



# Parent Handbook

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Updated February 2025

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## Mission and Philosophy

Welcome! Thank you for choosing TLC Child Care as your child's first school. We are honored to have the opportunity to grow with your child through this most important stage in their development. We are a community outreach program that is sponsored by Trinity Lutheran Church. We offer a unique, non-profit Child Care Center for children in the community ages 0-6 (up to 7 in the summer, those who have finished first grade), regardless of financial status. At TLC, we believe in a multi-faceted approach to learning that engages children's cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic development. We strive to offer many and varied opportunities for children to engage in hands-on discovery activities. As has been discovered through many studies, children learn best in a play-rich environment that allows the child to have some control over the kind of materials used. We empower the children in our classrooms to choose from different centers and work on skills that interest them. Our teachers design curriculum and create activities that engage all children in their care. Our teachers support learning by encouraging children to think for themselves, work on peaceful problem solving, and express their feelings and ideas in a safe, nurturing environment. It is our passion to offer a fun, stimulating, and Christian learning environment built on kindness, compassion, and understanding. We recognize and foster active partnerships between school, home, and our community.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed ancestry, sex, handicap, age, language, or national origin, as in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or the Pennsylvania Human Relationship Act of 1955, as amended.

## Objectives

We foster a loving, Christian atmosphere of caring, sharing, and developmentally appropriate practice that will encourage children to grow emotionally, socially, spiritually, and academically. We focus on educating the whole child: body, mind, and spirit.

## A TLC History

It is only because of the loving, concerned members of Trinity Lutheran Church, who had a dream of giving Glory to God through the care of young children, that the following story has become history.

**1980** - After 18 months of planning, Trinity Lutheran Church continued its ministry of caring for young children by opening a Baby-Sitting Center that was open two days a week. There were many requests throughout the year from the community to care for children of working parents.

**1981** - Trinity opened its *TLC Child Care Center* on August 31, 1981 with 5 children enrolled. TLC specialized in quality care for Infants and Toddlers, although children 6 years of age and under were accepted into the program.

**1982** - Enrollment increased rapidly, and TLC was given approval to expand to another room. Adding space allowed TLC to accommodate additional children in our program.

**1983** - "Latch Key Kids" were a new phenomenon for our community and TLC felt compelled to extend their outreach to serve this population. A summer program for these children began.

**1984** - TLC expanded again, allowing the school to divide into different age groupings. The "Latch Key" summer program was expanded to a full-time School Age Child Care program.

**1985** - TLC Child Care Center became licensed by the State of Pennsylvania. In September, additional space for our School Age Program was added.

**1986** - TLC had expanded to serve eighty-five children, growing to 17 times its original size in only five short years.

**1987** - TLC's SACC continued offering quality care to children in grades K through 3. The rest of the school continued to grow and offered services to children ages birth through six.

**1988-1997** - TLC continued to prove that we offered the highest-quality care as we routinely scored 100% on all of our DPW inspections. Space for eight children were added in Older School Age Care at the 1995 inspection. An increasing number of parents requested Older School Age Care and TLC expanded its outreach to account for this need. Our DPW License was increased to allow for 126 children in May of 1995.

**1998** - The School Age Child Care was expanded to include 5th and 6th graders.

**2000** - TLC had 101 children enrolled in their ever-expanding outreach.

**2005** - TLC enrolled in the Keystone STARs quality assurance program. Since its inception in 2002, the STARs designation has been a benchmark for Pennsylvania Early Childhood Programs.

**2015** - TLC was awarded the highest ranking of STAR 4 through the Keystone STARs accreditation process. This award is a testament to TLC's continued commitment to providing the highest level of care and shows that outside licensing agencies recognize the work that TLC does.

**2020** - TLC continued to maintain their STAR 4 licensing status throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic shutdown. Though enrollment dropped, TLC's teachers remained committed to providing high quality care to their students. Through online classrooms and email communication, teachers maintained a presence in their students' lives. When the shut down ended, TLC came back just as strong as before.

**2022** - TLC currently has 84 students enrolled and employs 24 staff members. We maintain our STAR 4 certification through the Keystone STARS accreditation agency and continuously seek to improve and update our education environment. After receiving the ARPA grant through the federal government, TLC began a several month's long refurbishment project to update the look of the school and add more 21st century teaching tools in each of their classrooms.

**2023** - TLC opened the Waddler Room. Children move up to this room from the Infant room when they begin to show signs that they are ready to crawl and/or walk, around 10 months, and then move to the Onesie room around 18 months. Our Waddler room has lots of space for our young walkers to try out their new skills, as well as a great deal of gross motor toys to help develop those muscles. The children in this room go through a lot of changes. They enter the Waddler room drinking bottles and perhaps taking two naps a day. By the time they leave this classroom, they'll be fully drinking from sippy cups and down to one nap a day. In order to make room for the Waddler room, we moved the Pre-K classroom to the third floor, right alongside the other Pre-K class. With that transition, our two Pre-K classrooms are able to collaborate and work closely with each other, and are able to better utilize the same curriculum and materials.

**2025** - TLC currently has 90 students enrolled and employs 22 staff members. We completed our Keystone Stars designation to maintain our STAR 4 certification. We purchased the Frogstreet Curriculum for our Preschoolers, which helps prepare them for Pre-K.

## Calendar

TLC is open weekdays, all year, except for the following dates:

1. New Year's Day
2. President's Day (Staff In-Service Training Day)
3. Good Friday
4. Easter Monday (Staff In-Service Training Day)
5. Memorial Day
6. Independence Day
7. Friday before the new school year begins (Staff In-Service Training Day)
8. Labor Day
9. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day (Staff In-Service Training Day)
10. Thanksgiving Day
11. The Friday after Thanksgiving Day
12. Christmas Eve
13. Christmas Day
14. The Day After Christmas (only if it falls on a weekday, this will not be taken if it falls in the weekend)

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, TLC will be closed Friday; if a holiday falls on a Sunday, TLC will be closed Monday. Parents are required to pay for holidays when the school is closed.

