



SHERMAN OAKS LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S CENTER

**14847 Dickens Street
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403**

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Website: www.lutheranchildrencenter.org

ADMISSIONS AGREEMENT PARENT HANDBOOK

Pastor: Reverend Daniel Pezzica

Director: Diane Nixon

Administrator: Leslie O'Byrne

**“Train up a child in the way he should go, and
when he is old, he will not depart from it.”**

Proverbs 22:6

Welcome to the Children's Center. Thank you for taking time to read this Admissions Agreement – Parent Handbook. If you have any questions please come by the office or call.

Please sign and return Admissions Agreement to the office.

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CLASS ROSTERS: Each year class rosters are printed and made available to the other parents. The rosters will contain your child's name, birthday and schedule, the parents' name, the home address, and the home phone number. If you do not wish any of this information published for the other parents, you must notify the office in writing.

I have read the Admissions Agreement – Parent Handbook and agree to observe all policies set down by Sherman Oaks Lutheran Children's Center.

Both parents must sign this agreement.

Child's name _____

Mother's Signature _____ Date: _____

Father's Signature _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Email Address: _____

PARENT'S COPY

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Child's name _____

Mother's Signature _____ Date: _____

Father's Signature _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Office Copy

We welcome your family to Sherman Oaks Lutheran Children's Center. It is our purpose to communicate and establish a relationship of understanding between home and school. Please read this Admission Agreement – Parent Handbook and return the attached signature page.

MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Children's Center is one that encompasses the total development of the child. The program is structured to meet social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual needs. Our priority is to deal with the whole child, with emphasis placed on building confidence in the child as they learn to relate to others, and to their environment. While pre-school children need to develop important skills necessary for academic success, it is vital that they be provided with opportunities to explore, to experiment, and to discover the excitement in learning. All facets of a child's growth are stressed equally.

At SOLCC we offer experiences and activities that build confidence and promote the joy of discovery. Children explore and gain understanding of their world through play, quiet time, book reading, conversation, sharing, chapel time, and dramatic play. Art activities are provided to allow children to experiment with various media, making their own interpretive creations. Music, movement and rhythms are an integral part of our program. Children listen, sing, dance, and make their own music. Cognitive processes are enhanced through language development, conceptual materials, and a stimulating environment. All of these activities take place in a loving, Christian atmosphere where every child is viewed as a special gift from God.

Non-Discriminatory Policy: Sherman Oaks Lutheran Children's Center admits students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

All classes include daily, age-appropriate Christian education and all students participate in the twice-weekly chapel time. While we acknowledge different beliefs, our school is Christian by nature and all students will be expected to participate in the Center's opportunities for spiritual growth.

ORGANIZATION

SOLCC is a non-profit unit of Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church, a non-profit corporation. The Center is a community service offered by the church. It is a Christ-centered program. Grace is said before meals, Bible stories are a daily part of the curriculum, religious holidays are celebrated, and there are weekly chapel times.

The governing body of the Center is the Church Council, which is elected by ballot at the annual voters' assembly. The Center is represented by a School Board that consists of members of the church. Non-voting members of the Board are the Pastor, Center Director, and Administrator. A parent may also attend Board meetings as requested.

The Center is a licensed daycare center. Under California law, the California Department of Social Services has the right at any time, without notice or prior consent to privately interview children or staff at any licensed daycare center. DSS also has the right to inspect and audit children's records to observe the physical condition of children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional conduct physical examination of children.

DESCRIPTION OF CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

The SOLCC program is designed for the preschool child between the ages of 2 and 5 years, who will benefit from a preschool and Junior Kindergarten experience. The Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Part time and full time programs are available. The Full day schedule encompasses the above hours and includes three snacks and an Enrichment Program. The $\frac{3}{4}$ day schedule begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. and includes two snacks. The $\frac{1}{2}$ day schedule begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 1:00 and includes one snack. All schedules include lunchtime.

ADMISSION

Initial Interview: An initial interview is required in order to determine whether the Center will be able to meet the particular needs of both the parents and the child. The interview is also a good opportunity for the parent to visit the Center and ask any question of the staff. The initial interview does not guarantee the Center will be able to enroll a child, because that depends on available space and the number of persons on the waiting lists. At this first meeting, the parents may receive all the necessary forms needed to apply to enroll the child in the Center.

