



# Parent Handbook

**Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool**  
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Preschool: 239-984-1443  
VPK: 239-984-1442  
[www.abidingloveschool.com](http://www.abidingloveschool.com)

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool! With your love and encouragement as a guide, your child is about to begin a new learning adventure. We are blessed that you have chosen our Early Childhood center to entrust your precious gift from God. We look forward to working alongside you to teach and nurture your child. This responsibility is not something we take lightly, and we encourage you to actively participate in your child's school life at our center.

As an Early Childhood Center, we are excited to give your child what may be his or her very first school experience. We will strive to instill an absolute love of learning and the love of Jesus in your child. In our warm, loving and safe environment, your child will find a place to soar in imagination and exploration. It is our goal to educate the whole child: spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.

As we begin this partnership, we ask God's blessings on our time together. What an honor it is to have the opportunity to get to know your family and a privilege to know we have the chance to grow in our faith together. This is our focal point of each day; growing in faith and in the love of our Savior Jesus Christ!

This handbook has been designed to introduce you to our Preschool and VPK programs, and give you information about our mission, policies and procedures. We encourage you to read through this handbook and please feel free to ask any questions you may have regarding our program.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve your family.

In His Grace,

Jessica Roberts  
ECM Director and Lead Teacher  
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## **A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE**

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its Preschool through grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 410 early childhood centers, 316 elementary school and 26 high schools across the nation. The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructions to these schools by training its teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools annually tend to outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievements tests. We humbly thank God for His blessings upon our school system.

## **A PARTNERSHIP IN LEARNING**

All our children are precious gifts from God. They are the next generation and the promise of the future. Many hands join to foster the growth and development of children. At Abiding Love Preschool, we recognize that parents have primary responsibility for nurturing their children. By enrolling your child in Abiding Love Preschool, parents are enlisting the help of our early childhood teachers. Teachers at school and parents at home create many learning experiences for children, which help children learn about God's love for them and about wonderful world he has created. At the same time, parents and teachers learn about child development by observing children and interacting with them. The Early Childhood experience is truly meant to be partnership in learning - parents are always welcome and we encourage you to visit and spend time with their child at school.

## **MISSION, VISION, AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Mission:**

As an extension of Abiding Love Lutheran Church, our preschool exists to share God's love and saving plan with young children and their families, while providing spiritual and educational nurturing within a loving creative, and structured environment.

### **Vision:**

By God's grace, Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is a childcare center of highest excellence in the Cape Coral area. In doing so, we will...

- Faithfully teach God's word to children and families
- Function as a branch of the ministry at Abiding Love Lutheran Church
- Promote Christ-centered, developmentally appropriate academic excellence
- Serve as a resource for outreach and strength to our community
- Support and encourage Christian parenting

### **Objectives**

- To encourage and equip parents in their God-given role as spiritual leaders in their home.
- To foster meaningful relationships between home and school.
- To provide a Christian education that centers on the Word of God, especially as it reveals God's plan of creation, redemption and sanctification through Jesus Christ.
- To establish a distinctive identity of service in our community as a Christian center of excellence.

## **STATEMENT OF BELIEFS**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is a ministry of Abiding Love Lutheran Church and a part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We believe without reservation that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the infallible written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice.

Therefore, Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is founded on these eternal Scriptural truths:

- There is only one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God has revealed himself and his love for us in his errorless Word, the Bible.
- God created all things: he created man and woman as the crown of his creation.
- Mankind's fall into sin has corrupted the entire human race, making all people deserve damnation.

- God, through his grace, love, and mercy sent his Son Jesus to live a righteous life for us and to die as payment for everyone's sins.
- Everyone who through the work of the Holy Spirit believes that Jesus is his/her Savior receives forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.
- A Christian desire to show his/her love to God by obeying God's commandments and by helping to spread the Good News of the Savior.