**Daily Program Hours:** 6:30 AM - 5:45 PM, Monday - Friday. **Ages served:** 6 weeks through age 7.

## Office Hours

The TLC CCC office hours are Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM. Please feel free to contact the office if these times are not convenient for you and we will make arrangements to accommodate you.

## Staff to Child Ratio

Infants	1:4
Onesies	1:5
Toddlers	1:6
Preschool	1:10
Pre-K	1:10
Kindergarten	1:12
Young School Age	1:12

## Registration

A registration fee of \$80 per child is required at the time of enrollment (\$120 for a family). This fee is annual and will be collected each year at the time of re-registration (Usually in the month of August). If your child cannot be enrolled during a specific time, such as for the summer, you must pay the registration fee before the start of summer to hold your child's spot. The other option that we offer is having your child come one day a week during the summer to hold their spot (See Also **Periodic Leave Program.**)

## Accident Insurance Premiums

An insurance fee of \$10 is required on all children, which is included in the registration fee each year. In case of accidents requiring medical attention, you will be notified immediately. Claims may be made through TLC 's insurance policy but may not be duplicated. If the claim is first put into the parent's insurance carrier and the entire claim is not paid, our carrier will then pay the difference.

## Payments

Payments are due at the start of your billing cycle. Your options are to pay weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. If you choose to be billed weekly, payments are due by Monday of that week. If you choose to be billed bi-weekly, payments are due by Monday of the first week. If you choose to pay monthly, payment is due by Wednesday of the first week of the month. Adjustments may be made at the discretion of the Director. Payments may be made by check, cash, or online through our payment management program, Procure. There are no fees for cash or check.

Credit card payments: Procure automatically bills you a fee of 2.7% + \$0.30 (per transaction). However, we have to bill that fee manually for debit. Procure debit fees are based on the amount PAID. So, if you pay less or more than what you were invoiced, you may be subject to an added fee OR we may need to credit you something. We'd prefer that you please stick with ONE payment method and pay the amount that we invoiced you for. If you'd like to do ACH payments, that's just \$1 per transaction. Parents are responsible for all fees associated with online payments.

When a check is returned for insufficient funds, it will be re-deposited. The third time this occurs, checks will no longer be accepted for payment. Cash payments only will be accepted. This policy also applies to online payment rejections. TLC charges a \$20 fee for all returned checks.

TLC will not be responsible for any payments left with children or with staff members.

All payments and/or field trip money should be brought directly to the office.

## Late Payments

A fee of \$10 will be charged for payments made after Wednesday unless another arrangement has been made with the Director. If payment is not made by the end of the week OR otherwise discussed date, the child will not be allowed to attend until payment is made. If payment is not made, this will forfeit the child's spot.

## Receipts

Weekly, monthly, and yearly receipts are available upon request. They are also available through Procure for those who have signed up for this application.

## Refunds

There will be no refunds for absences or vacations beyond the one-week vacation credit earned after one year of enrollment.



## Rates Per Week

Group	Full-Time Rate	Part-Time Rate	Daily Rate	½ Day Rate
Infants	\$273	\$228	\$95	\$75
Waddlers	\$273	\$228	\$95	\$75
Onesies	\$263	\$218	\$93	\$73
Toddlers	\$258	\$208	\$90	\$70
Preschool	\$243	\$193	\$86	\$60
Pre-K	\$238	\$188	\$85	\$65

Kindergarten \$230 for full day with extended care, \$215 (9-3 program only).

These rates are subject to change. Parents will be notified in writing one month prior to tuition increases, which often occur at the start of a new school year. Full time rate is calculated based upon 50 hours of childcare per week, including absences and holidays. For example: Hours not used due to absence, illness, vacation, or TLC holiday may not be carried over to be used another day. The "contracted hours" are expected to be honored daily. We do not give refunds for holidays that we are closed. TLC should be called (215-257-6636) or emailed ([tlcchildcarecenter1@gmail.com](mailto:tlcchildcarecenter1@gmail.com)) in the early morning if your child is not attending school that day.

## Sibling Discounts

### Full Time Students:

- Youngest Child - full rate
- Second Child - 10% Discount
- Subsequent Children - 20% Discount

### Part Time Students:

- Youngest Child - full rate
- Second Child - \$7 Discount
- Subsequent Children - \$10 Discount

\*Sibling discounts are not given to families paying the daily rate or ½ day rate

## Fee Vacation

Fee vacation days are days in which your child/ren DO NOT attend the school. No payment is required for those days.

This program applies to families with full or part-time children in the school and runs from September 1st through August 31st. Fee vacation days do not accumulate year to year. **Fee vacation days are not retroactive.**

The child must attend the school for 12 consecutive months to become eligible for vacation days. Families must remain on a part time basis to keep fee vacations.

This program does not apply to families that have children out of School for part of the year. This would include teachers or others that utilize the "Periodic Leave Program."

Eligible families may take up to five days of fee vacation per year for each child. Part-time families may take the number of days the child attends. For example if your child attends Monday, Wednesday and Friday, you are eligible for three days of vacation. **Subsidized and scholarship families are not eligible for this program.**

Parents **must** advise either the Director or the Assistant Director one week in advance of using a fee vacation. Fee vacations become null and void upon giving withdrawal notice.

### Periodic Leave Program

Periodic Leave of up to 12 weeks per year or the duration of the school summer break is available to **full time families only**. TLC offers families two options to hold their child's spot:

1. Parents may choose to bring their child to school one day per week on a per diem basis for the entirety of the Periodic Leave term or summer break. We require that monthly fees be paid in advance during the first week of the month to keep the spot available.
2. Parents may also choose to pay a weekly placeholder fee of \$40 per week per spot. We require that monthly fees be paid in advance during the first week of the month to keep the spot available.

