8 – 1/4 cup vegetables and fruit or 1/8 – 1/4 cup of 2 different vegetables

1/2 slice whole grain bread, 1/4 cup cooked whole grain pasta or rice or

1/4 cup cooked cereal grains or equivalent

PHOTOGRAPHS / VIDEOTAPING / SOUND TAPE RECORDINGS

Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center may occasionally provide special learning experiences for children. These experiences may be discussed in the college’s education classes. Videos and sound tape recordings or photographs may be made of the children for educational purposes. Written parental permission will always be acquired at the beginning of the year with our Parental Agreement Form and/or before each occasion of research experimental procedure prior to an activity.

GENERAL CENTER POLICIES

ILLNESS

If your child has a cold, symptoms of illness, or needs to remain indoors, it would be best to keep the child home. Please contact the center if your child will not be coming to school due to illness (233-9105). The office should be notified of a child's absence and the reason for it early in the morning. Should a teacher feel that a child is unable to function properly at the center due to illness, parents will be notified immediately and requested to make arrangements for transportation home. In the event that your child has a contagious disease, your child may not come to the center. We must be informed of the disease so notice of possible exposure can be given to families enrolled. A child with a communicable disease will be readmitted to the center only after allowing for the longest usual incubation of the disease or with a signed statement from your physician.

MEDICATION

No medication of any type will be given to a child without the written consent of a parent. An Administration of Medicine form is available at the center. Please inform your child's teacher should your child be under medication which might affect the child at the center. Simple injuries will be treated with soap and water cleansing. A state required Health Care Summary and Immunization Record needs to be kept on file at the Center. This record must be on file from the first day of the child's attendance.

REST TIME

Children will have an active morning, and therefore, will be given the opportunity to rest or nap. They will be provided with a cot and a quiet setting. Parents should provide a blanket and pillow for rest. They are responsible for taking them home to wash each week or as needed.

FIELD TRIPS / NEIGHBORHOOD WALKS

Field trips and neighborhood walks are a part of the curriculum at the Learning Center. Advance notice of field trips will be given. Parents will sign an approval form. A first aid kit and all emergency phone numbers will be taken along by a staff member.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Children must be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. Parents should bring an extra set of clothing to keep at the Center in the event that a change of clothing is needed. Please have all clothing labeled. Clothes should be comfortable and easy for the child to manage. We require that your child wear shoes appropriate for their active play – no backless footwear. The center is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

At Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center, training and discipline are blended with God's love and concern. Discipline needs to be meaningful, consistent, and constructive. A child needs to know what is expected before he/she can obey. Guidelines reassure children that they are loved and there is concern for them.

Two behavior goals will be communicated to the children. These are:

1. The love of Jesus motivates children to live as the Lord expects.
2. Children show love through words and actions.

A positive environment will be fostered in the following manner:

1. Children will be encouraged in their positive behaviors, negative and destructive behaviors will be minimized.
2. All staff personnel will be knowledgeable of infant through five year old developmental stages, family background, special needs, interests and medications being given (if any) in dealing with each individual child.
3. Children will be reminded of the appropriate behavior, and then helped to approach the problem situation with a new perspective or his/her attention will be diverted to a new activity.
4. Staff will avoid unsafe activities to protect staff and children.
5. When discipline is needed it will be administered immediately so that not only the child's behavior is influenced, but more important the child's attitude about himself/herself and about proper and improper behavior is influenced.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Regular and frequent visits by parents are encouraged. Parents may volunteer to assist teachers in the classroom, on field trips, or by sharing their special talents and interests. Each fall and spring teachers will arrange for a special time to discuss your child's development and progress. In addition, if parents wish to arrange a conference at other times, the opportunity is always welcome. Parents are free to view their child's daily observation record. A developmental check list of observations will be recorded and kept on file.

BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES PROHIBITED STAFF ACTION

BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

Our staff is committed to modeling Christian attitudes. The goal of discipline is to teach. Your child will be dealt with constructively at all times. A child will never be disciplined in such a way that is frightening or demeaning. The teachers use love, encouragement and praise. Desirable behaviors are emphasized. Should behavior problems occur, positive guidance will be offered and behavior will be redirected. Continual behavior problems will be brought to the attention of the parent. Increased staff guidance and time will need to be implemented if a child's behavior is persistently unacceptable. The staff will observe, record, and report the behavior of

the child. A plan will be developed to address the behavior and a consultation will be held with the child's parents/guardians, other staff persons, and professionals when appropriate. No child will be separated from the group unless the staff has tried less intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior which have been ineffective and the child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the center. A child who requires separation from the group will remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person. When separation from the group is used as a behavior guidance technique, the child's return to the group will depend on the child's stopping or bringing under control the misbehavior. The child will be returned to the group as soon as the behavior lessens or stops. All separations from the group must be noted on a daily log. The log will include the child's name, staff person's name, time, date, and information indicating what less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior and how the child's behavior continued to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in the center. If a child is separated from the group three or more times in a day or more than eight times in a week because of persistent unacceptable behavior, the child's parent/guardian will be notified and asked to come for a consultation. Such notification will be indicated on the daily log. The MLC-ECLC reserves the right to deny care to families if we feel that the child would benefit better in the care of a different facility.

PROHIBITED STAFF ACTION

All corporal punishment and humiliating techniques to control behavior are not allowed by any staff person. Corporal punishment includes rough handling, shoving, shaking, slapping, pinching, and spanking. Humiliating and emotional abuse includes name calling, shaming, derogatory remarks about the child, or using language that threatens or frightens the child. A child will not be mechanically restrained in a manner such as tying.

GRIEVANCE AND CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The following procedure and timeline have been established for handling grievances within sixty days:

- a. The parent should contact the teacher or aide first and discuss the matter.
- b. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the parent should contact the director for a meeting within two weeks with the parent(s) and the teacher.
- c. If the matter is not resolved, the matter is taken to the Advisory Committee within two weeks with the parents, teacher, and director.

ORGANIZATIONAL FLOW-CHART

VP of Education Division at MLC

Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center Director

Lead Teachers

Student Teachers

REPORTING POLICY FOR PROGRAMS PROVIDING

SERVICES TO CHILDREN

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 297-4123.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 507-354-8246 or local law enforcement at 507-233-6750.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Service, Licensing Division at (651) 296-3971.

What to Report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holiday.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with

persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations. *The reporting policies and procedures must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the child care program and must be made available upon request. The Division of Licensing recommends that parents with children currently enrolled in your child care program are informed of the development of the reporting policies and procedures, and provide them with an opportunity to request the information.*

EMERGENCY AND ACCIDENT POLICIES

1. Parents will be notified via telephone numbers listed on the application if a child becomes ill or an accident occurs.
2. In an emergency where time is a factor, staff will call 911 for local ambulance help and the child will be transported to the New Ulm Medical Center. Parents will be notified immediately. A complete written report will be recorded of all accidents, injuries, and incidents involving a child enrolled in the center.
3. Within 24 hours after the occurrence of an unusual accident, death or serious injury to a child, the appropriate reports will be submitted. A serious injury is defined as one that requires hospitalization of the child.
4. A log will be kept for all accidents, injuries, or incidents involving children, staff and visitors.
5. A first aid kit and emergency handbook is kept in the center. Standard first aid practices will be followed. Superficial wounds will be cleaned with soap and water, and protected.
6. Each morning before children arrive, the staff will check that the center is orderly and clean, and for any potential hazards that might cause injury to the children.
7. Hazardous substances will be stored out of the reach of the children and will be daily inspected. If a poisoning is ever suspected, the Poison Control Center will be contacted. The parents will be notified.
8. Non-toxic paint will be used and stored out of reach of the children.
9. Entrance hallways and exits will be kept clear.
10. The staff will give attention for the safety and physical welfare of the children, **NEVER LEAVING THEM UNSUPERVISED.**
11. Unstable equipment will be repaired or eliminated. Only equipment suitable to the age group will be used.
12. Matches and flammable substances will be stored in proper containers out of reach of the children.
13. Electrical outlets will be covered when not in use.
14. Food will be stored in proper containers and sanitary measures will be taken when preparing daily snacks and noon lunch (catered).
15. Snack foods having pits, cores, or seeds will have the pits, cores, and seeds removed before serving them to the children.
16. The staff will be aware of children with allergies and take necessary precautions.
17. Children will cross streets only at the appropriate crosswalks and will be directly supervised.
18. In the event a child should become missing from school, the police department will be notified and the parent will be called.

