

Parent Handbook



Bethany Lutheran Preschool
4644 Clark Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90808
562-429-7335
License #191600943



Mission Statement for Bethany Lutheran Church

The Bethany Blueprint

Having been called to faith in Christ, moved by the love of God the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the members of Bethany Lutheran Church are committed to:

Worshipping Faithfully: (Acts 2:42, Acts 2:46) "Worship is the climax of the week past and the starting block for the week to come. In worship our past and our future rest under the umbrella of the God of eternity in whose presence we find ourselves." The golden, blank key reminds us that: Worship is the key to the Christian life and mission; Worship sets a tone for the heavenly life that lasts forever; God wipes our slate clean in worship; God forms us for mission in worship; and worship is an everyday experience.

Forming Spiritually: (Colossians 1: 10-14) "The Lord shapes us into His Disciples through His Word." The picture on the bookmark was taken on our campus and the flower reminds us that when we are rooted and planted in the Word of the Lord, we bloom in a way that brings beauty to the world around us.

Serving Passionately: (Ephesians 2:10) "A humble, willing desire to benefit others, regardless of cost to self - that is the definition of passionate service. That is how the Lord served us in His Passion." The Scrabble tile reminds us that our gifts are needed in the body and that the Lord has "turned us over" in baptism and is planning to use us to spell out His Word in the world.

Giving Proportionately: (Luke 21:1-4) "My stuff is not my stuff." The wooden nickel reminds us that our possessions are only on loan to us from God and that everything we have is truly a gift given us by God. Therefore, out of thanks for what we have received we, the people of God, joyfully return to Him a first-fruit percentage of all that we have.

Sharing Intentionally: (Matthew 28: 19-20) "Instead of being given something, today we are simply being given." We took nothing home with us after the sharing intentionally message, because God has given us to the world. We are the visible, physical reminder of this message. God, who has made himself known to us in Christ, has chosen to make himself known to the world through us, His church.

Mission/Ministry Statement for Bethany Lutheran Preschool

“To provide quality Christian Early Childhood Education in a safe, loving and caring atmosphere; daily teaching God’s forgiveness and love through our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Statement of Purpose for Bethany Lutheran Preschool

While recognizing the parent as the first and most important teacher in a child’s life, Bethany Lutheran Preschool is dedicated to providing a quality Christian developmentally appropriate environment for every Bethany Lutheran Preschool child’s early learning years.

Governing Body

Our Policy making decisions are made by the Board of Schools, which consists of voting Members of Bethany Lutheran Church.

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Long Beach, CA 90808
562-429-7335

Fax: 562-429-1693
License #: 191600943

Preschool e-mail: nseaman@bethanylutheran.org
Hours of Operation: 6:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Part-day Program 8:30 AM – 12:00 NOON

Welcome to Bethany Lutheran Preschool. This handbook explains our philosophy, goals, policies and procedures. **Please read it carefully and completely and save it for future reference**

Director: Mrs. Nola D. Seaman
Staff: Miss Karen Sutherlin, Assistant Director, Teacher
Mrs. Jean Barton, Teacher
Mrs. Belinda Padias, Teacher
Mrs. Shirley Mateik, Teacher
Mrs. Alicia Lagana, Teacher
Mrs. Cookie Krueger, Teacher's Assistant
Mrs. Donna Forney, Teacher's Assistant

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PHILOSOPHY:

We believe children are valued members of God's family who benefit by being respected, loved, and led by caring adults. At Bethany Lutheran Preschool, they will be taught God's loving guidance according to His law, and learn the blessing of forgiveness earned for each of us by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our program is designed to provide spiritual, physical, cognitive, social/emotional and creative experiences at the developmental level of the child. Children need time in which to think, experiment, discover and grow in an *unhurried and accepting atmosphere*. We will provide opportunities for your child to learn through play and interaction.

In our play-based, developmental program, we provide time for each child to develop self-confidence and trust as they acquire skills necessary for personal expression and positive social interaction. We believe children benefit when a Christ-centered school and a loving family work together to promote their education and care. Bethany Lutheran Preschool is a ministry to the parents and children of the community.

ACCREDITATION:

We are licensed by the California State Department of Social Services.