### Low Income

Slots may be available for families who qualify for low-income pricing. We participate in the ELRC program that offers assistance to low-income families. For those families who do not qualify for the other programs, but who still have a hardship, please contact TLC directly as there are scholarships available for those in need.

### Delinquent Account Policy

If you are having financial problems, please talk with the Director before your account becomes delinquent. Service will be terminated if fees are not paid in full by the end of the second week, if contact has not been made with the Director. If the slot has not been filled, the child may resume care only after the parent pays another registration fee and brings the account up to date. We are aware that hardships happen, and we are more than willing to work with families to avoid delinquency.

### Withdrawal Policy

A two-week written notice must be given to the director before you withdrawal your child from the school. Fee Vacations become null and void upon notice of withdrawal.

## Part-Time Policy

Part-time is considered any schedule that is up to and including 25 hours of service. You may add non-contracted days to your schedule by notifying the director one week in advance. Additional days must be paid for on the Monday of the week of service. Refunds or credits will not be given for additional days requested, but not used. Contracted days may not be switched for non-contracted days due to teacher/child ratio.

## Change from Full to Part-Time

Requests to change from full to part-time must be approved by notifying the director at least two weeks in advance of the change. There will be a \$25 fee charged per child when changing from full to part-time. No fee will be charged to return to full time if space is available.

## Inclement Weather Policy

In the past, TLC followed a predictable pattern based on what the Pennridge School District did. Now that the district uses flexible instructional days on snow days, we use our own best judgment and look at all neighboring school districts and daycare centers to decide on delays and closures.

In the event of a delayed opening, TLC will open at 8:30am. When Pennridge has a delay or is closed, TLC will automatically operate on a two hour delay, opening at 8:30 am. The exception to this rule is if Pennridge makes the call too late, then TLC will open at regular time. TLC will make the decision on a two hour delay or closures by 5:45 am of that day. Parents will be notified of any delay or closure using email AND the emergency alert feature on Procure.

Should the school close early, parents will be notified by email and emergency alert. In these cases, we expect that children will be picked up within the hour. If you live or work a greater distance away from the school, please make sure that you have alternative pick-up plans in place for your child. Early closures are done with the safety of the families and staff in mind. It is important that your child is picked up on time to ensure that everyone gets home safely. Late fees of \$2 for every 1 minute late will apply. The safety of our families and staff is of the utmost importance to us. It is, therefore, important to have a backup option for picking up your child in case of an emergency.

In the event of a public state of emergency, TLC will abide by the declaration. Parents will not be notified by phone of a state of emergency; rather, we will use email and the emergency alert system from Procure.

The director reserves the right to close TLC if weather conditions are too severe for staff to get to the school safely, or for other safety-related concerns. TLC will also be unable to open if there is a power outage, water outage, or other building outage that prevents child care from safely operating. Parents will be notified by email and the Procure app.

\*\*\*If TLC is closed due to a declared state of emergency or necessary closing, we are willing to prorate tuition for part-time students. Contact the director for your prorated amount. If only one day is missed and children are full-time, tuition will not be prorated because the rate for four and five days is the same. If closed for two days out of five scheduled days, parents may pay the part time rate. Please request the prorated amount from the office.\*\*\*

## Emergency/Disaster

In a situation requiring immediate evacuation from the TLC building, Child/Staff ratios will be maintained and the children will be relocated to the Perkasio Mennonite Meetinghouse or another location designated by the EMS.

Children who cannot walk out of the building on their own will be evacuated as planned in consultation with a fire safety professional. We have cribs in the infant room specially designed to carry children for evacuation purposes. Parents will be notified via procare and email. The children will be supervised until a parent or guardian arrives.

## Fire Drills

Fire drills are carried out at least once every 60 days. All children and staff are involved.

## Enrollment

### Inclusion Policy

TLC Child Care Center (TLC CCC) admits children from the ages of six weeks to ten years without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability. TLC does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided to the child. To help the program staff better understand the child's needs, the staff will ask the parent or legal guardian of a child with special needs to complete a "Special Care Plan" in conjunction with the child's health care provider(s). The program will attempt to accommodate the child's needs as defined by the child's health care provider(s) or the Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan without posing an undue burden as defined by federal law. TLC Child Care Center will request a copy of the child's IEP to be placed in the child's file.

### IEP

TLC families will be asked to provide a copy of each child's IEP upon enrollment and after any updates and revisions are made. IEP meetings are commonly scheduled at the school and meetings include family members, the child's teacher(s), specialists, and often the school's director. There are adequate opportunities available for staff to meet with families and support therapists to discuss child goals and how they are implemented in daily lesson plans.

## Enrollment

Prior to the child's attendance, a conference (Getting to Know You Meeting) with the parent/guardian is required. The purpose of this meeting is to acquaint each new family with the environment, staff, and schedule for child care. During this visit, the parent/guardian will have a personal interview with the Director or Assistant Director and an opportunity to review the Parent Information Handbook and other written materials. It is recommended that the child spend some time at our facility with the parent/guardian before remaining in care without a family member.

The following forms will need to be completed and submitted to the TLC CCC office prior to the child's first day of attendance. The information on these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other caregivers only as required to meet the needs of the child:

1. Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form
2. Child Care Agreement
3. Child Health Assessment (must be returned within 30 days of enrollment date or services will be terminated)
4. Modeling Release Consent Form
5. Nondiscrimination Policy
6. TLC CCC Handbook Sign off

Information concerning the child will not be made available to anyone without the express written consent of the parent/guardian. This includes transferring records to another educational setting.