### **ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ABIDING LOVE EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRY**

- The love of Jesus Christ permeates the early childhood ministry's culture and establishes the bond among students, teachers and parents.
- The authority of the Bible establishes the foundation upon which early childhood activities are rigorously pursued and upon which Christian character is fully developed.
- Children are cherished, and their needs addressed because each is uniquely created and redeemed at great cost by their loving God.
- The whole child is educated in mind, body and spirit.
- The home/school partnership is exceptionally strong because teachers understand that God gives children to parents and parents entrust children to the teachers.
- Teachers are highly qualified and motivated because their career is a calling in ministry.
- Safe, inviting, orderly classrooms and emphasis on the holistic development of the child are hallmarks of WELS early childhood ministries.
- Instruction, programs, activities and opportunities for students are comparable to and often exceed what is available in other quality early care and educational programs.

### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Spiritual growth for students and parents is a primary objective at Abiding Love. We want to encourage and equip parents in their God-given role as spiritual leaders in their home and teach the love of Jesus to our students daily.

#### **Worship Life**

*"I rejoice with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1.*

Abiding Love recognizes weekly worship as an opportunity for families to be spiritually nourished and strengthened by Word and Sacrament. In addition, regular worship helps establish good spiritual habits for children that they will carry with them into adulthood. Families are encouraged to attend church at their home congregation, or join us at Abiding Love, on a regular basis.

Abiding Love services are held at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on Sunday – these services also include a children's message. During the school year, Sunday school is held at 9:15 a.m. for children three and older, and Adult Bible Study is offered in the sanctuary during the same time.

#### **Singing in Church**

The students in the preschool are expected to sing with their class on occasion at Sunday service at Abiding Love. This is an opportunity to put their faith in action through song. Parents are always notified of singing times via posted reminders, letters sent home and on our Facebook page. In the event a child is unable to attend a scheduled singing date, parents are to notify the classroom teacher.

#### **Weekly Chapel**

Weekly chapel services are held for the preschool every Wednesday morning at 8:45 in the sanctuary. This is an opportunity for the student body, staff, and the Pastor to gather for worship, singing, and prayer. The doors will be open at 8:30 a.m. and coffee will be served - we encourage parents to join us whenever they can.

### **ACCREDITATION**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families Services (DCF).

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING PHILOSOPHY**

***“Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding” Proverbs 3:13***

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool values educating the whole child, including spiritual, physical, intellectual and social-emotional development. Helping young children excel in language and cognitive learning, promoting independence, curiosity, decision-making, cooperation, persistence, creativity and problem solving is of high importance to our staff. More than any other facet of the education offered here, the privilege of joining children and families at the feet of Jesus is what brings us the greatest joy!

We believe that children learn best through active participation. Our classroom, lesson plans, and activities are designed to engage the children and reach them according to the way they think and process information. What may look like play to most adults is actually young minds hard at work. The key is our focus on developmentally appropriate practice for each individual child.

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool seeks to carry out the following general goals for our students:

### **Spiritual Growth**

- To learn that Jesus is their Savior from sin
- To learn that Jesus is their best friend
- To learn of God’s love through Bible lessons, prayers, songs and daily activities
- To respond to God’s love in everyday life

### **Physical Growth**

- To appreciate likenesses and differences in God’s children
- To observe health and safety procedures
- To develop small and large motor strength, control and coordination

### **Intellectual Growth**

- To learn that their abilities are a gift from God and how to use them to serve others
- To instill a love of learning
- To make and express choices, plans and decisions
- To experience using different materials in many applications
- To develop language, literacy and math skills

### **Social-Emotional Growth**

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

## **OUR CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum consists of two main parts:

- Bible Curriculum
- Creative Curriculum

### **Bible Curriculum**

Our Bible instruction permeates every part of our curriculum, and it is our hope that it fills your family home as well. The foundation of our daily Bible Time includes:

- One In Christ Curriculum
- Use of beginner’s Bible and story Bible
- Songs of praise and prayers
- Bible Memory Work
- Sharing a family interaction page, sent home weekly for in-home Bible lesson review

## **Creative Curriculum**

Creative curriculum is an early childhood curriculum that focuses on project-based investigations as a means for children to apply skills. It addresses four areas of development; social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language through:

- **Circle Time:** 2-year old's: This group time helps the children begin identifying shapes and colors, saying their ABC's and counting to 30.  
3-year old's: Daily group teaching time in which children learn to recognize the days of the week, numbers, months of the year and seasons through calendar work. Children also learn to identify letters, shapes and colors through various group activities and songs.
- **Story Time:** Interactive storytelling, in which children listen and respond to a book read by staff. Children learn to recognize letters, colors, numbers, shapes and various pictures through literature.
- **Center Time:** Monitored free play in which students visit and participate in the following centers:
  - **Language Art Center:** Books, manipulatives, games and puzzles reinforce lessons about letters of the alphabet, sight words and numbers. Children also use various writing tools and media to draw or write letters and numbers. A library of children's books is available to help them recognize letters and pictures.
  - **Math Center:** Activities and games help to teach and reinforce concepts like counting, identifying shapes, number recognition, sequence and patterns.
  - **Science Center:** Hands-on activities allow students to explore how the world works. Sand and water tables will be filled with various wet and dry substances for children to investigate.
  - **Block Center:** Using blocks and Legos, children explore size and space relationships, and develop mathematical concepts of counting, sorting, comparing and matching. Through creation, children develop their fine-motor skills, and practice creativity and problem solving.
  - **Art Center:** Children are free to create their own masterpieces through a variety of media and in the process, develop valuable fine-motor skills, improve hand-eye coordination, and learn to identify colors.
  - **Pretend Center:** Students can create different play situations, such as home, school, store, and assume various roles and occupations. This type of dramatic play develops social interaction, language, and problem-solving skills as children learn to work with one another in these imaginary situations.
  - **Movement Center:** Outside time on the playground helps to develop muscle coordination and encourages creative, active play. Children also learn how to take turns and encourage one another through group play.

## **ADMISSION POLICIES**

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, sex, age, national and 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, sex, age, disability, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies and other school-administered programs.

### **Enrollment Requirements**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is open to all members of Abiding Love Church and families from the community who desire a Christian education for their children. Specific enrollment requirements include:

1. The child must be the ages of 2- to 5-years
2. All children ages 3 – 5 should be fully potty trained
3. All children must have a current immunization and physical exam record (within one year of enrollment)

**Enrollment Fee:** \$50.00 (renewed annually) This fee is not charged to Abiding Love Church member families.  
**Supply fee:** \$30.00 for Preschool (renewed annually)  
\$20.00 for VPK Wraparound

**Nap Mat:** You must supply your own mat (must be 19" x 1" x 44" vinyl), if you prefer, you may purchase one from Abiding Love for a \$20.00 fee. You must also provide a crib sheet and blanket to cover your child's mat at nap time.

### **TUITION / FINANCIAL POLICIES**

- **Full Days (7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.) \***
  - Three Full Days - \$90.00
  - Four Full Days - \$120.00
  - Five Full Days - \$150.00
  
- **Half Days (8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.) \***
  - Three Half Days - \$60.00
  - Four Half Days - \$80.00
  - Five Half Days - \$100.00
  
- **VPK AM Wraparound\*** - \$20.00 (8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)
- **VPK PM Wraparound\*** - \$20.00 (12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

#### **\*PLEASE NOTE:**

**Full- and Half-day amounts are flat rates, there will be no credit given for days your child does not attend. Three-day minimum set schedule required for Preschool and VPK Wraparound**

**Financial Policies:** Children will be enrolled with the understanding that they will remain for the full year or at the discretion of the Preschool Director. Please note: no registration or supply fees or tuition will be refunded or credited because of dismissal, withdrawal or absence. At the time of withdrawal, if a parent has a credit balance, with all tuition payments current, a refund for this credit will be issued within 30 days. In order to maintain your child's place in the preschool, tuition and VPK wraparound fees must be paid weekly (we accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, check or cash). You may complete a credit card authorization form that allows us to automatically charge your credit or debit card on a weekly basis for your tuition or VPK wraparound payment. If your tuition payments or VPK wraparound fees become delinquent by two weeks, and there has been no communication with the Director, a child may be suspended until the balance is paid in full. If a delinquency occurs more than twice during a school year, you will be required to provide an authorization for automatic payments for the remainder of the school year. All outstanding VPK wraparound fees must be paid in full the week prior to VPK ending.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

The preschool doors open at 7:00 a.m. You **MUST** sign in on the attendance sheet in the front entry - please find your child's name on the appropriate clipboard and write the time the child is dropped off, along with your signature. This is the same procedure for dismissal. We will **ONLY** release children to parents with legal custody, legal guardians or persons named in writing on your child's emergency card. Please note that the person picking up your child must be a minimum of 16 years old and on the preschool pickup list.