Registration Form: The Registration Form must be completed and returned with the deposit fee in order for the child to be registered and placed on the waiting list. When the registration form is returned to the Center office the full enrollment pack will be given to the parent.

Waiting List: If enrollment at the Center is full, children will be placed on a waiting list in chronological order from the date the application is received and deposit is paid. When a space becomes available in the Center, children currently enrolled have priority to the available space. Siblings of currently enrolled children and Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church members are given priority. Upon notification of space availability, the parent will have five (5) days to decide whether or not to accept the available space. If the parent chooses not to enroll the child, the child's name will be placed at the end of the waiting list.

Registration Fee: A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of enrollment. A \$75.00 deposit toward the registration fee must be paid for the child to be placed on the wait list. The balance is due when a position is accepted. Thereafter the annual registration fee is due at the time of enrollment for the new school year. A child that chooses to return in September but not enroll for the summer is required to pay a returning September registration fee. For children enrolled in the summer program there is a Summer Activity Fee.

Enrollment Package: To complete the enrollment process the parent must complete all forms in the enrollment package. The package includes forms required by the Department of Social Services, the Admissions Agreement - Parent Handbook and other necessary forms.

TERMS OF PAYMENT

Monthly tuition: Payments are due the first of each month. Late fees are applied to any payment received after the 5th day of the month. No bill/invoices are sent. If the Center has not received payment of the monthly fee on or before the tenth (10th.) day after payment of such fee is due, the Center may terminate the child's enrollment. Tuition rates are subject to annual changes.

Method of Payment: Payments may be made by cash, personal check, bank check or money order. All payments should be made out to SOLCC or Sherman Oaks Lutheran Children's Center. Payments should be brought to school office, put in school drop box (located on 1st floor double door) or mailed to 14847 Dickens Street, Sherman Oaks, Ca. 91403. Any returned checks are subject to an additional service charge and the application of late fees (See Monthly Tuition above). After 2 returned checks, future payments must be made in the form of cash or money order.

Late Pick Up Fees: Our licensed hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The parent of any child picked up after 6:00 p.m. violates our license and is responsible for a \$1.00 a minute late fee. This fee is paid directly to the teacher AT THE TIME OF PICK UP. Late fees not paid at pick up will be added to tuition. Children who are scheduled to leave at 1:00 or 3:30 are subject to \$7.00 per half hour or any portion thereof up to 6:00 p.m.

Absence Policy: No refunds or credits can be given for absences of any kind. This includes, but is not limited to reasons of illness or vacation.

Tuition Rates: The monthly tuition rate is subject to change and the Center will give the parent one (1) month written notice of such change.

Withdrawal by Parent The parent may withdraw the child from the Center at any time without penalty, provided that the parent notifies the Center in writing two (2) weeks prior to withdrawal. Failure to give two weeks prior written notice of withdrawal may result in payment by the parent to the Center a two week prorated fee. If a child withdraws in the middle of the month, provided that a two week prior notice has been given, the Center will pro-rate a portion of the monthly fee.

DAILY ROUTINE

The center offers full-time and part-time programs. Each schedule provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum that works with children to help them grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally and socially. This is achieved through both age appropriate curriculum and activities. All schedules include lunchtime; $\frac{3}{4}$ and full time schedules include naptime.

The children are expected to arrive at the Center at or before 9:00 a.m. No child shall be accepted without contact between the Center staff and the person bringing the child to the Center. The person bringing the child must sign the child in on the sign-in sheet and must remain until the child is accepted by someone on staff. The child will only be released to his/her parent or person authorized by the parent(s) to pick up the child. The person picking up the child must be at least 18 years of age and make contact with a member of the Center's staff and sign the sign-out sheet prior to leaving with the child. Persons picking up or dropping off must sign in and out using full first and last names and the times of drop-off and pick-up.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Immunizations: Before being admitted to the Center each child must be immunized as required by law. The parent shall provide documentation of immunizations, completed by a licensed physician, to the Center before enrollment. The record may also be documented by the child's yellow California Immunization Record.