## Code of Conduct

In keeping with TLC's values and standards, mutual respect and good communication is expected of all staff and families at the school. We believe that appropriate, two-way communication is paramount to our success in delivering quality services and exceptional care for the children and families that we serve. Open communication promotes a focused, professional network which benefits all participants.

All adults, while at the school or attending school related meetings or events, must behave in a manner consistent with the school's philosophy. We expect:

- Appropriate, positive discipline of children that follows TLC CCC's discipline policy (see page 13).
- No conduct that can be viewed as threatening, including verbal and/or physical abuse of a child, parent, or staff member.
- No actions or language of a sexual nature.
- No actions or behaviors that are disruptive to the operation of the school or for its staff.
- No use of, possession of, or distribution of illegal substances. Anyone believed to be under the influence of illegal substances or alcohol while on school premises will be removed.

- No use of profane or abusive language.
- No possession of any type of weapon and/or explosive on or near the premises.
- No smoking on church property during the school's hours of operation.
- No physical violence of any kind.
- No violation of the school's confidentiality policy (see page 14)

School management will address any staff member or parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the school whose behavior is not in compliance with the Code of Conduct. This will be done via an Incident Review Meeting. Any staff member who does not comply with the expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the TLC Employee Handbook. Any parent/guardian who does not uphold the Code of Conduct will be asked to withdraw their child or children from the school. Dismissal of a family from the program is at the sole discretion of TLC and its management.

## Expulsion and Suspension Policy

### Discipline Policy

Caregivers will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, and planning to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Consistent, clear rules will be shared with all children in the classroom. Children will be involved in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Physical punishment **is not used** and **will not be tolerated on school property**. It is our goal to create a positive climate and focus on prevention of negative behaviors. We also do our best to develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors. It is also our goal to ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement. We use various tools and strategies to communicate with families and work on goals for children as challenges arise, in an effort to avoid suspension and/or expulsion from the program.

We strive to include social and emotional learning in our curriculum using our Social Emotional Library collection, along with group discussions and other age-appropriate learning opportunities. We conduct developmental screenings (Ages and Stages Questionnaires), conduct seasonal assessments using the Teaching Strategies tool, offer transition meetings, offer "getting to know you meetings," and parent-teacher conferences. We maintain a productive relationship with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU) and other support staff. We host most Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings here at the school. The Director and lead teacher typically attend to provide input and ensure progress is made with the created goals.

Behaviors such as frequent hitting, punching, shoving, biting, disruption of the school day, abusive or inappropriate language and gestures, elopement from the classroom or play area, etc. will not be tolerated at TLC. TLC will make every effort to work with the child, family, and any support staff to ensure a successful and positive outcome for every student. Should a child not respond to disciplinary measures, the following actions may occur:

- The teacher will speak informally with the parent indicating the unacceptable behavior. Follow-up on this behavior may take place in the form of informal conversations and/or written notes. The teacher/s will keep a notebook of repeated behaviors to understand the pattern of the behaviors. The teacher will share these observations with the parent on a week to week basis.
- If the inappropriate behavior continues, the parent/s will be asked to meet with the Lead Teacher and Director to discuss ongoing concerns and create a plan of action. The staff, directors, and family will work together to find resources to support the child in a successful, educational environment.
- The family may be referred to services offered through the local Intermediate Unit and/or wraparound support services provided by various organizations. The teaching staff will collaborate with support staff to work on behavior goals and improve the classroom environment overall. Open communication will be maintained between staff, families, and any outside services throughout the process.
- In the case of seriously disruptive behavior, and if deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of all persons at the school, the parent will be called, and the child may be removed from the school for the remainder of the day. Also, in the case of sudden and unexpected seriously harmful behavior, the parent will be called immediately to come and remove the child from the school for the day.

If, despite exhaustive use of all available resources to improve the classroom climate and behavior supports, the seriously disruptive and/or dangerous behavior continues, TLC reserves the right to dismiss a child from the school. This policy is to ensure a child's behavior does not pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the child, other children, and/or staff.

## Confidentiality Policy

TLC has established a written policy on confidentiality that protects students, families, and staff. The school will not disclose any materials in the records, including conference reports, service plans, immunization records, and follow-up reports without the express written consent of parents/guardians for children. Forms will be in the native language of the family and will be communicated to them through their normal means of communication.

Confidential information, such as health-related information and IEP/IEFP, will only be shared with staff who need to know information to provide the highest quality care. Otherwise, these documents will remain in a locked cabinet in the office to maintain confidentiality. These documents cannot be shared with any outside agency or other school without the express written consent of the parent or guardian. TLC is unable to pass information on to a matriculating school without obtaining written consent from the parent or guardian.

Caregivers will not discuss confidential information regarding children or families with any other staff member, unless that staff member requires the information to provide care to the child. No staff member will ever share privileged information with any entity outside of the school for any reason without the express written consent of the parent or guardian.

## Summary of Parents' Responsibilities

1. Read all messages distributed at the school.
2. Fill out and return all distributed forms by the due date.
3. Read and abide by the policies listed in the handbook.
4. Inform the school if your child will be arriving or leaving at times other than scheduled (and pay appropriate fees.)
5. Inform the school of any events away from the school that may affect the child's disposition during the school day, for example: illness, sleepless night, or a crisis at home.
6. Inform the school if the child is kept home due to illness or for any other reason.
7. Be available (or designate someone) to pick up your child if you are called by the school (illness or emergency).
8. Inform the school by written communication if someone other than the parent will come for the child.
9. Check child's cubby each day to pick up soiled or wet clothing, messages, and child's papers.
10. Label all clothing, lunch containers, and medication with a permanent marker.
11. Send child to the school with clothing appropriate for the weather.
12. Parents are responsible for putting items into cubbies or hanging items on hooks in the morning.
13. If your child is sent home in clothes belonging to the school, the parent must launder the clothes and return them.
14. Have age-appropriate health appraisals up to date, as well as changes of address, phone, etc. throughout the year.
15. Check daily reports and keep feeding instructions up to date.
16. Children are the responsibility of the parent until the parent leaves the school and once the parent arrives to pick up the child.
17. Keep track of your child's diaper needs. This includes children who are in the process of potty training.
18. Ensure we are informed prior to enrollment if the child has any special care needs or if an IFSP/IEP has been written. Copies of these plans should be provided during the enrollment process.