**If you are late picking up your child (past 5:30 p.m.) a late fee of \$20.00 will be applied.**

Cut-off times for drop off are:

- AM VPK- 8:30 a.m.
- PM VPK- 12:30 p.m.
- Preschool children and wrap around care – 8:30 a.m.

Students will only be allowed to arrive past the cutoff times if they have had an appointment and must provide a note from the doctor at the time off drop off.

**VPK students:** it is very important that they attend their VPK scheduled class time every day. We understand that illness happens and if your child cannot attend, please call Ms. Cindy at 239-984-1442 as soon as you are aware your child will not attend. Also, please bring a note when the child returns, to be provided to The Early Childhood Coalition of Southwest Florida, as VPK is a state-funded program and reimbursement is based on the child's attendance.

VPK is held in the church building (Building A). The doors open for the AM VPK class at 8:15 a.m. If you are using wraparound care, you may drop your child off at the preschool starting at 7:00 am. At 8:15 a.m. a teacher will escort the children to the church building for their VPK class. When AM VPK has ended, the children using wraparound care will be escorted back to the preschool building (Building B). Parents will pick their child up from the preschool building.

PM VPK children using wraparound care: please drop your child at the preschool building in the morning, your child will be escorted to VPK at 11:30 a.m. and will eat lunch in the VPK room. Once VPK is over, the children will then be escorted to the preschool building until parent pick up.

### **NON-Wraparound VPK**

If your child is signed up for our morning VPK program and is not using wrap around care, the VPK doors at the Church (Building A) will be locked until 8:15 am. You must be there to pick your child up at 11:30 am (no earlier than 11:30 am, unless they have a doctor appointment please). If your child attends the afternoon VPK program, they may not be dropped off until 12:30 p.m. at the Church (Building A) and not picked up earlier than 3:30 (no earlier than 3:30 pm unless they have a doctor appointment please).

### **HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool desires to build a culture where parents and teachers partner in providing the finest Christian education possible for the young children entrusted to our care. To that end, the staff at Abiding Love is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with parents and/or guardians. The following list outlines some of the important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective home/school communication.

#### **Early Childhood Information available via:**

- Important messages posted on the entrance door of the preschool and VPK
- Flyers sent home
- Facebook
- Monthly Newsletter
- Yearly calendar with closures and important dates given out at the beginning of the year
- Daily Reports sent home for non-VPK children

#### **Backpacks / Student Folders:**

Each child **must** come to preschool with a backpack that will hold their personal belongings, including a change of clothes (including, underwear), crib sheet and blanket, along with a light jacket or sweater. Your child will receive a folder on their first day that will be kept in their backpack. Please check your child's bag regularly to replenish supplies, change spare outfit and underwear, and wash bedding (weekly).

Student folders contain any written work / artwork / crafts your child has completed during the day.

Additionally, you may find notes from your child's teacher, notifications of upcoming events and account balance summaries and reminders for updating immunization / physical records. Some of this information may be time sensitive, so please check this folder daily.

**Please keep personal toys and other play items at home.**

**School Calendar:** An annual calendar is provided in the enrollment packet you received at the beginning of the school year and can also be accessed on our website ([abidinglovepreschool.com](http://abidinglovepreschool.com)).

Our VPK program follows the same calendar as Lee County schools; it observes the same holidays and off-days, as well as the same start and end dates.

The Preschool program has the same start date as Lee County schools but is typically open during teacher-duty days and some holidays – if you need care for your VPK students on these dates, the cost is \$30.00 per day.

When the school year ends, we offer a Bible-based summer camp program with a different theme every week. Detailed information will be provided in the late spring.

We are closed on Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day before and after, and the two weeks including Christmas and New Year's Day (same as Lee County Schools) and Good Friday. Notices of Holiday closings will be posted in the entrance and reminder notes will be included in the student's folders.

