

# **Welcome To First Step Preschool, BLC**

**“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord;  
And great shall be the peace of thy children.”  
Isaiah 54:14**

**Student Handbook  
Celebrating First Steps in Education**

# **Welcome to First Step Preschool, BLC**

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Proprietor**

**504 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Wahoo, NE 68066**

**402-443-3160**

**[firststep@bethlehemlutheranwahoo.org](mailto:firststep@bethlehemlutheranwahoo.org)**

**Jen Kaminski, Facility Director**

## **Teachers:**

**Julie Palm – 4/5 Head Teacher**

**Julie Palm – 3/4 Head Teacher**

**Barbie Anderson - Assistant Teacher**

## **Entrance Requirements:**

**3 year old class: The student must be 3 by July 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year and **MUST** be potty-trained.**

**4 year old class: The student must be 4 by July 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year and **MUST** be potty-trained.**

**Every student must have 2 copies of their child's immunizations turned in by the first day of school.**

### **Meet Your Teachers:**

Julie Palm graduated from Bishop Neumann High School, in Wahoo. Julie graduated from SCC in Lincoln with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Early Childhood Education. Julie has worked at various Child Care Centers as a preschool teacher and as a para at Wahoo Elementary School. Julie lives near Swedeburg with her husband, Rod and two children who also attended First Step Preschool!

We look forward to getting to know your child and for the opportunity to provide a safe, happy, environment for them to learn and grow! We are looking forward to making their first school experience a successful and happy one. Be assured that the best possible learning environment and opportunities will be available for your child's academic and social development.

**Mission Statement:** to offer a safe and fun learning environment that will enhance each child's motivation for future education and provide spiritual education to help guide them through their life. They will be receiving a foundation in basic education and spiritual knowledge about the Lord.

**The preschool program:** is a literature based, active learning program. That means we will be doing a lot of reading, writing and hands-on activities that help children learn by interacting in their environment. We direct the preschool day so that your child will be learning valuable skills even during playtime. The daily activities will increase cognitive growth, language skills, socialization skills, imagination and creativity. All activities throughout the year are age appropriate and introduced in several different ways to help the children develop skills needed to succeed in their educational future.

**Child-centered bible story:** Pastor joins the 3&4 class and the 4&5 classes weekly with a special bible story. This is a valuable asset to your child's preschool experience. We will also be learning Christian songs, games and values as well. Occasionally, we send home a Christian based coloring sheet or pamphlet. Please, take time to discuss it with your child. We are very excited to provide this experience for your children.

**Arrival:** An adult MUST bring your child to the classroom to ensure their safe arrival. Please share this important safety rule with whoever will be bringing your child. Prior to entering the classroom, please help your child find their labeled hook located outside the classroom for their coat and book bag. Please have your child use the restroom before class starts. We ask that NO drop off person enters the classroom. A teacher will greet you at the door. If your child has trouble separating from you, we ask that you make the good-bye short and sweet. Children's tears and fears will be best overcome if you do not linger. This can be hard on parents but rest assured, usually after mom and dad are gone, the tears stop and we are able to engage your child into the preschool day quickly. We will call you if we are unable to calm your child.

**Classroom Drop off Times: 8:25 a.m. M-W-F  
8:55 a.m. T-TH.**

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD BEFORE 8:25 a.m. or 8:55 a.m.  
The teachers use the time before opening to prepare for the day.  
Bethlehem Lutheran has added a security lock to the top of the stairs that lead to the classroom. This door will be locked during preschool hours with the exception of 8:25 - 8:40 a.m. on M-W-F and 8:55 - 9:10 a.m. on T-TH. If you need to enter the preschool outside of these times please ring the bell and the door will be unlocked by the Preschool staff.**

**Dismissal:** We do our best to dismiss promptly at 11:00 a.m. You may wait outside the west doors of the Church while the teacher dismisses the children one at a time. This ensures that your child is released to the correct person. Please meet your child to walk her/him safely to your car. There may be times when we must be dismissed from a different location due to events at the church. We will communicate those with you prior using the remind app.

As required by state regulations we will need to be notified by a parent/guardian if there is a change of person who will pick up your child from Preschool. The person will need to show a photo ID before staff will release your child from Preschool. Your child will only be dismissed to parents or designated drivers.