## Pick up and Drop Off Procedures

### Arrival and Departure Times

When filling out the initial application for enrollment, "contracted arrival and departure times" will be agreed upon in the Daycare Agreement. These contracted hours will encompass the earliest time your child will come into school and the latest they will be picked up. These contracted hours cannot exceed 50 hours per week. If the contracted hours exceed 50 hours per week, there will be an additional charge of \$6 per hour, at the discretion of the Director. These extra hours need to be approved prior to enrollment or the change in schedule. These extra hours are not "drop-in", and they are not to be used as a flexible arrangement. If a family routinely brings their child for longer than 50 hours per week, without prior notification, the director reserves the right to charge the family \$6 per every 15 minutes and up to \$15 per hour for any time used above the 50 hours. All fees are due on the day of service.

### Late Arrivals

If you drop your child off later than your contracted time, you are still expected to pick your child up at the regularly scheduled time. Unused hours may not be added to the end of the day or carried over to the next day.

### Delay in Pick-up

Parents are requested to call the school if you are delayed in picking up your children at the regularly scheduled time due to an emergency. We will stay with them and keep them calm and safe until your arrival. Without notice, you are expected to arrive at your contracted time.

### Schedule Changes

All schedule changes, whether temporary or permanent, must be made with prior approval of the Director and are requested in writing at least three days in advance of the change. Due to staffing requirements and ratios, we may not be able to honor your request. We ask that you include your child's teacher on any schedule change request. All classrooms are equipped with their own email address that will be provided in the welcome packet. Including everyone on the requests allows all involved to be aware of any potential changes to the schedule.

### 5:45 Closing Time

The school closes promptly at 5:45 each day. If your child is left at the school past 5:45 PM, you will be charged \$1 for every minute (per child) or portion thereof past 5:45 PM. This charge is payable immediately upon your arrival. If you know in advance that you are going to be late, and you have access to a phone, please notify us so that we can reassure your child. Lateness is determined according to the computer clock in the office.

## Supplies

A first day packing list is available on our website ([www.tlcperkasio.com](http://www.tlcperkasio.com)) under each classroom's heading. We also have hard copies of these sheets available for parents at the time of registration.

A blanket, sheet, and a small pillow (if age appropriate) must be left at the school for naps. We will send them home every week to be washed along with the cot cover, and they must be returned by the following Monday.

All children are expected to keep 2 complete sets of weather-appropriate spare clothes in their cubby. Please include shoes!

**Please make sure to label all personal items brought to the school with permanent markers or labels.**

We ask that no toys be brought to the school. A stuffed animal or doll may be brought for naptime only. We will not be responsible for items, including toys, brought from home.

## Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing and shoes -- clogs, flip flops, and sandals are not appropriate footwear for regular playtime. Parents are responsible for hanging coats and jackets on assigned hooks.

## Parking

Please use the small parking lot behind the Church or use the side street to park when dropping off or picking up. TLC's entrance is at the back, middle door. TLC's kindergarten classroom is the red door to the left. Please use caution when entering or leaving the parking lot as children are frequently entering or leaving the building.

If you are picking your child up at the Church lot, please park your car on Fourth Street, Chestnut Street, or the alley next to the garage. Parents are not allowed to pull into the lot as this poses a serious safety hazard to children playing there.

For the safety of all children, **parents must turn off their car motors before entering the building.**

## Safe Drop off and Pick Up Procedures

To always keep the children safe, children must be escorted to and from the parking lot, up or down the stairs, and into their classroom. Supervising adults are responsible for the children in their care until the child/ren have been placed in the care of their teacher. No child may be left unattended in the parking lot, even if they are sitting in the car.

Picking up your child/ren is your responsibility. We will not release your child/ren to anyone not authorized by you. Custody papers, if applicable, must be on file with the School Office. Please do not send someone else to pick up your child without first notifying both your child's teacher and the School Director. Your child will not be released to anyone other than parents without your written permission and proper ID (driver's license, passport, state ID, etc.) from the person picking up your children.

No child should ever be allowed to go into the parking lot ahead of an adult.

### **Supervision Policy**

No child will be left unsupervised while attending the program. Caregivers will directly supervise the children by sight and sound at all times, even when the children are sleeping.

Caregivers will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and when leaving one area and arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

## **In Cases of Illness or Injury**

### **Injury and Illness Notifications**

In the case of a minor injury (a bump or scrape of the arm or leg), teachers will notify parents using the Incident Form and the incident feature on Procare. When necessary, they will take a picture of the injured area to send to the parents. Parents will be called at the Director's discretion.

Parents will be notified by phone any time a child bumps his or her head. Typically, TLC will call one parent and leave a message with that parent if they do not answer the phone. Please communicate with the office which parent you prefer to be called first in the case of an injury or illness.

In the case of a medical emergency, the caregiver who is with the child who has pediatric first aid training will provide first aid. Staff will activate the EMS system by dialing 911 when immediate medical help is required. Staff will contact a parent or guardian. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the next emergency contact will be phoned. A staff person will accompany the child and remain with the child until the parent or guardian assumes responsibility for the child.