## **DRESS CODE**

It is important that children come to school neat, clean, and well groomed. As Christians, we recognize that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and what we wear reflects who we are. The following guidelines have been established to promote a Christ-centered atmosphere at Abiding Love.

**Dress appropriately and modesty:** As we seek to maintain an atmosphere that glorifies God and promotes learning, we require students to **avoid** the following:

- Extremes in makeup, dress, hair style or hair color that draw attention to the student or becomes disruptive to the school environment
- Clothing which has content related to immoral themes
- Tattered, torn excessively frayed or dirty clothing
- Excessively baggy, excessively tight fitting, or low-hanging pants
- Short skirts, dresses and shorts.
- Clothing that does not cover the midriff and / or undergarments (please wear shorts under skirts and dresses)
- Heading coverings: hats, caps, hoods, sunglasses (may be worn during outside playtime)
- Shoes without backs or open toes

**Dress Safely:** Students should wear clothing and footwear which is safe and appropriate for recess play and large motor activities. Wear clothing that is appropriate for the season (a light jacket or sweater may be left in the child's backpack). Please **avoid** the following:

- Bare feet, flip-flops, high heels or other footwear which can easily come off while running or playing or ones that mulch can easily get into.

Fashions change often, the dress code may need to change also, but the pertinent guideline will always be to dress in the way that brings glory to the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:31). Please dress your child appropriately, modestly, and safely.

## **SNACKS / DRINKS / LUNCH**

**WE ARE A PEANUT-FREE FACILITY. No peanut butter or any item containing peanuts will be allowed – we ask that you please check the ingredient list of items prior to sending with your child.**

### **Snacks**

We provide a morning and afternoon snack daily – a monthly calendar listing the snacks provided will be posted in the entryway. If your child has an allergy, inform the Director of any items that your child cannot have and plan to provide a snack for your child on that day.

### **Drinks**

We provide the drinks for the morning and afternoon snacks that consist of milk, apple juice, and water, with the milk and juice rotated every other day. You **must** bring a water bottle that is labeled with your child's first and last name, clearly visible on the body of the bottle. Your child has access to their water bottle at any time during the day.

## **Lunch**

Parents are to provide a lunch for your child each day – this lunch must be packed in a lunch box (no paper or plastic bags) and per DCF an ice pack must be in the lunch box. Parents are encouraged to send nutritious, low sugar items for optimal energy, nutrition and focus. Please have your child's first and last name written clearly on the outside of their lunch box. You may also send lunches that need to be warmed; however, we ask that you send items that can be heated in one minute or less. We do not provide drinks for lunch time. If you do not send a drink for your child's lunch, they will be given water. Please do not send soft drinks.

**Please do not bring your child's lunch in a glass container, this could be dangerous for all students and staff if it were to accidentally break.**

## **REST & NAPS**

DCF requires that all children aged 5 and under, who attend a full day program, must rest for a minimum of 30 minutes. Our rest time is scheduled between 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Children who are awake after 30 minutes may color or read books while remaining on their mat to rest.

Parents are required to provide a nap mat that is vinyl and at least 1-inch thick. You may find these in stores, online or you may purchase one from us for \$20.00. Additionally, DCF requires you to provide a **crib sheet and blanket** in your child's backpack for naptime. We ask that bedding be laundered weekly and brought back on Monday.

## **CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY**

Effective discipline stems from careful planning and consistency in a loving, caring environment. Caregivers strive to develop a positive relationship with each child; set clear limits and redirect unacceptable behavior. Proper Christian discipline at Abiding Love will be maintained and exercised in a loving manner keeping with the Law and Gospel. Therefore, our form of discipline is not be physical or demeaning in any way. Our staff seek to keep the wonderful example of our loving Savior before the children and aim to communicate promptly and sincerely with parents regarding any behavior problems.