We are accredited by the National Lutheran Schools Association of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

OBJECTIVES:

On the basis of our philosophy, we, as a staff, have the following objectives for the children in our care:

- ♥ Children will, through the power of the Holy Spirit, come to know Jesus as their loving Savior and Friend.
- ♥ Children will have an opportunity to participate in a balanced daily schedule allowing time for worship, drama, art, music, literacy, science, and creative play inside the classroom and outside.
- ♥ Children will discover, manipulate and experience materials in a variety of creative ways.
- ♥ Children will interact with adults and other children in cooperative settings.
- ♥ Children will tend to their own physical needs in the areas of eating, toileting and clean-up.
- ♥ Children will use appropriate words to express feelings and needs.
- ♥ Children will develop cognitive and physical skills appropriate to their age and ability.
- ♥ Children will develop feelings of empathy toward other people.
- ♥ Children will see their parents and teachers as supportive and loving caregivers.
- ♥ Children will be developmentally ready to enter kindergarten when they leave our pre-k class or we will suggest another year of preschool.

ENROLLMENT:

Enrollment is open to children who are between the ages of 2 and 5. Children must reach the required age for the class they are entering by September 1 of the year they are entering. A child may be enrolled after a parent/Director interview to determine the child's readiness for preschool.

We do not require two year old children to be potty trained, but we do have a quota on the number of non-trained children we can accept.

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY—Bethany Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the students. Discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, disability, or national origin is prohibited. We will accept most agency assisted financial programs.

PUBLIC RELATIONS VIDEOS AND PICTURES:

When a child is enrolled in Bethany Lutheran Pre-School, his or her parents or guardians are given a Photo Release Form to complete. They have the option of okaying the public display of pictures or denying consent. They can update and change their consent/denial at any time during the school year.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING:

In accordance with California law, we are required, under penalty of fine and/or incarceration to report the **reasonable suspicion** of physical abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, or sexual abuse and exploitation. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact the parent in advance of making a report to legal authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law (California Penal Code Section 11166) is to mandate a report of **reasonable suspicion** of abuse. School staff will make such reports in the best interests of the affected child, and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review. Should this ever happen at our preschool, please be assured such action is taken only in the spirit of what is best for your child(ren) and your family. The goal is to obtain help and support where it is needed.

HARASSMENT POLICY:

Bethany Lutheran Preschool is committed to provide a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student or staff member by any other student or staff member is prohibited. Any allegations of harassment will be considered seriously by the staff and will be investigated in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, any of the following: verbal harassment, physical harassment, visual harassment, and sexual harassment.

TUITION:

Tuition changes yearly for the preschool. Tuition is charged on a School Year basis, with an annual fee, payable in 10 equal payments—August 1 through May 1. A current fee schedule is available in the Preschool Office.

Each payment is 1/10th of the total and is not related to the amount of school days in that month. If the entire year's tuition is paid on or before August 1st, a 5% discount will be given. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of the month a \$30.00 late fee will be charged. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for a non-sufficient check. **Communication with the preschool office regarding matters of tuition is vital.**

The Registration Fee is non-refundable. The registration fee includes the \$10.00 Disaster Supply Fee, which is paid only one time during your years at Bethany.

The summer program is run separately in that the tuition is charged on a weekly basis to enable and encourage family vacations. A non-refundable Registration Fee is also charged for the summer program.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL:

A two-week written notice is required if a child is to be withdrawn from preschool during the school year or tuition will continue to accrue. Any outstanding tuition must be paid in full before the child leaves Bethany Lutheran Preschool.

INSURANCE:

All students are covered by a limited accident insurance policy that is secondary to any policy you may have on your child. Information regarding payment for any accident is available in the preschool office.

STATE REQUIRED FORMS:

In order to meet state licensing regulations, it is mandatory that **all forms be completed and returned to us by the first day of attendance at Bethany Lutheran Preschool.**

If you move, change telephone numbers, begin a new job, add someone to your pick up list, or in any way change the information you have given us on your forms, **you must notify the preschool office of this change immediately!** If we ever need to contact you in an emergency it is extremely important that we have correct numbers on file at all times.

FAMILIES INVOLVED IN SERVICE HOURS (FISH):

Each Bethany Lutheran School family unit is being asked to give five hours of service to our school each year. Families with children in both preschool and elementary school will give a total of five hours of service. These hours are to be completed by the parents/guardians, grandparents, aunts/uncles or high school graduate siblings of the students in our school.

The primary purpose of the FISH Program is to strengthen the relationship between families and our school. Willingness to use God-given abilities in service to the school enriches all of us, particularly the children, as they see servant hearts modeled. Details about how FISH hours may be served are included in a folder given to each family upon entrance to Bethany Lutheran School. If you have any suggestions to add to the list, please feel free to share them with the day school Principal or the preschool Director.

When necessary, a donation of \$100 will be accepted in lieu of service hours and will be due before the first day of school. These donations will be used to hire a part-time FISH coordinator and to fund other programs in the school. Un-served hours will be billed at the rate of \$20 per hour at the end of the school year. It is up to each family to decide how and when to fulfill their FISH commitment.