### **Injury and Illness Reporting and Tracking**

TLC keeps logs for the tracking of injuries and illnesses of staff and children. If a minor injury occurs or a child becomes ill during the day, a report will be completed by the lead teacher or person designated by that teacher. Illness reports will be completed and a copy will be sent home with the child during pickup. Incident/injury reports will be completed and signed by a parent and the person completing the report. The report will include the following information:

- Date and time injury/illness occurred
- The specific location injury occurred
- Child involved

- Teacher(s) present
- Description of the illness/injury
- Identification of possible contributing factors
- Preventative action to be taken
- Corrective action to be taken
- Preventative/corrective action plan completion dates

A copy of the written report will be sent home to parents, and one will be kept in a tracking log. After one year in the tracking log, reports will be moved into each child's record/file. The director or designated health and safety coordinator on staff will be responsible for copying and logging the reports. The logs will be reviewed monthly by the director or health and safety coordinator. They will collaborate to determine corrective action to be taken. The course of action will be shared with the staff and logged on the review form. The tracking review system will be shared with staff at hire and as needed to review procedures.

### Emergency Procedures

A copy of the School's Emergency procedures, along with all paperwork and up to date logs of emergency drills, can be found in the Director's office.

Fire drills are carried out at least once every 60 days. All children and staff are involved in these drills.

## Health Policy

### Daily Health Checks

Upon arrival at TLC, each child will be observed by the caregiver for signs of illness/injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the day's activities. The family will supplement these observations with an oral or written exchange of information with the child's caregiver. Teachers are required to make note of any visible marks, bruises, or other health concerns each day.

### Child Health Services

State regulations require age-appropriate health appraisals on entrance and at intervals recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. These will be requested at the following ages: 2-4 weeks; 2 months; 4 months; 6 months; 9 months; 12 months; 15 months; 18 months; 2 years and every year of age thereafter. TLC will keep on record the Parental Consent form giving TLC permission to seek emergency medical care for a child in the event of a serious illness or injury, the name of the parent's personal medical insurance carrier, and the policy number of the parent's medical insurance.

### TLC Immunization Requirements

Parents, guardians, or caregivers of students seeking to enroll in TLC CCC are required to have their children immunized against various diseases to protect the health and safety of all students and their classmates. Regulations issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health in 2017 require all students to

complete the full series of immunizations, or they may not be admitted to school. TLC CCC requires you to have any and all updated vaccines dependent on your child's age. These vaccines or preventative antibodies include: RSV, hepatitis B, Rotavirus, DTaP, Hib, Pneumococcal, Polio, Influenza/flu, MMR, Chickenpox, Hepatitis A, Covid 19 (optional).

Please find the table below to see the *2024 Recommended Immunizations for Birth Through 6-years-old* from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf>

### Care of Ill Children

The decision to exclude a child from care will be based on whether there are adequate facilities and staff available to meet the needs of both the ill child and the other children in the group. The Director makes the final determination about whether the ill child can receive care in the child care program. TLC bases its exclusion policy on the recommendations of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The final decision on whether to exclude a child from care is made by the Child Care Program's Director - American Academy of Pediatrics, PA -- 1-800-24-ECELS (PA). Children will be excluded if:

1. The child's illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities that are routinely offered to well children.
2. Illness requires more care than the staff is able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
3. Keeping the child in care poses an increased risk to the child or other children or adults with whom the child will encounter, for example:
  - a. Fever exceeds 100.4°F. Child must be fever-free for 24 hours **without the use of OTC medication before returning to the school.**;
  - b. Significant behavior changes, such as lethargy, irritability, inability to remain awake;
  - c. Vomiting; Child must be vomit-free for 24 hrs before returning to school.
  - d. Diarrhea (Stool consistency must be normal before returning to the school. Exceptions will be made for diarrhea associated with teething, medication, or change of diet).
  - e. Breathing difficulties and/or wheezing.
4. If the parent is unable to pick up a sick child, the parent is responsible for making alternate arrangements to have the child picked up from School.
5. Please inform TLC if your child becomes sick at home. This can alert other parents to bring similar symptoms in their children to medical attention sooner.

### Post-Illness Re-Admission Criteria Illness

**Keep your child home until:**

Ear Infection	Child is fever free, can withstand a normal day
Diarrhea and Vomiting	Asymptomatic for 24 hours (no vomiting for at least 24 hrs before returning to school)
Diarrhea	Asymptomatic and stool consistency has returned to normal
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever/Tonsillitis	has been on antibiotics for 24 hrs
Pink Eye	must have 3 rounds of drops OR 4 doses of ointment
RSV	Child needs to be cleared by a doctor before returning to school and providing a doctor's note.
Croup	Child is fever free, can withstand a normal day
Coxsackie Virus (Hand, foot, and mouth)	Fever free, blisters are crusted over and no longer visible
Pneumonia	24 hours after the start of treatment, able to withstand a normal day
Whooping Cough	5 days after antibiotic treatment has begun
Thrush	24 hours after antifungal treatment has begun
Infestations (lice, scabies)	Until child is completely nit, scabies etc., free and has had appropriate and recommended treatment by the State Health Department
Pinworm OR Ringworm	has been on antibiotics for 24 hrs
Chicken Pox	One week after onset of rash and until chicken pox are scabbed over
Impetigo	24 hours after treatment began, rash must be covered until gone

**\*\*\*Other contagious illnesses will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director and the Assistant Director\*\*\***

### COVID-19 Specific Policies

After the unique COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, TLC has chosen to address specific requirements about this illness in this handbook. As regulations change, so will the wording in this manual.

