



# Oak Grove Lutheran School Early Learning Center Handbook

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*Oak Grove Lutheran School • Fargo, North Dakota  
Updated: August 2016*

# **OAK GROVE LUTHERAN EARLY LEARNING CENTER HANDBOOK**

## **MISSION**

Oak Grove Lutheran Early Learning Center is a ministry of Oak Grove Lutheran School. Our goal is to provide a loving, safe and stimulating setting in a Christian environment.

The mission of Oak Grove Lutheran School is to express God's love by nurturing students for academic achievement, lifelong Christian commitment and loving service throughout the world.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Our philosophy is to provide a quality learning environment for children. In this setting we hope to help the child develop a positive attitude toward responsibility, self-discipline and self-esteem. A developmentally appropriate curriculum is provided that adds to the social, intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional development of each child.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

To provide a Christ-centered learning environment.

To encourage social development by providing opportunities for sharing, taking turns, making friends, solving problems, helping others and accepting others, cooperating on projects, and building self-esteem.

To encourage spiritual development in an environment where faith is openly expressed and opportunities exist to participate in prayer, praise and celebrations of the church. To participate in an environment where adults model behaviors which encourage children to be kind and respectful.

To encourage emotional development through verbal expression of thoughts and feelings, experiencing rules and limits, experiencing kindness and empathy, and recognizing and accepting emotions in others.

To encourage the physical development of large motor skills through outdoor and indoor games and activities and fine motor development by using toys, blocks, puzzles, and other small objects.

To encourage creativity by offering many kinds of materials and experiences in art, music, and literature.

To encourage interest in language through stories, dramatic play, and conversations.

Regular information will be provided to parents through a weekly newsletter. Information on your child will be available whenever asked for. Questions, opinions and involvement are enthusiastically encouraged. We want to work together to make this experience away from you and home a good one. Parents are welcome to visit anytime.

## **ADMISSION**

Oak Grove Lutheran ELC accepts children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin whatever religious faith or background.

Oak Grove Lutheran ELC requires that students who enroll must:

- be at least three years old by August 1st for pre-school
- be at least four years old by August 1st for pre-kindergarten
- be toilet trained
- be able to separate from parent
- be current on all immunizations and must give a copy to be filed
- Completely fill out all required forms and turn them into the office

Admission to Oak Grove goes through the admissions office. Call to receive information and paperwork to apply.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Please call the office if your child will be absent at 701-893-3073. Office hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

## **HEALTH**

The state of North Dakota requires that all children have their immunizations current. A state form for immunization records can be gotten from your physician. This form should be filled out and signed by a health care professional and returned in a timely manner.

Children will be visually screened as they arrive at the facility. If a child exhibits signs of illness, it will be determined if the symptoms indicate the need for exclusion until remedied. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the child will be separated from the rest of the children until a parent arrives.

Children with the following symptoms should not be sent to school and/or will be sent home should they exhibit these symptoms:

- ∞ Any indication of a childhood illness - chicken pox, mumps, etc.
- ∞ Temperatures above 100 degrees or medicine keeping it down
- ∞ Lice or nits
- ∞ Pink eye or watery, inflamed eyes or crusted eyelids
- ∞ Undiagnosed rash or sores
- ∞ Vomiting or diarrhea
- ∞ Deep and severe cough, heavy or discolored nasal discharge

- ∞ If a doctor diagnoses an infection and places the child on a prescription medication, the child should not be brought into the school until he/she has had this medication for a full 24 hours, and symptoms have disappeared.

**A child's temperature should have been normal (97.6) for at least 24 hours before he/she returns. They must be without medication to keep the temperature down. Please be conscious of this and understand it is for the benefit of all children to follow this policy.**

## **DRESS and PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Oak Grove Lutheran Elementary School has a uniform policy. The Early Learning Center does follow this policy. However, we are fine with t-shirts or sweatshirts in blue, maroon or white with no writing. The bottoms can be khaki or blue pants, jumpers, skirts with leggings, or shorts. All children should bring at least one change of clothing, including socks and underwear. Keep in mind that children will be encouraged to participate and be creative with running, climbing, and often messy art materials, so dress appropriately.

Outdoor play will be a part of the day. Tennis shoes with Velcro are best. We also ask for no other shoes to be sent along to change into. Please, be sure your child is dressed for existing weather condition, sweatshirts or jackets, mittens and hats.

We will have gym at least once each week, and sometimes two; and will get outside most every day. We want to encourage the children to be active in their play inside or out and the type of shoe they will wear somewhat dictates that. We will try to have about 60 - 120 minutes of active play each day depending on which class your child is in. Physical activity and active playtime will not be withheld as a punishment and our day is active with very little sitting.

Another area you won't need to be concerned about is **screen time**. Outside of our 30 minutes of computer lab each week and a minimal amount of time within centers, we do very little. On a special occasion, we may watch ourselves on the television following a program or a special movie at Christmas. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time to 1-2 hours per day.

## **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP**

Drop-off and pick-up will be at the gymnasium with the elementary children. A child will only be released from the school to an authorized, responsible person.