Your time and talents will improve both the quality and the quantity of programs we can offer and we also hope the FISH Program will serve as a great way to get to know the other families in our Bethany community.

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD:

We do not release a child to a person not listed on your emergency information sheet. If someone else is picking up your child we must have this information in writing from you, the parent. Only someone who is 16 years or older will be allowed to pick your child up and sign your child out for the day. The person picking up your child WILL be asked for picture identification. Please remind the person picking up your child we will ask for ID and that this is for the safety of your child. Please respect the staff member who asks for ID.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT:

If a non-custodial parent is NOT TO PICK up your child, we must have an official restraining order or other legal paperwork in our files. If we do not have paperwork, we must, by law, release the child to this parent. If we have written instructions from you, we will call you to let you know this has occurred.

SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT:

California State Licensing requires that each child be signed in and out each time the child attends preschool. **Parents/Guardians** are required to sign their **full legal signature**, not initials. Failure to do so can cost the preschool a fine in the amount of \$50 for each occurrence. This cost will be passed on to the parent/guardian who failed to sign his/her legal name.

Sign-in/Sign-out sheets are posted on the bulletin board in the preschool hallway. If your child is absent, we appreciate a phone call letting us know why.

CLOTHING:

We encourage children to bring a jacket or sweater that can be left at preschool during the cooler months. We also request that a change (or changes) of clothing to be left at preschool in case of an accident requiring a clothing change.

All clothing should be marked with your child's name.

Children can, and probably will, get messy and/or dirty at times at preschool. Please send your child to preschool in clothing you can easily launder. While painting, the child often gets paint on their hands, arms and any clothing not covered by our paint aprons. We use washable paint, but it can stain some clothing.

We appreciate you sending your child to preschool in clothing he can easily manage to unfasten and refasten when going to the bathroom. Suspenders, belts, "body shirts", bib-type overalls are all adorable and look cute on your child, but can cause a bathroom accident if it can't be undone quickly enough!

TENNIS SHOES are best for playing in our playground. Open toe sandals cause sand and rubber nuggets to be inside the shoe all the time; dressy type shoes can be slippery.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS:

We are concerned about the health of your child. The California State Licensing regulations require us to have only healthy children in the preschool. Children who are ill or who show symptoms of illness while at preschool will be sent home. Germs travel fast in a day care center! By keeping your ill child at home, infections are not being spread to others and your child is not being exposed to others while his/her resistance to infections is low.

Please keep your child at home if he/she:

Has a fever or has had one in the previous 24 hours.

Has vomited in the last 24 hours.

Is taking an antibiotic and has not been on the antibiotic for 24 hours.

Has diarrhea, even if caused by an antibiotic, in the last 24 hours.

Has an eye discharge or crust. A child with conjunctivitis must stay home 24 hours after medication has started and until all discharge has stopped.

Has a constant cough.

Has a constant runny nose. Clear and runny usually means allergies, but yellow or green means infection. Please do not expose the other children and the teachers.

Has a rash.

Has symptoms of possible communicable disease.

Has a doctor's appointment to possibly diagnose an illness; please do not expose other children while waiting for time to go to the doctor.

If you do not want your child to play outside during the day, he/she should remain at home that day.

Has head lice. The child should remain at home until all treatment is complete and all lice and nits are gone.

Has ringworm. Ringworm should be treated by a doctor and is contagious until 24-48 hours after treatment.

Please report contagious diseases immediately so we can post a flyer alerting other parents of the possibility of a contagious disease in their child's classroom.

We prefer not to administer medicine to the children. However, we know most antibiotics must be taken during the day for several days. We will, with your signed consent, give **physician-prescribed medicines** to your child if you bring the medicine in the original container showing the label giving directions for giving to the child.

You will need to complete a medical release form before we will give medicine to your child.

OUCH REPORTS:

If your child has an injury at preschool, either from falling, tripping, slipping in the sand, being hit or bitten by another child, an OUCH REPORT will be sent home to let you know what happened and what action was taken. Occasionally, a teacher will be busy taking care of the minor injury and will not get the ouch report written – be sure to ask the teacher what happened when you see her the next day!

Non-emergency injuries to the head, or an injury to the teeth, will be reported to a parent via a phone call immediately so you may take appropriate action.