19. If an undesignated person or no one comes to pick up the child, the parent or the designated person from the emergency list will be called. If an incapacitated person or a person suspected of child abuse attempts to pick up a child, the police may be notified.
20. The persons authorized to pick up a child must sign their name on the attendance log before the child will be dismissed.
21. In the event of fire, the building will be evacuated using the designated main entrance exit or the classroom exit. Children will be led out of the building by the teachers and staff to a designated area.
22. Fire drills will be held once a month and recorded in the log. An alarm system will be used and the children will be led from the building until the all clear signal is given.
23. A fire extinguisher is easily accessible near the main door. Directions for use are posted. Fire extinguishers will be checked annually.
24. In the event that the Civil Defense sirens should sound to warn of a tornado or other notification of a tornado, the children will be taken to a designated area. Everyone will remain there until the all clear is sounded.
25. A tornado drill will be held monthly from April to September and recorded in the appropriate log.
26. 911 will be called for emergency medical care.
27. We are a smoke free building which includes our parking lot. Thank you.

Brown Co. Public Health New Ulm Medical Center
1117 Center St. 1324 5th North
P.O. Box 251 New Ulm, MN 56073
New Ulm, MN 56073 233-1000
233-6820

MN Poison Control Center
Dental 1-800-222-1222
Dorothy Hartmann, D.D.S.
26 N. Broadway
354-8943

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. All children will be required to have current immunizations and a child's immunization history will be recorded on the Child Care Immunization Record.
2. Parents are requested not to send a child to the preschool if he/she is sick. Parents will be called to pick up their sick child if the teacher feels this is necessary. The center must exclude a child
 - a. with a reportable illness or condition that may be contagious.
 - b. with chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over.
 - c. who has vomited two or three times since admission that day.
 - d. who has had three or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day.

- e. who has contagious conjunctivitis (pink eye) or pus draining from an eye until medicine or the child is not spreading the infection to others for at least 24 hours.
 - f. who has a bacterial infection such as streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy.
 - g. who has unexplained lethargy or fatigue.
 - h. who has lice, ringworm, or scabies that is untreated and contagious.
 - i. who has a 100 degrees axillary or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medicine is given.
 - j. who has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
 - k. who has significant respiratory disease.
 - l. who is not able to participate in normal activities with reasonable comfort.
 - m. who requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children present.
3. Parents will be notified via telephone numbers listed on card in file if the child becomes ill or an accident occurs.
 4. If possible, a sick or injured child will be separated from the other children and attended to by a teacher or other staff person until the parent arrives. In an emergency, 911 will be called and decisions will be made by paramedics as to the next procedures to be carried out.
 5. Parents will be notified via note posted by teachers if an infectious or communicable disease is present in the center.
 6. There will be a qualified first-aid person with CPR training present at all times. The first-aid kit contains sterile bandages and band aids, sterile compresses, scissors, an ice bag or cold pack, a surface thermometer with disposable covers, adhesive tape and a first aid handbook. The kit and emergency handbook is accessible to the staff in the school and taken on field trips. No ointments, medicines, or salves are administered without written parental permission.
 7. Children and staff are required to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before and after meals and snacks.
 8. Tables will be washed and sanitized before meals and snacks and washed after eating.
 9. Most injuries can be treated with ice, soap, and water. An accident report will be written for every accident, regardless of how minor. These reports will be signed and dated by staff and parents and kept for the records.
 10. Staff will give full attention for the safety and physical welfare of the children, **NEVER LEAVING THEM UNSUPERVISED.**
 11. Children will be out-of-doors only under the supervision of the staff.
 12. Due to prevalent allergies among children, no live pets will be in the center. (An aquarium may be an exception.)
 13. Emergencies procedures are located in each classroom in a backpack along with emergency numbers for children.