



**EARLY LEARNING CENTER OF WOODLAND CHURCH**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**

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**EARLY LEARNING CENTER OF WOODLAND CHURCH**  
**HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS**  
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The Early Learning Center of Woodland Church (the “ELC”) is a non-profit ministry of Woodland Church for children ages 1 through Kindergarten. The ELC does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, national origin, or ancestry.

**Mission Statement of Woodland Church**

Woodland Church commits to building a church family that proclaims Christ and reflects His love.

**Mission Statement of the Early Learning Center**

Woodland Church has established the ELC with the same mission, purpose, and doctrinal commitment as the church itself. The foundation for the ELC is the good news of Jesus Christ:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16.*

Prayer and scripture guide the ELC on a daily basis, as the following scriptures and others are imparted and practiced:

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength...Love your neighbor as yourself. There are no greater commandments than these. Mark 12:30-31.*

*Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” Luke 18:15-17.*

*“And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name, welcomes me.” Matthew 18:5.*

*“All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be your children’s peace.” Isaiah 54:13.*

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23.*

*Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall because it had its foundation on the rock. Matthew 7:24.*

Christ's love and character will be expressed through day-to-day experiences at the ELC. Christian beliefs will be expressed throughout the day through such activities as prayers, scripture, songs, stories, art, the observance of religious holidays, and the fostering of loving relationships. Under the guidance of Christian teachers, age-appropriate, developmental opportunities will be provided for each child to develop in the following ways:

To provide a foundation for spiritual growth through Christian principles.

To provide a Christian approach to living.

To find out as much as possible about God's creation, including people, animals, places, and things.

To be comfortable away from home in a group situation.

To express his / her feelings, both positive and negative, in an acceptable manner.

To develop creativity through art, drama, music and movement.

To appreciate the importance of communication, both written and oral.

To understand the feelings of others through stories, role-playing, and songs.

To learn to be a part of a group, waiting his / her turn, listening and practicing courtesy and respect for the teachers and the other children.

To develop physical coordination and large and small muscle competence.

To encourage problem solving.

To develop language skills.

## **Entrance Requirements**

### **Age:**

For the 1 year old group, the child must be one no later than December 31.

For the 2 year old group, the child must be two no later than December 31.

For the 3 year old group, the child must be three no later than December 31.

For the 4 year old group, the child must be four no later than December 31.

A copy of your child's birth certificate may be required at the Director's discretion for enrollment to verify age and/or parental relationships. The ELC reserves the right to change age requirements from time to time, as it deems necessary and appropriate.

### **Health:**

On or before the first day of school, the ELC must have your child's up-to-date immunization form or a statement regarding an alternative schedule of immunizations.

**Toilet Training:** Children in the 3 and 4 year old classes must be out of diapers and fully toilet trained by the time school begins. Children in the 1 and 2 year old classes may come to school in diapers.

## **Admission Policy**

1. At the time of registration, the following order of preference will be followed for admission to the program:
  - a. Children presently enrolled in the ELC and their siblings will be given first priority.
  - b. Children of members of Woodland Church will be given second priority.
  - c. All others will be given the next priority.
2. A letter of acceptance will be mailed before school begins.
3. When vacancies occur, children will be accepted from the waiting list for their age group in the order in which they applied.
4. The ELC reserves the right to accept or reject any applicant and to determine a child's continuing acceptability. Applicants may be accepted on the basis of performance, evaluation, and/or maturity, in keeping with age and capacity.

## Tuition and Fees

**Monthly tuition:** The monthly tuition is as follows:

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTHLY TUITION</u>
2 day classes	\$225
3 day classes	\$275
5 day classes	\$360

**Registration fee:** A non-refundable registration fee of \$175 is required with each application; the registration fee is \$100 for each additional child in the same family.

**Supply and event fees:** A supply fee will be due at the beginning of school in the amount of \$160 for 2 and 3-day classes, and \$200 for 5-day classes. Small additional fees may be charged for field trips or other special events during the year.

**Commitment Fee / May tuition:** When registering your child for the next ELC year, tuition for May of the following year must accompany the registration form. The tuition is non-refundable, non-transferable and may be applied towards outstanding sums, in which event May tuition will remain due. Military families under orders to move out of the New Orleans area may be refunded all or part of their May tuition if moving during the school year. A minimum of thirty days' notice is required before the child is withdrawn and a copy of military orders must be presented to the Director. May tuition will first be applied to any outstanding sums owed the ELC before any refund is considered.

**Payment dates:** Regular monthly tuition must be paid by the first day of the month. Checks, money orders, or cash should be given to the Director and should be made payable to Woodland ELC. Tuition will be considered delinquent after the 10th day of the month, and a delinquent fee of \$25 per month will be added to the monthly tuition check. In addition, a fee may be charged for NSF checks. The ELC reserves the right to apply all payments towards outstanding sums.