- A parent must fill out the necessary information regarding whom they will allow their child be the picked up by.
- If a person, incapable of providing adequate supervision, attempts to pick up the child, the school may notify local law enforcement officials.
- Preschool drop-off and pick-up is at the Kjos ELC north door after 8:10 a.m. and by 11:00 a.m.
- Prekindergarten is at the southeast gym door after 7:50 a.m. and by 2:45 p.m.

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE**

It is the goal of this program to help children to become happy, responsible, cooperative participants through positive reinforcement positive role modeling, intervention techniques and redirection. It is our goal to guide children to develop responsibility for their actions and respect for themselves and others. It is our responsibility to give them feedback and help them grow in respecting the rights and feelings of other people.

Another goal is to help children develop tools to problem solve. Behavior guidance is the external tool to help children develop internal control. Young children learn by experimenting, testing limits and experiencing the consequences of the behavior.

Children need to respect the rights of other children and the property of the program. When conflicts develop over property or the rights of other people, it is our goal to give each child effective communication tools to solve the conflict. When conflict continues, children may be invited to work independently for a short time to regain self-control. "Time outs" are not used in this setting. Rather, we use positive statements like: "Do you need to be by yourself for a while? This might be hard for you right now. Can I help you find something else to do?" It is against our policy to spank, or to grab a child strongly by the arm, etc. Any physical contact during a time of conflict would be to only remove a child so they would not hurt themselves or anyone else. We feel especially privileged to have the opportunity to continually model and reinforce Christian behaviors, good manners, friendships, values and a sense of community.

## **NUTRITION - LUNCH AND SNACK TIME**

Lunch will be in the elementary school gymnasium. It will be served around 10:45 a.m. Sending a cold lunch with your child is acceptable. The preschool class will not eat lunch but will have a morning snack. Please let us know of any allergies or strong dislikes.

Snacks are an important part of our day and we are asking you to help us make them nutritious. They are essential for young children's optimal growth and development. If we work together to provide a healthy snack at school our children will learn from this and be more apt to choose something at home or elsewhere that will be nutritious.

We know it is exciting to bring a snack for your child's birthday. You may want to contact your child's teacher before the date.

Keeping healthy in mind when you purchase the snacks you send with your child, think of things your child likes. Stay away from cookies, cake, sugary snacks; that are high in sugar, ones that are highly processed or high in fats. Please consider the five food groups - *fruit, vegetables, protein, grains and dairy*. Send things in their original box so we can tell what ingredients are in it.

Occasionally, we may ask for certain types or kinds of snack that may go along with what we are talking about or maybe we have had too much of a certain thing and need to change it up. Milk will be available at lunch time and in the afternoon for snack as well as water.

## SNACK IDEAS:

Crackers- graham, Ritz, Saltine  
Popcorn  
Canned Fruit- apple sauce, peaches, pears - packed in water or light syrup  
Bugles  
Pretzels  
Yogurt  
String Cheese  
Fresh Fruit- bananas, apples, oranges - things easy to get ready  
Fresh Veggies- celery, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower - cleaned and cut  
Combinations of snacks could include:  
Wheat Crackers and String Cheese  
Celery and Peanut Butter

## NORTH DAKOTA RULES AND REGULATIONS ON DISCIPLINE

75-03-08-23 and 75-03-09-23. Discipline-Punishment prohibited. Disregard of any of the following disciplinary rules is grounds for denial or revocation.

1. Discipline must be constructive or educational in nature and may include diversions, separation from the problem situation, talking with the child about the situation, praise for appropriate behavior, and gentle physical restraint, such as holding. Children may not be subjected to physical harm, fear, or humiliation.
2. Authority to discipline may not be delegated to or be accomplished by children.
3. Separation, when used as discipline, must be brief and appropriate to the child's age and circumstances. Any child must be in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated room within hearing of an adult. A child may not be isolated in a locked room or closet.
4. A child may not be physically punished for lapses in toilet training.
5. When addressing a child, or while in the presence of a child, staff members may not make derogatory remarks about the child, the child's family, race or religion nor use profane, threatening, unduly loud, or otherwise abusive language.
6. A child may not be force-fed, unless medically prescribed and administered under a physician's care.
7. Deprivation of meals may not be used as a form of discipline or punishment.
8. A child may not be punched, spanked, shaken, pinched, bitten, roughly handled, or struck by any staff member or any other adult in the facility.

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## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Early childhood services program operators and employees are mandated by North Dakota Century Code to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the child protection’s division at the appropriate county social service office. All staff, including backup staff and volunteers are trained on the policy, procedure and confidentiality in relation to child abuse/neglect. All documentation of suspected abuse/neglect is kept in a confidential file and is locked.

### Procedure

1. The director will report suspected abuse/neglect and document all concerns and have staff document their concerns.
2. If unsure whether to report the situation, the director will contact county social services to discuss the situation and follow recommendations.
3. Staff, volunteers and backup staff will document concerns, discuss concerns with the director and follow recommendations.
4. Staff, volunteers and backup staff will use their own judgment, document and report concerns to county social services when the situation is warranted and director is not available. If unsure whether to report the situation, on should contact county social services. The director will be informed immediately upon return.