Physician's Report requirement: Prior to, or within 30 calendar days following the acceptance of a child into the Center, the parent shall provide the Center with a completed Physician's Report as required by the Dept. of Social Services. If the completed report is not available at the time of enrollment, the parent must provide the Center with a date of a medical appointment set within one month's time. The physical assessment must be less than one year old and performed by, or under the supervision of a licensed physician. The Department of Social Service-Community Care Licensing provides the necessary form: PHYSICIAN'S REPORT-CHILD CARE CENTERS. The assessment must contain all of the following:

1. The signature of the examining physician.
2. A record of any infectious or contagious diseases which would preclude care of the child by the licensee.
3. Identification of the child's special problems and needs.

4. Identification of any prescribed medications to be taken by the child.
5. The ambulatory status of the child.

Illness: The Center cannot permit any child who is ill with a contagious or communicable disease to attend the Center. If in the opinion of the Center's staff, a child arrives at the Center and is ill, the staff member will refuse to admit the child. If a child becomes ill while the child is at the Center, the Center will immediately notify the parent and isolate the child until the child is picked up. Any child with a temperature of 100 F. or above is considered too ill to be at the Center.

For children's comfort and to reduce the risk of contagion, we require a parent to pick up his/her child from the center within 1 to 1 ½ hours after notification of your child being ill.

Children sent home ill may not return to school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

They may not return to school the following day even if the fever or other symptoms are gone in the morning.

If your child is ill and will be absent, please call to let us know. If your child has a contagious disease, it is important that you alert the school so that we may inform the other parents. A doctor's note may be required to re-admit the child. Note that if a child who is absent had a hot lunch ordered, the only way to receive a credit is by requesting it at the time of the call and prior to 9:00 a.m.

Safety: In an extreme emergency that demands the evacuation from the premises, the temporary relocation sites are Sherman Oaks Elementary School (14755 Greenleaf St.) and Sherman Oaks Presbyterian Nursery School (4445 Noble St.). The emergency hospitals are Sherman Oaks Hospital (4929 Van Nuys Blvd. 91403) and Northridge Hospital (18300 Roscoe Blvd. 91328) for trauma.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Effort will be made to communicate concerns to the parents. It is our desire to guide the children in ways to help them gain appropriate maturity in their behavior. In most cases a "team effort" on the part of the teacher, parent, administration and the child will work in the child's favor toward gradual, positive change.

Behavior concerns will include but not be limited to the following:

- Biting another child
- Hurting another child by hitting, punching, scratching, or any behavior that causes physical injury to another child.
- Intimidating other children causing the other children to be fearful repeatedly.
- Willful continued disobedience toward the teachers.
- Language (i.e. swearing) considered inappropriate for use by children.

The following steps will be taken when a child's behavior shows any of the above actions:

- Verbal communications to the parent of the behavior.
- Written and verbal notice of the behavior to the parent.
- At the third infraction, the parent will be called and a mandatory conference with the teacher will be necessary.
- At the fourth infraction, the parent will be called and may be asked to pick up their child from school immediately. No refund will be extended for these situations.
- If a child is sent home three or more times in a school year, the Director with Board approval may choose to terminate a child from school.

CHILD DROP-OFF/PICK-UP POLICY

Our children and their safety are of great concern to us. These procedures must be followed with great care in order to ensure their safety.

1. Make sure you make eye contact with the teacher as you deliver/pick up your child. Make a verbal connection (i.e. good morning/good-bye) and expect a similar response from the teacher.
2. SIGN IN and SIGN OUT! You must write your full last name. No initials please.
3. Say good-bye to both your child and the teacher when you are leaving. NEVER SNEAK AWAY!
4. Clarify these procedures with anyone picking up your child.
5. Expect ID to be requested of those picking up your child if they are not known by the staff.

PARKING:

For daily drop off and pick up of your child please park in the larger east section of the parking lot and walk along the sidewalk to the entrance of the Center. Do not park on the street. Drive slowly in the parking lot, hold your child's hand and always be aware of where the children are. Do not park in the area designated as teacher parking.

INDIVIDUALS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILD

The Center can release a child only to the parents or legal guardian(s) of the child, or to those individuals authorized to pick up the child whom the parent/guardian has listed on the Identification Form. Staff members of the Center may require any person who arrives to pick up a child to show identification.