**Snacks, Show and Tell:** When your child's name appears on the calendar they are responsible for bringing the snack. They will be the helper of the day and may bring one Show and Tell item. We do not have the traditional group show and tell. It is replaced by an individual Show and Tell. This is a very important day for your child so we don't want them to miss this opportunity. If your child is absent on his/her snack day feel free to call another parent to exchange snack days. Unless it is a show and tell item please do not allow toys or undesigned money to come to school with your child. Items can get lost or broken at school.

**ALL SNACKS MUST BE PREPACKAGED AND STORE BOUGHT.** We will provide a drink and napkins. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CANDY OR GUM AS A SNACK. Keep in mind the nutritional value of the snack as well as the portion size. In an effort to reduce wasting snacks we will offer a snack to each child. They have the option to take a snack or not.

Suggestions for snacks: fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, rice krispie bars, muffins, trail mix, small sandwiches (cut in half or fourths), popcorn, or foods that start with the letter of the week.

**Field Trips:** There will be a few local Field Trips during the school year if the current health situation allows. We will communicate dates and location as those get closer.

**School cancellations:** If Wahoo Public **OR** Neumann close, due to weather, we will not have preschool. If there is a late start or early dismissal, due to weather, we will not have school. Any school cancellations related to things other than weather, such as COVID-19, will be communicated with parents through email and the Remind app.

**Visiting School:** Due to the current pandemic we will not be allowing visitors inside of the classroom.

## **Classroom Schedules:**

### **3/4 Class**

9:00-9:30 Table Activities/Center Time  
9:30-9:40 Clean Up and Restroom  
9:40-10:00 Circle Time  
10:00-10:15 Snack Time  
10:15-10:45 Art  
10:45-10:55 Outside Time (depending on weather)  
10:55-11:00 Dismissal

### **4/5 Class**

8:30 – 8:45 Arrival/Name Writing Check In/Centers  
8:45 – 9:00 Circle Time - Calendar  
9:00- 10:00 Rotation Activities and Teacher lead small group  
10:00 – 10:15 Circle – Theme, Letter of the Week  
10:15 – 10:30 Snack  
10:30 – 10:45 Library/Whole Group Activity  
10:45 – 11:00 Outside Time/Dismissal

**Table and Rotation Activities:** these activities are a very important part of our day. In the 3/4 class the color-coded tables provide the students with manipulative activities for pre-reading, pre-math, eye-hand coordination and small muscle skills. This is an independent learning activity. As the student completes an activity, the teacher will discuss it with him/her. During this discussion the teacher is able to identify strengths of each student as well as areas that still need development. Table activities encourage self-motivation and determination, for when an activity is started, it must be completed.

Rotation Activities for the 4/5 Classes will focus on different developmental areas. Each day the students will have the option of 4 or 5 different rotations. The rotation activities will include cognitive activities, dramatic play, name writing, sensory activities, fine motor activities, craft/art activities as well as a daily teacher-led activities. The students will rotate through activities over the course of thirty minutes. The goal for these activities is for the students to enhance their learning of our weekly theme while also increasing their kindergarten readiness skills.

#### **Center Time:**

Each day the students will have the option to play in 8 different areas within the classroom. These 8 areas include: Movement Center, Library, Art, Puzzles, Dramatic Play, Block Center, Chalk Wall and Manipulatives. Each area will be limited to 3 students at a time and will have center labels that allow for the students to attach their names before starting the center. If a center of choice is full the student must wait their turn.

#### **Report Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect:**

All staff will be responsible to follow the state law that requires to each of us to report all suspected child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities.

#### **Disaster Preparedness:**

In case of a man-made or natural disaster and we have to evacuate the building, we will take the students to the Public Library, located at 637 N. Maple. Parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child at the above location.



**Fire Evacuation Plan:**

At the sound of the fire alarm the teachers will direct the students to make a single file line and exit through the south door of the classroom. We will go up the south stairs and exit the building through the west doors. We will go to the southwest corner of the parking lot. If it is not safe to exit the building as described we will exit the classroom from the north door, up the stairs and out to the Scout House. This procedure will be practiced during the school year.

**Immunizations**

All students enrolled in First Step Preschool are required to be up to date on all childhood immunization. No student will be admitted to the program without a complete immunization record.