### Employment Procedure

As a licensed center in the state of North Dakota, they instruct us to inform you that we will not employ an individual who has been found guilty of, pled guilty to, or pled no contest to the following crimes:

\*Homicide, assault, threat, coercion, kidnapping, gross sexual imposition, corruption or solicitation of minors, robbery or burglary.

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### Accountability Procedure

If a child will be arriving to the school unaccompanied by a parent we will confer with the parent as to the expected time of arrival. If the child fails to arrive at the expected time we will notify the parent’s by phone so they can locate the child. We will wait to hear from the parent’s as to any further steps to take. If neither of the parents is locatable we will contact the emergency contact person provided by them on the enrollment form. If all efforts fail to find a responsible party we will notify the city police.

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### Missing Child Procedure

If a child disappears from the school:

1. Contact the director or principal
2. Search immediate area for child's presence.
3. If child is not found within ten minutes, contact law enforcement center and the parents.

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### Authorized Release of a child

Children must only be released from the facility to an authorized, responsible person:

1. A parent must provide written documentation as to whom the child can be released.
2. The identity and authorization for the person to whom the child is released must be verified before the child can be released. (example-photo ID)
3. If a person, incapable of providing adequate supervision, attempts to pick up the child, the director or principal may notify local law enforcement of officials.

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### Dispensing Medication

Written permission to dispense medication and proper instructions for the administration of medication obtained from the parent if the child in the facility requires medication.

- A. Medications prescribed by a physician must be accompanied by the physician's written instructions as to dosage and storage, and labeled with the child's name and dated.
- B. Medication must be stored in the refrigerator and must be stored collectively in a spill proof container.
- C. A written record of the administration of medication, including over-the-counter medication, to each child must be kept. Records must include the following.
  - \*Date and time of each administration
  - \*Dosage
  - \*Name of the staff member administering the medication
  - \*Name of the child
  - \*Completed medication records must be included in the child's record.



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### Illness and Emergency Procedure

1. In case of serious injury, 911 will be called. First aid will be administered; the director will accompany the injured child to the hospital. We will have a statement on file, signed by the child’s parents/guardians, authorizing emergency medical care for each child in case we are unable to contact the parents/guardians.
2. In case of ingestion of poison, we will contact the Poison Control Center for instructions; parents/guardians will be notified. If the child becomes ill while in school, we will notify the parents/guardians and will discuss how the child will be cared for. If the child is more than moderately ill, is lethargic, vomiting or has diarrhea, we will ask the parent/guardian to pick up the child immediately. If the child is infectious or has a communicable condition, we will obtain guidance from local or state health department authorities as to exclusion and return to the school.
3. If a child requires medication (any drug or remedy taken or applied internally, orally or topically), we will secure and follow proper written instructions from the parents/guardians as to the administration of medication. Records including the date and time of each administration, dosages, name of person administering will be included in the child’s records.

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### CHILD CARE IN NORTH DAKOTA

#### HOW TO MAKE A REPORT OR A COMPLAINT, SUSPECTED LICENSING RULE VIOLATION OR A CONCERN

All reports of a suspected licensing rule violation should be made at the local county social service office, to any county social service office or to any of the state’s eight regional human service centers.

When reporting a licensing rule violation:

- ∞ Reports can be made in person, by telephone, or in writing.
- ∞ Written reports can be made using a state reporting form, called a “1269”. These forms are available from all county social service offices, child care resource and referral offices, the eight regional human service centers or [www.State.nd.us/eforms](http://www.State.nd.us/eforms).

[www.ndchilcare.org](http://www.ndchilcare.org)

## The problem with physical punishment

*Something to think about, "Each time I spank I am teaching, when you are angry, hit. I have never known of a child who was spanked into becoming a more loving human being." –Hiam Ginott*

1. Physical punishment is most often a sign of frustration and anger in adults, not a means of teaching children.
2. The use of physical punishment discourages adults from seeking more effective means of teaching children.
3. Physically punished children often do not develop self-control. Adults end up having to act as police officers because when the force is gone, the behavior returns.
4. Physical punishment will frequently increase rather than decrease negative acts. Children who are victims of a lot of physical punishment often tend to be aggressive and hostile. These children frequently become highly resentful, have high levels of mistrust and display a negative approach toward life and people. Persistent misbehavior is often the only way the children have to communicate that they have unrecognized and unfilled needs.
5. Physical punishment can also result in withdrawn and passive children. Extremely timid people quite typically have a history of much physical punishment.
6. The frequent use of physical punishment is strongly associated with the development of low self-image in children.
7. Physical punishment often results in the permanent cutting off of meaningful communication between the adult and the child.
8. Physical punishment hinders learning and developmental progress. When children are nervous or preoccupied with self-protection, they cannot learn as well or as much as when they are relaxed and alert.
9. Physical punishment does not teach children anything at all about constructive ways to resolve conflicts and problems.
10. Physical punishment exposes children to violence, makes children the victims of violence, and provides children with a context for learning violence.

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