If someone other than mom or dad is picking up your child or there is a change in pick up time, let both the teacher and the office know. The office has forms to be completed giving permission for someone else to pick up your child.

All persons authorized to pick up a child must be at least eighteen (18) years old. If telephone authorization is given written permission may be requested the following day.

If only one parent has custody of the child and the other is not authorized to pick up the child, the parent must instruct the Center of this fact, and must provide the Center director with a certified copy of the Court Order confirming the change in custody. Although we at the Center recognize that this may be inconvenient for the parent, this policy is essential in order to protect the Center against potential claims for releasing a child to an unauthorized person or for refusing to release a child to an authorized one.

If an unauthorized person arrives at the Center to pick up a child, the Center staff will notify the parent immediately.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/INFORMATION

It is part of our philosophy to bring together the child's school and home environments. Working cooperatively is most definitely to the child's advantage. A child receives a great deal of satisfaction when parents are interested and involved in the life of the school.

The monthly newsletter, found on the school website www.lutheranchildrencenter.org, and the teacher's weekly letter are the main sources of school information; check your child's mailbox daily and read the information enclosed. Messages and signups will also be placed at the main entrance of the school. We ask that you keep abreast of current happenings at the school by reading information in those areas as well the parent information center located by each classroom.

Monthly Parent Organization meetings are held. These meetings are open to all parents. Room Parents are needed to assist the teacher and office in getting information out to all class families. Parents are encouraged to participate in fund raising events.

Parent visits, conferences, and concerns: Parents may visit the Center at any time; however, we ask that you do not disturb classes that are in session. Conferences are scheduled each year. Each classroom posts a sign-up sheet for conference appointments. Parents are encouraged to ask for conferences whenever they feel the need. The teachers are available to discuss any problems that may arise.

Sherman Oaks Lutheran Children's Center wishes to be open to suggestions and constructive criticism by parents. Any grievance or concern should first be privately shared with the immediate staff involved. If a situation remains, the parent or staff member may discuss with the Director, who will listen, investigate, and may either report back or arrange for a conference with all parties present. Grievances, concerns and/or results will be reported to the Pastor and the School Board as necessary. Final responsibility for policy decisions rests with the School Board and Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church. Parental behavior that is disruptive and discouraging to staff undermines authority and stifles creativity in both students and faculty and cannot be permitted. After taking the necessary steps to resolve the grievance, parents who continue to be dissatisfied may be asked to seek other school placement in order to preserve the effectiveness and accord of the Children's Center.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Clothing Please have your child wear play clothes to school that are comfortable and easy for your child to manage as we encourage children to do as much for themselves as possible. Clothing should be simple and free of complicated fastenings. Each child must have a minimum of one complete outfit (including shoes) on hand at the Center labeled with their name. Remember to include clothes that accommodate a sudden change in weather. Any jackets or sweaters sent to school should also be clearly labeled. Experimentation and interaction with the environment and participation in all available activities are an integral part of the curriculum. Children will get dirty. Please plan their "school wardrobes" accordingly.

Shoes: The children need to be able to safely climb, run, jump and ride bikes without slipping or losing their shoes. All shoes must have a back strap. If a child arrives wearing inappropriate shoes, the parent will be called and asked to bring appropriate shoes. High heels are also not acceptable for preschool children. Rubber soled shoes are best.

Summer Attire: All suits and towels must be labeled with child's name. No two pieces bathing suits. Water shoes are encouraged. See 'shoes' for additional requirements. Sunscreen is to be applied at home. Additional applications are possible if sunscreen, labeled with your child's name, is provided. Due to possible allergies, no sunscreen will be applied that has not been brought from home.

Bedding: All children staying for nap need a small crib size blanket for naptime. Downstairs children store their blanket on their cot. Upstairs children rest on mats and must bring a standard size pillowcase for storing their blanket. Again, all items should be clearly labeled. No oversized blankets or pillows please, as storage space is at a minimum and will be sent home. Children's bedding will be sent home for laundry on a bi-weekly basis.

Diapers: Children in diapers must keep a one-week supply of diapers and wipes in the classroom. No pull-ups please.