If a child is crying or distraught the caregiver will attempt to ensure that the child's physical and emotional needs have been met. Children will be comforted with kind words spoken in a soothing and loving tone. We believe by using the following techniques we will minimize inappropriate behavior while maintaining a positive Christian environment:

- Use transitioning techniques such as sing-alongs, games, music and extra staff to minimize and ease the waiting time in large groups and lines
- Redirect negative behavior by changing activities
- Talking privately with a child, out of earshot of peers
- Use reflective listening to let the child know we understand how he/she is feeling
- Give specific, alternative choices
- Modeling and reinforcing appropriate Christian behavior
- Praising and promoting behaviors that enhance positive self-esteem, respect, and self-control
- Provide clear guidelines and promote positive behavior through classroom arrangement and through equipment and materials used
- Explain consequences of behavior to children
- Encourage children to resolve differences, with adult supervision
- Setting reasonable expectations for child's age
- Providing interesting, challenging activities

If these techniques are not working, staff may give the child time in the classroom recovery spot. Recovery time can help a child to relax and regain control of his/her actions and feelings. Recovery will involve separating a child from a group for a period of one to five minutes. When this time has been reached, the teacher will pray with the child to ask God for guidance and help to control their actions and feelings and then will help them re-enter the group's activity.

When recovery techniques become frequent occurrence, a conference will be scheduled between the parents and the director to discuss further intervention.

In the event that the above listed techniques are having no impact on the child's behavior, the child has become unresponsive to any interventions and has possibly become: aggressive, and is negatively impacting the classroom environment and routine, parents will be contacted and requested to come pick up their child. In most situations, and if possible, parent and director communication will precede this occurrence. No child will be spanked, pinched, hit, shaken or verbally abused. They will not be subjected to punishment that is frightening or humiliating. No child will be punished for lapse in toilet training nor will staff withhold or force meals, snacks, or naps. These techniques are prohibited even at parent's request.

### **TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool has a desire to unify parents, staff and children as a family under Christ. However, Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool reserves the rights to terminate any enrollment based on the following reasons:

- Not observing facility / parent policies and procedures as outlined in the handbook or as presented by the Director
- If our school cannot accommodate a child with extensive / special needs, based on the best interest of all children
- Physical or verbal abuse by a child or parent toward another child or staff member
- If a parent excessively and continuously abuses school drop-off and pick up times
- If a parent fails to pay tuition or is consistently receiving late fees
- A parent opposes the teaching of God's Word.

### **Discharge Policy**

The staff at Abiding Love works with families to provide the best possible care for their children. Discharge of an enrolled child will occur under the following conditions:

- **Mutual Decision between Parent and Director**
- A mutual decision may be reached between the parent and the Director whereby both parties agree that placement of the child is inappropriate, and the child would better profit from another placement. Written notice must be given.
- **Parent-Initiated Voluntary Discharge**
- Circumstances may arise when parents voluntarily choose to withdraw their child from the program. A written notice must be given to the Director stating the child's last date of attendance.
- **Center-Initiated Involuntary Discharge**

Under the guidance of Abiding Love's Board of Education, the Director may initiate discharge or immediately discharge a child for the following reasons:

- **Steps prior to center-initiated discharge:** When appropriate, actions may be taken to resolve the situation or create a correction plan.
- **Failure to pay tuition:** If payment of tuition is two weeks delinquent, and there has been no communication with the Director, a child may be suspended until the balance has been paid in full. If payment is not received, the child will be discharged.
- **Failure to observe or cooperate with the policies of the center:** The policies of Abiding Love have been established to provide quality care for the children. Any parent or child who fails to follow the policies may put the children in jeopardy. School policies are stated in this handbook and another copy is available upon request.
- **Inappropriate verbal/physical behavior toward staff or children at the school:** Immediate discharge may be granted by the Director for inappropriate physical or verbal behavior.

Any outstanding tuition / fees must be collected before student records will be returned.

### **RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Any family who feels they have been unfairly discharged may submit a written appeal to the Director and the Abiding Love Board of Education. The appeal should state the reason for the dismissal, what actions were

done on the part of the parents to resolve the problem, as well as why they feel the discharge was unfair. The child who was discharged will not be readmitted during the appeal process.

The appeal will be reviewed by the members of the Board of Education and parents will be notified of the board's decision within ten working days.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **School Visitor Procedure**

Abiding Love maintains a closed campus during school hours. For the safety of the students, all visitors, including helping parents and relatives of students, are required to check in at the front office, show ID and sign in and out. In addition to the teaching staff and secretary, we highly encourage our church members to participate in the preschool by volunteering to help with snacks and lunches, as well as reading stories to the children and singing songs of praise to the Lord.