**Parent Information Brochure:**

You will receive a “Parent Information Brochure for Licensed Child Care” published by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services Division of Public Health. It is a requirement that the preschool gives you this brochure and that we keep on file the “Receipt of Parent Information Brochure” that is included in the brochure. Please complete the receipt and leave it with a teacher. The receipt needs to be on file before class begins. Thank you for helping us comply with this regulation.

**Change of Personal Information:**

Parents should report change of address, phone numbers, doctor phone number, parent work numbers, emergency numbers, and daycare provider numbers.

**All student information must be on file by the first day of preschool.**

**Personal party invitations ARE NOT ALLOWED** at school to be distributed unless the entire class is invited.

## **Student Discipline**

We expect each student to be courteous and respectful to all teachers and to the other students. They will be required to clean up after themselves and to take turns without argument. The basic disciplinary rule is the Golden Rule-**Do to others as you would have them do to you.** If they cannot work with the others in a suitable manner, they will be removed from the situation. At that time a teacher will discuss the problem with the student and come to an understanding of what the problem is and how to resolve the situation. If the problem is not resolved at school, we will report it to you so you can discuss it with your child. Then we can work together in helping your child get along better with his peers.

When giving guidance to students the teacher will be on the child's eye level, not towering above them. Guidance will be positive and address personal feelings. Choices will be given when it is appropriate.

The teacher will be specific, reasonable and consistent in enforcing rules and consequences. With every rule there will be an explanation so the student can understand the importance of the rule and the consequence of failing to follow the rule.

Good behaviors will be verbally acknowledged and praised. This reinforces good behavior and aids the child to become intrinsically motivated.

We do not have a "time-out" chair.

Procedure for promoting the students self-discipline:

1. Remind and redirect
2. Remove
3. Review
4. Return
5. Reinforce (positive)

**Complaints and Concerns:**

If you need to reach us during school hours please call the church at 402.443.3160 and leave a message. If you have questions concerning your child please call your child's teacher after school. We are very busy during school time working with your children, so it is easier to visit with you when we are not at preschool.

If you have a concern of any nature you should contact:

1. The **classroom teacher** first. Discuss the concern and search for possible solutions together. If it cannot be resolved with the teacher **then**
2. Contact the director for a conference.

**Terms for Suspension or Termination**

Harmful or aggressive behaviors that are uncommon to preschool age children.

Harmful or aggressive behaviors toward classmates or teachers that causes a person or persons to feel physically threatened.

Harmful or aggressive behaviors that cause extreme emotional distress to fellow classmates or staff.

Harmful or aggressive behaviors that create an unsafe environment for fellow classmates or staff.

**Absences:** Please inform the school of scheduled or illness related absences.

Please call 402.443.3160 to reach the preschool and leave a message regarding any illness. You can also reach the teachers by email at [firststepreschoolwahoo@gmail.com](mailto:firststepreschoolwahoo@gmail.com)

**State law** requires us to inform all parents that a child may not attend school if he has any illness associated with a fever or any communicable condition such as vomiting, diarrhea, ringworm, impetigo, head lice, pink eye, or scabies. In compliance with state regulations you must wait 24 hours after symptoms have subsided to send your child to school. If a parent refuses to exclude his child, he must provide a written statement from a physician indicating that the child's illness or condition is not highly communicable. If your child or a family member tests positive for COVID-19 please contact First Step Preschool IMMEDIATELY so that we can contact Local Health Officials and determine what safety steps need to be taken.

**Medications:**

First Step Preschool does not administer any medications to students.

**Hand Washing:**

The teacher will instruct the students on proper hand washing methods. Students will wash their hands with soap and water after outdoor activities and use of the rest room. Hand sanitizer can be used before snack if the students have not been outside or in the restroom. Teachers will use the same hand washing techniques.

**Tuition:**

Monthly tuition   \$140 (4&5class)  
                                 \$110 (3&4 class)

Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> day of every month. Checks should be made payable to **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**. Tuition and other preschool fees need to be turned into the payment box outside of the Preschool Room.

**Late fees:**   5% after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month  
                  10% after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month

**ALL TUITION IS DUE IN FULL AND ON TIME!**

Please help us comply with state regulations by signing this form and returning it to your classroom teacher. We must have this on file for review by the state department.

Thank you.

I have read and understand the First Step Preschool Student Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND SUPPORT

First Step Preschool admits students of any race, color, and ethnic or national origin.