BEDDING NEEDS:

It is a state requirement that children in a day care program are given the opportunity to rest each day. Full-day children will need a crib size fitted sheet; a small crib size blanket and a pillowcase in which to keep them. They are to be left at preschool. We have a washer and dryer and will launder the bedding. **All bedding should be marked with your child's name.**

PROGRAM:

We are a developmental, play-based preschool. We encourage small motor development through manipulative materials in the classroom, such as blocks, puzzles, learning games, toys, and art activities such as cutting, gluing, coloring, painting, printing, play dough, weaving. Socialization skills and school readiness are developed in fun ways through interaction in the housekeeping area, book corner, small group activities. We provide an atmosphere that is comfortable and compatible with the children's interests and abilities.

We encourage large muscle development through active play outside by painting large pictures (sometimes covering the entire fence with paper to paint on), digging, climbing, swinging, balancing, riding tricycles and scooters, using sand toys, playing with the parachute, and bouncing, catching and throwing balls.

During our inside group (circle) time each day, children are learning through the repetitious daily curriculum that may include helper charts, share time, stories, finger plays, songs and theme related activities. We keep the group time geared to the attention span of each individual room's enrollment.

Not all teachers have "show and tell". Your child's teacher will let you know if she does this. We always welcome books and theme related items.

Toys from home are discouraged as they cause distractions when a child does not want others to play with them/or they are lost or broken.

We do not allow any violent type toys to be brought to the preschool at any time; nor do we allow children to play in an aggressive, violent way.

Our nutritious snack foods are provided by the preschool and the children have a scheduled morning and afternoon nutrition time. We will serve a variety of foods to satisfy the food pyramid groups. If you ask your child's teacher, she will give you a copy of her menu for the week to come.

Parent Newsletters are sent home via your child's cubby monthly. In the newsletter you will find a calendar listing any special days you need to note on your calendar; birthdays for the children and/or staff, reminders of special happenings at the preschool and other items of interest to you regarding the preschool. If you have questions or suggestions, please talk with the Director.

BIRTHDAYS:

We celebrate each child's birthday at preschool. After scheduling with your child's teacher, you are welcome to bring a nutritious snack for your child to share with his class on this special day. Ask your child's teacher for suggestions as to what to bring so all children will enjoy it – we sometimes have allergies to certain foods!

We have a special hat or crown for the birthday child and sing "Happy Birthday."

We will take pictures with your camera if you send it.



OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH:

We are a Christian preschool sponsored by Bethany Lutheran Church. Your child will have "Jesus Time" in the classroom daily. We will use songs, stories, filmstrips, flannel board, very short videos, CD's, records, puppets, and other types of visual aids to help your child come to know the love our Savior Jesus has for them. Each Tuesday at 9:15 am we take the children into the "big church" for a short chapel time.

We will sing during four Sunday morning church services—twice at 8:00 am, and twice at 10:55 am. We will let you know the dates in advance.

We will also have a special Christmas Service in December. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite friends and family to come and hear the gospel presented by our little children.

Bethany 101, offered several times each year, is a five-week adult course that explores the key truths of the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. Attendance at this course is required for those joining Bethany who are not transferring their membership from another Lutheran Congregation. Those transferring from another Lutheran church are welcome to attend as are any members of Bethany wanting to 'refresh' their catechism instruction.

Bethany 201 is a one-session event that welcomes confirmed Lutherans transferring to Bethany from another Lutheran congregation as well as those who have completed Bethany 101.



DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR BETHANY LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

The Bethany Lutheran Preschool staff is in the process of learning the principles of Conscious Discipline¹ and integrating them into our program as our classroom management model. As we acquire the Seven Powers for Self Control and the Seven Basic Skills of Discipline, we gain the ability to become proactive instead of reactive in conflict moments. We are learning to accept conflict as a teaching opportunity instead of viewing it as a disruption to learning. Each of the seven powers has a slogan to help the adult remember to use it in conflict situations. The powers and their slogans are as follows:

- 1) **Power of Perception:** No one can *make* you mad without your permission
- 2) **Power of Unity:** We are all in this together
- 3) **Power of Attention:** What you focus on, you get more of
- 4) **Power of Free Will:** The only person you can *make* change is yourself
- 5) **Power of Love:** See the best in others
- 6) **Power of Acceptance:** The moment is as it is
- 7) **Power of Intention:** Conflict is an opportunity to teach

From the Seven Powers for Self Control emerge the Seven Basic Skills of Discipline. These skills promote a peaceful inner state in children. From this state, children are free to learn, cooperate and help each other to be successful. Each of the seven skills has a slogan to help remind teachers the purpose of each skill. The Seven Powers for Self Control, along with The Seven Basic Skills of Discipline, define Conscious Discipline. The Seven Basic Skills of Discipline and the slogans that support them are as follows:

- 1) **Composure:** Becoming the person you want children to be
- 2) **Encouragement:** Building a school family
- 3) **Assertiveness:** Saying “no” and being heard
- 4) **Choices:** Building self esteem and willpower
- 5) **Positive Intent:** Creating teaching moments
- 6) **Empathy:** Handling the fussing and the fits
- 7) **Consequences:** Helping children learn from their mistakes

The principles of Conscious Discipline align easily with the teachings of Jesus. The belief that we are all sinners leads to the realization that conflict will never be eliminated in this world. We are not attempting the impossible through fear of punishment. We will never use corporal punishment. We are even working toward replacing “time out” with the “safe place” where children take themselves to re-gain their composure. Instead, we follow the example of Jesus and use moments of conflict to model and teach loving behaviors. We teach forgiveness by forgiving; we teach love by loving the children and their families. We model the seven powers and seven skills of Conscious Discipline as we teach them to our students. Through this modeling and teaching, we are helping our students to develop self-discipline. We are helping them to develop problem-solving skills that will benefit them throughout their lives and into adulthood.

¹ Bailey, B.(2001) *Conscious Discipline: 7 Basic Skills for Brain Smart Classroom Management*. Oviedo, Florida: Loving Guidance, Inc.

DISMISSAL POLICY

In an atmosphere that expects conflict and uses it to teach, mistakes are opportunities to learn responsibility. Rather than using punishment and rewards, which rely on judgement, Conscious Discipline uses consequences, which rely on reflection. Consequences are administered with the intent of helping the child learn to make better choices.

A child will only be asked to leave Bethany Lutheran Preschool if, after conferences with the teacher, the director, and the parents, it is determined that Bethany Lutheran Preschool is not able to meet the needs of the child and/or the family.

SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD:

Realizing the potential for violence in today's world, we believe your child will be as safe as possible at Bethany Lutheran Preschool.

Teachers are instructed to always ask for picture identification when a child is picked up by someone we do not recognize – even if it is the child's parent.

If we see someone on campus we do not recognize we will find out why he/she is here.

Should your child be severely injured at preschool, we will call "911" first then the parent. For this reason we must always have correct current telephone numbers on file for you.

If you have concerns regarding the safety of your child, please talk with the staff.

EMERGENCY PLAN:

Bethany Lutheran Preschool has a plan for evacuating the buildings in case of a severe emergency. If the building is deemed unsafe, we will go to the large grassy field adjacent to the parking lot.

We have food, water, medical supplies, blankets, search and rescue tools and other provisions to care for the children for up to 72 hours.

Our staff has been trained in CPR and first aid.

In case of a disaster, the gates to the parking lot will be locked and when parents come for children there will be someone posted at each gate to bring your child to you. It is imperative we have the **emergency cards that were included in your registration papers** up to date and on file at all times. Anyone not listed on this card to pick up your child will be turned away and we will stay with the child until an authorized adult comes.

TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING:

For the safety of the many children who attend both Bethany Lutheran Preschool and Bethany Lutheran Day School/Extended Day Care, we ask you to be extremely careful as you drive in and out of our parking lot. Please drive slowly, watchfully and courteously.

During the times of 8:15 am - 8:45 am, you may drive in from Clark Avenue, park and drop off your child, return to your car and drive through the parking lot and exit by turning right onto Arbor Road.

In the afternoons, between 3:00 - 3:30 you can drive through the parking lot and exit by turning right onto Arbor Road.

If there are traffic barriers at the end of the preschool playground, you must exit back onto Clark Avenue.

If the rolling gate is closed, you are asked not to open it. Please find an empty parking space on the front parking lot, or park on Clark or Arbor while you bring or pick up your child.

Please do not park in any space marked with a name and/or position. Thank you.

LATE FEES:

If a child is picked up late we do have a “late fee” charge. The first time a parent is late, the late fee is forgiven. After that, the fee is \$10.00 for each 10 minutes—or portion thereof—that you are late. This fee is to be paid in cash to the afternoon teacher in charge.

When it is apparent a parent is running late, the teacher in charge will call:

1. The parent’s work number – both parents if applicable
2. The home number
3. The emergency number given with your enrollment papers

Please use our direct telephone number to call and let the staff know you are caught in traffic and on your way. Calling the day school number will give you our voice mail and that does not get transferred to the staff on duty; they will not know you have called. Please use the **PRESCHOOL NUMBER – 562-429-7335** if you know you will be late. This helps your child to know you are coming – especially during the darker winter months when it is kind of scary to be the last child here!

Repeated lateness may be cause for asking you to withdraw your child.