**Removal:** The ELC Board reserves the right to remove a child from the ELC if tuition payment is more than one month late.

**Withdrawal:** Parents should give 30 days' written notice if it becomes necessary to withdraw their child.

**Overtime Fees:** A fee of \$5.00 for every five minutes late will be imposed for unnecessary or habitual delay in picking up children.

**Class size:** The ELC enrollment is limited to 11 -14 students per teacher in the 4 year old group, 12 - 13 students in each 3 year old group, 12 students in each 2 year old group, and 10 students in each 1 year old group. Modifications to class size are made at the discretion of the Director.

## **Discipline Policy**

The ELC staff uses positive and preventive discipline techniques, including:

1. Statements to children are phrased in positive rather than negative terms.
2. Active listening is used to help children think out their own solutions to problems.
3. The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for all discipline. Teaching assistants may take emergency action or respond at the teacher's request.
4. Children who are out of control, i.e. in danger of hurting themselves, other children or damaging equipment, etc. are given time - out in a space separate from the class but in view of the teacher until they have regained their self-control.
5. A child who continues to disrupt the class may be seated in a room separate from the classroom with a teaching assistant or the director until they are ready to return.
6. When necessary, a child that has lost self-control may be held firmly but gently in the arms of an adult until they are calm enough for the time-out space.
7. Any further steps such as behavior modification techniques will be discussed with the director and the parents before being implemented.
8. In extreme cases, the ELC reserves the right to request the child's withdrawal.
9. Corporal punishment will never be used. Such action by a teacher or teaching assistant will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

## **Transportation**

No transportation to and from ELC will be furnished.

For 1 & 2 year olds: Parents are requested to deliver and pick up children in their rooms. Children are never to be dropped off in the parking lot, nor are children to be left unattended in the parking lot or in automobiles.

For 3 year olds & 4 year olds: Parents are encouraged to participate in carpool. There will be an exception for those children with siblings who are in the 1 or 2 year old classes. Carpool begins at 9:00am sharp in the Berkley Drive parking lot and ends at 9:10am. The pickup time begins at 12 noon for those not staying for the extended day program (Lunch Bunch) and at 2:00pm for those in Lunch Bunch. The teachers will be there to assist the children in getting in and out of the cars

Please do not park in handicapped parking spaces. The church's Woodland Hwy. lot is for ELC parents' use.

The Director or your child's teacher must be notified if someone other than the people listed on your child's Emergency Information Form will be picking them up from ELC. This includes any carpool arrangements or a student riding home with another student. We may ask to see a driver's license or picture identification at the time of pick-up.

### **Illness**

The ELC will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of the children. Cooperation by parents in helping to prevent the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance. Parents should watch their child for cold or other disease symptoms. Children who are sick may not attend the ELC. For the child's own protection and others in the ELC, parents should keep children at home when they show such symptoms as: sore throat, nausea or vomiting, runny nose, diarrhea, skin rash, inflamed eyes, discharge from ear, coughing, earache, enlarged glands, flushed face or fever. If a child develops any of these symptoms at the ELC, his/her parent will be notified to pick him/her up immediately. Parents should notify the ELC immediately if the child contracts a contagious disease.

Before a child can return to the ELC following a contagious disease, the Director must receive a signed note from the doctor, or they must have met the established protocols.

The ELC staff will administer no medicine. The only exception is in the event of severe allergic reactions in which the parent is to supply the emergency supplies and specific instructions from the child's pediatrician.

Children should be symptom and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Clothing and Personal Belongings**

All personal belongings and clothing must be marked with the child's name. Please send a change of clothing in a plastic bag, which can remain at the ELC. The clothing should consist of underwear, outer clothing, and socks. Please place the clothing in a small bag and mark the bag with the child's name. Please clean out your child's cubby before holidays, wash the clothing, and check that it still fits your child. Return the clothing on the first day after a holiday.

Your child must wear closed toe shoes to school. This reduces accidents in the classroom and on the playground. Girls in dresses must wear bloomers or shorts underneath their dresses.

## **Messages**

Verbal messages from the children cannot be accepted by the staff. Please speak directly to or write down all messages for the Director and teachers. Call the ELC at 504-394-8781 if you have an emergency message.

E-mail is used to disseminate information to parents and individuals that the parents have authorized to receive information. The email for the ELC is [alice@wcnola.org](mailto:alice@wcnola.org).

The Remind App is also used to disseminate information via text messages or e-mail, especially for emergency situations such as school closings. To register with the Remind system text @msoril to 81010.

## **Parent Conferences**

A parent conference will be scheduled during the month of January for all classes. Please take this opportunity to discuss any comments, questions, or concerns either of you may have about your child's progress.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very important to the young child. It is the child's own day - the day when he / she is given special attention. The teacher will let you know how children usually celebrate birthdays in the classroom. Birthday party invitations distributed at ELC must include all children in the class.

## **ELC Closings**

We follow Orleans Parish emergency closings and holidays. Our other open and close dates may vary.