Potty Training: Children who are being potty trained should have two complete changes of clothes available including 1 pair of shoes. (More if there are frequent accidents.) No pull-ups.

Toys: If your child feels that he/she needs to bring a special toy, book or tape to school, it is okay; however, items when not being shared should be kept in classroom cubby, and the Center is not responsible for items brought from home. Please label any items brought from home. Do not

send items with your child that cannot be played with by other children. We ask that you not send guns or weapons with your child for we do not consider them appropriate school toys. Money should also not be brought to school.

NUTRITION

Snacks: The center provides a mid-morning snack for all programs, as well as an afternoon snack for those children who remain after 3:00. A casual 5:00 snack is also given to children who stay a Full Day.

Lunch: Lunch is served around noon. There are two options available to you for lunch. Your child may bring a lunch from home. We recommend light lunches with nutritious food choices. Although we do encourage the children to eat their “growing food” first, children are allowed to choose which lunch foods they want to eat. No refrigeration or heating of lunches from home is available. All uneaten food is sent home in the lunch box. Please no gum or candy.

School Lunches are available for purchase. The menu and order forms are available on our website (lutheranchildrenscenter.org) each month. The completed order form and payment to be submitted prior to the 1st of the month. Lunches ordered after the 1st are charged at a higher rate. All cancellations (for credit) and additional ordering of lunches must be communicated to the office before 9:00 a.m.

Nut Free School: Unfortunately there are more and more children with severe nut allergies. For the safety of these children, the school is nut free.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs and videos may be taken of the children during the course of the year, both by the Center and by other parents. Pictures may be used on school website or other media used to promote the school. Professional school pictures are also offered each year. See Photograph Release

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BIRTHDAYS

Children may acknowledge their birthdays at school by providing a special snack (i.e.: cupcakes, cookies, party napkins, etc.). No **party favors**, lunches, or entertainment please. Remember to check with the teachers for any allergies and to secure the date.

Birthday invitations for your child’s party may be given out at school if these guidelines are followed. The invitations may be placed in the parent files with the knowledge of the teacher. The entire class must be invited, no exceptions. Children from another class may not be given invitations at school unless that child’s entire class is invited. If these rules are not followed the invitations must not be given out at the Center.

FIELD TRIPS

The Center may take field trips each year. Parents must sign a permission slip before a child is allowed to go on a trip. Trips are by private vehicle. All drivers must have vehicles that are in a well-maintained condition, have current valid driver’s license, evidence to show current required

California automobile insurance and be able to secure car seats for children riding in the car. A car seat must also be available for any child going on the trip. Copies of each child's emergency information will accompany driver of vehicle in which the child rides.

The children may also take nature or neighborhood walks throughout the year. Occasionally, these are spur-of-the-moment depending on weather, unit of study or special projects. The office is always aware of the children's location. If parents have any objections to having their children participate in these walks with their classmates and teachers, they must notify the office in writing so that other arrangements for their child may be made for that period of time.

OUTSIDE CONSULTATIONS

At the parent's request, a child may be interviewed, observed or tested by an outside professional under the guidance of the Center.

The Center occasionally invites students in Early Childcare programs to visit the Center to observe children as part of their educational requirements. Any observations are strictly confidential and do not record the child's name, address or other personal information.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE CASES

Each Center staff member is required by law to report evidence or suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services of law enforcement officials. Persons found guilty of failure to report abuse is subject to a fine, a jail term or both.

We reserve the right to terminate a child's enrollment for violations of SOLCC policies and rules of the Center or of the Department of Social Services.

SOME INPORTANT DO'S FOR YOU TO REMEMBER

1. Do have your child at the Center on time.
2. Do accompany your child to the classroom and say good-bye positively and quickly.
3. Do sign your child in and out – no initials please.
4. Do verbal appreciation of your child's creative work and if possible display it.
5. Do feel free to discuss with us things troubling you concerning your child's behavior, language, health problems, or family changes that could affect attitude or behavior.
6. Do pick up your child on time. A child becomes anxious when he/she seems to be left.
7. Do obey guidelines for parking lot safety.
8. Do read the monthly newsletter posted on our website www.lutheranchildrenscenter.org and the weekly teacher letters
9. Do check your child's mailbox whenever you pick up.