- Guidance states that those who test positive may return to regular activities and school after 24 hours of being symptom and fever-free without the use of over-the-counter medications. **We ask families and staff to use their best judgement when bringing children back to school after Covid or any illness. If your child is still exhibiting symptoms, we ask that you continue to keep your child at home until their symptoms have passed. This is the same guidance that we would give to any illness.**
- Children and staff who are exposed to Covid-19 do not have to quarantine after their exposure. It is strongly recommended that they wear a mask for the first 5 days after exposure, but we understand that some children are not able to wear a mask and will not exclude children because of not being able to wear a mask.
- The new regulations place the burden of prevention on personal responsibility. This means that it is up to us individually to do what we can to prevent the spread of Covid-19. TLC asks parents to act in good faith by keeping children who are sick home from school to prevent the spreading of Covid and other illnesses to the other children in our school.

### Medication/Use of Care Plans

Please inform the staff if your child is on any medication at home. Because administration of medication poses an extra burden on the staff, and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside child care hours cannot be made.

No medication will be given unless the medication bottle is labeled with your child's name, doctor's name, date, medication name, dosage, time and amount to be given. A medication sheet must be signed by the parent/guardian and given to staff each week that your child is on medication. Medication sheets may be obtained from the office or your child's teachers. **Parents only** may sign the medication sheet.

If a child has a medical issue or allergy which requires emergency medication to be kept on site, a care plan must be completed by the child's doctor and signed by the parents. Care plans will be posted in the child's classroom, kept with emergency contact information, and on file in the office. Care plans must be updated annually and all staff working with the child will have the knowledge and training needed to carry out the care plan instructions. TLC uses "Caring for our Children" as a reference when implementing care plans and other health and safety procedures regarding the children and faculty. A current copy is available in the Director's Office.

### Cleanliness

Each child's food containers, lunch box, and water cup must be washed with soap and water, rinsed, and dried each evening before returning to school. For infants, bottles must be thoroughly cleaned each night after use.

Upon enrollment, each child is assigned a cubby bin for personal possessions and a cot or crib for naptime. This helps eliminate cross-contamination. TLC does not share cots between part-time students. Please be sure to check your child's bin each evening for items that need to be washed or taken home.

Infant crib sheets will be washed at the school as the need arises. Infant blankets, when developmentally appropriate, will be sent home every week for washing.

For older children, blankets and cot sheets will be sent home every Friday. Please wash and return them to school the following Monday.

Please be sure to label all items left at the school for your child by using a permanent ink marker or iron-on label.

### Mealtimes

#### Infants and Waddlers

Parents of infants will supply all food for their children. They will provide a written feeding schedule and update teachers as that schedule changes. Nursing mothers are welcome to nurse their babies at the school if they choose. Bottles brought to school must be plastic. For sanitary reasons, all bottles and bottle parts must be taken home and washed and returned each day.

When you first introduce your child to a new food, please remain on the new food for 3 or 4 days before introducing another new food. This allows time to ensure that your child is not allergic to new foods.

Please make sure to label ALL items that are brought into the school. Spoons, bibs, jars, and bottles should be labeled with a permanent marker and covered with clear tape. There are also dishwasher safe labels that can be purchased for these items.

#### Onesies through Kindergarten

**Breakfast** will be fed to the children before 8 AM if parents so desire. Parents should provide all breakfast foods.

**Lunch** will be served according to each classroom's schedule. Children should bring their own lunches and beverages. Please put hot food in a wide mouthed thermos or in a microwavable container. Please label ALL containers and lids with a permanent marker or label. Fridays are Pizza Days. If you choose to have your child participate in Pizza Friday, please bring in \$2 by Friday morning and give to your child's teacher. This will cover pizza and a cookie for your child. You should still bring a drink for your child.



**Snacks** will be served in the morning and afternoon. TLC will provide snacks for children. These snacks include, but are not limited to: Goldfish, pretzels, fruit, and other healthy choices.

Please remember to make healthy, age-appropriate choices for your child's lunch. Some suggestions of foods to avoid as potential choking hazards:

<p><b>Fruits/Veggies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked or raw whole corn kernels</li> <li>• Uncut cherry or grape tomatoes</li> <li>• Pieces of hard, raw vegetables or fruit, such as raw carrots or apples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole pieces of canned fruit</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Uncut grapes, berries, cherries, or melon balls</li> <li>• Uncooked dried vegetables or fruit, such as raisins</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proteins</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole or chopped nuts and seeds</li> <li>• Chunks or spoonfuls of nut and seed butters, such as peanut butter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touch or large chunks of meat</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hot dogs, meat sticks, or sausages</li> <li>• Large chunks of cheese, especially string cheese <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bones in meat or fish</li> <li>• Whole beans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Grain Products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cookies or granola bars</li> <li>• Potato or corn chips, pretzels, popcorn, or similar snack food</li> <li>• Crackers or breads with seeds, nut pieces, or whole grain kernels</li> <li>• Whole grain kernels of cooked barley, wheat, or other grains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain wheat germ</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Sweetened Foods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round or hard candy, jelly beans, caramels, gum drops, or gummy candies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chewy fruit snacks</li> <li>• Chewing gum</li> <li>• Marshmallows</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Please remember that all foods must be pre-prepared. This means that foods must be cut to size and foods should be ready to either serve or simply microwave. We cannot prepare foods, such as EZ-mac or oatmeal packets. If you send in a food, such as whole grapes, we will not serve this food to your child as we will not cut up food that is too big. Please also pack utensils for your child in their lunch container.

## Distribution of Health and Human Services Materials

Upon enrollment, TLC CCC will distribute a packet of community health and human services information. Information will be given out in September of every school year. Materials will be available year round for any family who may be in need of assistance.

## Referral Services Policy

TLC CCC will provide an informational form with resources for appropriate social, mental health, educational, wellness, outside services and medical services. TLC CCC will distribute the resource form to families upon enrollment and as needed. A referral is conducted when deemed necessary by observation from staff or request by a parent.