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## **How Parents Can Help**

1. Talk about ELC as a joyful place.
2. Adopt a positive attitude with your child, such as "I know (not "I hope") you will like the ELC and your teacher."
3. Visit the ELC so you will understand the type of program being provided.



4. Come to as many school events as possible. You will be notified of these meetings in advance as they are scheduled from time to time during the year.
5. Let your child wear washable clothing in order that he may freely use clay, paints, and other messy materials. Please do not dress your child in flip-flops or boots. Children usually prefer closed toe shoes for our sandy playground. Rubber soled shoes are best for climbing. Let children wear clothing that is easy to take off and put on when using the rest room.
6. Show an interest in your child's work. Such questions as, "Did you paint today?" will let him know you are interested in his ELC activities. Do not expect the child to bring home something he has made every day. When you want to know what your child has made, say, "Would you like to tell me about it?" instead of "What is it?" Show appreciation and approval of your child's efforts.
7. Mark all your child's outdoor clothing with their name.
8. If your child has symptoms of illness, please keep them home. If your child has been exposed to any contagious disease, please notify the teacher and give the date of the exposure. This is to protect your child as well as other children in the ELC.
9. Share with the ELC any unusual situation in the home or changes in the home situation. The teachers will share any unusual ELC experience with the parents.
10. Do not allow your child to bring toys to the ELC. Teachers may have "share day or show and tell" when children will be invited to bring and share "scientific discoveries", a favorite book, toys, and educational supplements.
11. Give your time by volunteering to help at a party; or give of your talents by volunteering to share a special interest or talent with the children at the ELC.
12. When bringing your child to the classroom, release him/her to the teacher as soon as you have been greeted. This will cause the least amount of separation anxiety for your child. It is normal for children to experience some difficulty when separating from parents. If your child continues to have an adjustment problem, we will let you know so that we can discuss it and determine the best alternative to resolve the problem.
13. Please read all material sent home with your child.
14. Do not allow your children to bring food into the classroom.
15. Please strictly adhere to requests from teachers to prohibit certain foods from lunches and snacks in the classroom. **There are some students with life threatening allergies.**

16. For lunches and snacks: Children under 4 years of age should not be given round, firm foods unless they have been cut into very small pieces. The following foods are choking hazards: hot dogs, sausage, nuts & seeds, large chunks of meat & cheese, whole grapes, and large fruit chunks. **All foods listed must be cut in small piece. Do not send hard candy, popcorn, chewing gum or marshmallows.**

17. Make every effort to bring your child to school on time and pick him/her up at the end of the day. Entering the classroom at other times can be disruptive to the class and can result in activities being terminated.

### **Snacks**

Snacks are provided by the ELC. Parents may also be asked to provide snacks from time to time. Please consult with your child's teacher in advance concerning special occasions when you may wish to provide snacks. Please alert your child's teacher to any food allergies he/she may have experienced. Please strictly adhere to requests from teachers to prohibit certain foods from lunches and snacks in the classroom.

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The ELC asks that your child have breakfast before school and that children not bring food into the classrooms.

### **Overtime Fees**

Please arrive promptly at 9:00 A.M. and pick up no later than Noon (or at 2:00 P.M. on extended days). At the close of the ELC day, a 5-minute grace period will be allowed. After 5 minutes, a fee of \$5.00 for every five minutes late will be imposed for unnecessary or habitual delay in picking up children. In cases of emergency, if the ELC is notified, no fine will be charged.

### **Extended Day Sessions – Lunch Bunch**

An extended day is offered Monday through Thursday from Noon until 2:00 P.M. Bag lunches, including a beverage, must be brought from home. Please send lunches that are not required to be heated. Classes are limited to between 10 and 12 children depending on the age group and will be determined by the Director. The Extended Day Fee is \$45.00 per month, per child for each Extended Day per week. Children may be enrolled at the beginning of the ELC year and changes may be made on a monthly basis if needed.

Children must be registered for a specific day of the week before the beginning of each month. The specific days may not be changed during the month. Drop ins or unscheduled Lunch Bunch days may be accommodated only if there is room in the class and upon the approval of the Director or Lunch Bunch Supervisor. The fee for a drop in is \$20 per day.

### **Cubbies**

Cubbies are for the use of the ELC and its students. Material placed in cubbies must relate to the mission of the ELC, and any material desired to be placed in a cubby other than by the ELC Board or staff, must be approved of by the ELC Director and/or Board Chairperson.

### **Student Lists**

The lists of ELC students' names and/or addresses are for school purposes only and may not be used for personal or solicitation purposes. Lists of students' names and/or addresses shall not be given to anyone except to the parents of currently enrolled students and current ELC teachers.

### **Animals**

No animals, reptiles, or other creatures may be brought to school unless as part of the class curriculum and approved of by the Director. Any approved animal must be contained in a cage or other restrained environment for safety purposes.