### **CPR and First Aid Certification**

All Abiding Love Early Childhood staff hold certification in both CPR and First Aid. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits Early Childhood teachers to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

### **Life-threatening Allergies**

Any students with food allergies requiring medications, must meet with the Director prior to their first day, as well as completing the appropriate medication form included in the enrollment packet. All emergency medications must be provided on the first day of the child's attendance. Although there is no way to completely safeguard students with allergies from all the risk, we have adopted an allergen-safe environment. This does not mean an allergen-free environment; however, the environment is made as safe as possible from food allergens. If your child has a food allergy, please be certain to review the monthly snack menu and inform the Director of any item your child cannot eat, and plan to provide a snack from home for that day.

### **Immunizations**

Abiding Love Early Childhood Center, in accordance with state law, requires up-to-date immunization records (within one year) for each child be provided to the Director on the first day of the child's attendance. **If these records are not provided, your child will not be permitted to start as planned.** Additionally, if this record expires during the school year, it must be updated and provided to the Director – you will be notified approximately one month in advance of an expiration. If an updated record is not provided by the expiration date, your child's preschool attendance will be suspended until an updated record is received; however, you will be responsible for your tuition fees during this time.

### **Immunization Waivers**

Immunization waivers are available through the Department of Health Service for personal conviction, religious or medical/health reasons. Children from whom waivers are filed are complaint; however, they may be subject to exclusion from school in the event of an outbreak of disease against which they are not completely immunized.

### **Safety Procedures**

The children participate in regularly schedule fire drills with the staff to prepare for evacuation of the building if this becomes necessary.

If a weather emergency occurs during the school day, we follow safety protocols of moving the children to a safe, secure location in the center of the building. You will be notified via text or email if this situation arises.

### **Emergency School Closing**

If Lee County Schools are closed due to severe weather conditions or storm emergencies, the VPK and Preschool/Childcare is also closed. Check local TV and radio stations or the internet for this information or

feel free to call the Preschool if you are unsure of a class cancellation. A decision to close school for the day will be made before 6:30 a.m., when possible.

If the school is canceled for the day, the following media will be used to reach the parents

- Facebook Page
- Email message
- Text message

## **MEDICAL ATTENTION / ILLNESS / MEDICATION**

### **Minor Medical Attention**

If your child is injured or becomes ill at school, temporary care will be given by the staff. All minor accidents: cuts, scratches, bumps, and bites are given First Aid treatment and recorded on an accident/incident form, which must be signed by the parent, including date and time, and placed in the child's file. Parents will be notified when you pick up your child, unless the Director feels the situation requires the parent to be notified sooner via phone call.

### **Emergencies**

If the situation is a high-level concern, a parent or other designated emergency contact person will be notified immediately. If the staff feels the situation warrants, emergency service will be called. Parents will sign a waiver in the enrollment packet providing consent to call emergency service and which hospital they prefer.

Parents must contact the school office throughout the year with any changes/updates of contact names, phone numbers and email mail addresses. In all cases of injury, an accident / incident form will be filled out, signed by a parent and kept in the student's file.

### **When to Keep Your Child Home from School**

Sometimes illness requires a child to be excluded from school to prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff. Time away allows the child to rest, recover and be treated for the illness. A student with the following conditions should stay home from school:

- A fever greater than 100.5 degrees F, or an elevated temperature with a change in behavior (tired, unable to participate comfortably in activities or school, unexplained irritability, or persistent crying)  
**A child must remain fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school.**
- **Vomiting or has diarrhea**, may return when symptom free for 24 hours
- **Influenza** (flu) like symptoms (body aches, fever, headaches) and may return with a doctor's note
- **Conjunctivitis** (Pinkeye) (red eyes, green or yellow discharge). Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins, with a doctor's note.
- **Impetigo/Staph/MRSA**: Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins, with a doctor's note.
- **Pinworm**: Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins.
- **Skin Rash**, until a doctor confirms it is not contagious.
- **Scabies**: Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins, with a doctor's note.
- **Strep Throat**: Child may only return with a doctor's note.
- **Chicken pox**: Child must stay home until all lesions have dried and formed scabs, usually within six days of onset rash. May return with a doctor's note.
- **Coxsackie Virus**: (Hand, foot, mouth) Child may return 24 hours after fever ends without a fever-reducing medication and with a doctor's note. School staff needs to be aware to ensure adequate school cleaning and extra attention can be made toward hand washing among children.
- **Fifth's Disease**: A child may return when "cold" symptoms have subsided, and with a doctor's note. A child is no longer contagious once rash illness appears.

- **Head lice:** Child may return to school after treatment and when no live lice or nits are present. Upon their return, your child will be brought to the office and checked by a staff member (with parent present) to confirm no live lice or nits present.
- **Vaccine Preventable Diseases**
  - a. Measles: Child may not return until five days after the rash disappears, and must have doctor's note
  - b. Mumps: Child may not return until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling, and must have doctor's note
  - c. Pertussis (Whooping Cough): Child may not return until five days of appropriate antibiotics have been completed or until local health department states the patient is non-infectious, and must have doctor's note

### **Medication**

In concern for the general health and well-being of our children, we require an updated immunization record and student health records to be on file the first day of enrollment. With a doctor's consent of certain prescriptions, along with parental consent, we are allowed to give medications as followed:

- Asthma Inhaler or Breathing Treatment
- Antibiotics, if the time it needs to be given is during the child's time at school
- EPI Pen

The Parent/Guardian Medication Authorization form must be completed with the name of the prescription, amount to be given, and time to be given, along with the parent's signature. These forms are in the enrollment packet and are also available upon request.

Classroom teachers must continually be made aware of students who are taking any form of medication during the school day. Medications will be given by the Director/ lead teacher at Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool. All medications are kept in the office, out of reach of all students. Please be aware that all medications must be kept in their original bottle / package with the pharmacy label attached to the bottle / package - do not send medication in a plastic bag or another container. Do not leave medication in your child's backpack – they must be given to the office at the time of entering the building.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

***“Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another, be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.” 1 Peter 3:8***

Abiding Love's Early Childhood Ministry Director and staff strive to maintain an environment that nurtures Christian love and academic excellence for our students. Differences of opinions may occur but need not create a divisive relationship between school and home. For the sake of the children, there is a mutual benefit if these differences can be resolved through communication and understanding.

Please speak directly to the director regarding any concerns. Every effort will be made to address parent concerns quickly and to resolve concerns so that all involved will be satisfied. If necessary, the Board of Education may become involved.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY / SOCIAL MEDIA**

Children may be photographed, audio taped and videotaped for use within our Preschool either for educational, promotional or advertising purposes. Parents are asked to sign a release included in the Enrollment Packet granting us permission to photograph, audiotape and videotape your child. At no time will your child's name be used on our website or our Facebook / Instagram pages.

### **PARENTAL SUPPORT**

Parental involvement is critical for a child's enjoyment of school. The following tips will help you and your child enjoy school and experience success:

- Let God's Word guide your family in all phases of daily life
- Attend church regularly as a family

- Have regular family devotions and prayers
- Read every day to your child
- Encourage your child to be respectful and courteous to teachers and fellow students
- Exercise Christian discipline and support Christian discipline exercised at school
- Project a positive attitude towards education, particularly Christian education
- Make sure your child is regular and prompt in attendance.
- Ensure enough hours of sleep for your child and encourage well-balanced meals
- Refrain from being critical of school procedures in the presence of the child
- Show your child through your own involvement and concern that school is important

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Abiding Love Lutheran Preschool is committed to providing your child with a quality, Christ-centered education in a loving and nurturing environment. Above all, we pray that your child will grow in faith and love of Jesus Christ his/her Savior and that your home and our Early Childhood center work together to this end!

If you have any questions not answered in this handbook or about specific policies, please feel free to call the Director at 239-945-1443 or email at [director.abidinglovepreschool@gmail.com](mailto:director.abidinglovepreschool@gmail.com).

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

***Proverbs 22:6***