## Staff Referrals

It is against TLC Child Care Center policy to refer any staff person to a parent for baby-sitting services. Staff are prohibited from transporting children to and from school and may not be used as emergency contact or pick-up persons for children. This will only be acceptable if we receive written permission from the child's parent or guardian. TLC Child Care Center will not be liable, should anything happen, if a family chooses to receive babysitting services from a current staff member.

## Communications/Language Development Policy

TLC will promote communication between families and staff by using the Procare app, as well as informal conversations. Families are encouraged to use the Procare app to leave notes for the teachers regarding changes in the child's schedule or other pertinent information that teachers may need. Parents may also choose to leave handwritten notes for the teacher in the morning. Caregivers will record important information for each child in Procare each day. Infant and Toddler teachers will record each diaper, meal time, and nap in the app. Older teachers will record all important information as needed for the parent. As this is a partnership, the teachers will speak with the parents to decide how much information is needed for each child. Parent conferences may be set up at the request of the parents, teachers, or director (see also Parent/Teacher Conferences).

The staff at TLC are committed to providing communication in a way that supports families. We will do our best to support culturally and linguistically diverse families. We will encourage children to continue using their home language to communicate in addition to building English language skills at school. Various strategies are used, such as gestures, sign language, technology, and many visual supports in the classroom. We will collaborate with families on goals to promote student achievement.

TLC values parent input regarding our program. Please feel free to contact the office if you have any questions or concerns regarding the care of your child or suggestions on ways to improve our program. We are committed to provide the best possible care to your children.

## Transition Policy

### Moving Up Procedure

Parents will be notified in writing via email by the Director or Assistant Director with the date that their child will be moving up to the next classroom. Move-ups occur when the child is developmentally ready for a transition, not necessarily on the child's birthday. Transitions happen after conversation between the teachers in the room, the Director, and the parents. They consider developmental milestones and other factors that influence both the children and the classroom. Once a transition is planned, this is the normal process that we go through with each child:

The child will begin by meeting with the new teachers in the next room. Then they will casually visit the next room for short informal visits with one of their current teachers to get acquainted with their new environment, teachers, and friends. This will start to happen a few weeks before the child's move-up date. Parents are encouraged to also visit the classroom as well, to get to know the teachers and the routine of the next classroom. On their scheduled move up date, all of the child's belongings and paperwork will be moved over to the next classroom and the child will be in the classroom fully.

Transitions are different for each child, and some are shorter or longer than average. We strive to provide adequate time for each child to transition as comfortably and successfully as possible.

### Family Engagement and Partnership Policy

Parents will be given the opportunity to partner with the staff at TLC to provide the best possible care and education for the children. Parents will be given the opportunity to provide feedback through surveys on an annual basis. There will always be at least two parent board members on the TLC Child Care Center Board of Directors to help in shared decision making. TLC may also engage parents in a family group to plan special events, fundraising, and other school related functions that support the program and families. There is a TLC Facebook Page that parents can join as well.

### Transferring of Records to other Institutions

If your child moves to a different school or matriculates out of our Kindergarten program into an elementary program, it may become necessary for TLC to transfer records to the new school. We will do so after the parent fills out a form giving us authorization to do so. TLC Child Care cannot transfer records without express, written consent given by the legal guardian of the child.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports

To promote parental involvement in the learning process and in your child's development, conferences are scheduled twice a year: once in early winter and again in the spring. Checkpoint assessments will also be completed three times per year (fall, winter, and spring). Progress reports/observations will also be done within 45 days of your child's transitioning into another class. We encourage parents to inquire about their child's progress throughout the school year as well. Open communication is strongly encouraged.

## Educational Standards and Responsibilities

TLC Child Care Center's educational philosophy is based on leading wisdom from Early Childhood experts. We employ a play-based learning model that utilizes a child's natural curiosity and gives them the tools to both explore and understand the world around them. Our teachers facilitate child-led, hands-on experiences that allow children the opportunity to make choices about their environment and the materials that they use. Curriculum is planned by the classroom teachers using the Creative Curriculum in the older age groups and FrogStreet Curriculum in the Infant, Toddler, and Preschool age groups. Kindergarten will make use of the Everyday Math Curriculum and the Foundations Literacy Curriculum.

Teachers plan their curriculum using the most current Pennsylvania learning standards\* for each age group. These standards consider developmental milestones and the course that children should take as they grow through the Early Childhood Years. Lesson plans are due the week before implementation and are reviewed by the Director each week.

To ensure positive outcomes for our children, teachers constantly assess the children in their classes. These informal assessments are done as children move throughout their day and do not interrupt the flow of the classroom. Data gathered from assessments helps to inform the type of lessons the teachers plan as well as what the teachers should focus on for each child. Lesson plans prioritize the needs of each child by ensuring that each child has an individual plan. These individualized plans are updated as children learn and grow. This prevents stagnancy and boredom in learning. Teachers utilize the Ages and Stages assessment tool 45 days after a child joins a classroom. They also use Teaching Strategies Gold to formally assess children three times per year: Fall, Winter, and Spring.

### Developmental Screening policy

After children are enrolled in the program for 45 days, parents will be offered a "Getting to Know You Meeting." At this time, assessment information will be shared with parents. If parents are not interested in a meeting, the teacher will ask the parents to sign a copy of the assessment and will provide a copy if requested. In addition to "Getting to Know You Meetings," we also offer two parent teacher conferences each school year.

\*Copies of the latest PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood and copies of lesson plans are available and kept in the front office.



TLC CCC Handbook Sign off

I have received from TLC CCC a Parent Handbook with the following policies:

1. Inclement Weather Policy
2. Discipline Policy
3. Health Policy
4. Emergency Plan
5. Fees
6. Daily Schedule
7. Hours of Care
8. Meals
9. Clothing
10. Supervision
11. Transportation and pick-ups and arrangement
12. Dismissal policies

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

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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