

Abiding Presence Lutheran Day School



Parent Information Handbook 2019-2020

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Director
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Early Learning Programs



Abiding Presence Lutheran Day School is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. APLC Day School has been NAEYC accredited since 1994. It is our goal to provide a developmentally appropriate program which will meet the needs of all children that attend.



Parent Handbook Table of Contents

Philosophy & Goals.....page 4-9

Philosophy
Mission Statement
Dual Language Program Goals
Our Curriculum Framework
Curriculum Goals & Outcomes for Children
Curriculum Goals & Outcomes for Families

Program Info.....page 8-14

Program Quality
Non-Discrimination Policy
Hours of Operation
Calendar
Registration
Enrollment
Scholarship Information
Parent/Child Orientation
Home Language
Grouping of Children
Placement
Sleeping/Napping Arrangements
Transitioning to Kindergarten
Speech & Hearing Screening
Field Trips
Pets
Substitutes in the Classroom
Confidentiality
Licensing Information

Attendance.....page 14-16

Attendance
Illness
Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases
Administration of Medication

Learning Environments..... page 17-20

Creativity
Language Acquisition
Literacy
Math
Science
Gross Motor Development
Social & Emotional Development
Assessment Methods & Procedures
Chapel
Guidance & Discipline

Safety.....page 22-25

Supervision Policy
Security & Access
Arrival & Departure
Parking Lot/Car Safety
Child Custody Issues
Emergency Procedures
Release of Children
Child Maltreatment
Parental Notification
Sanitation, Cleaning & Renovation
Smoking & other Potential Hazards

Clothing & Supplies.....	page 26
Clothing & Individual Supplies	
Brining Items from Home	
Toileting & Toilet Learning	
Food.....	page 27-29
Meals & Snacks	
Celebrations & Birthdays	
Day School Board.....	page 30
APLC Day School Board	
Grievance Policy	
Home/School Connection.....	page 30-33
Message Boards	
Messages from Home	
Newsletters/Flyers	
Classroom Bulletin Boards	
Parental Involvement	
Parent Conferences	
Program Evaluations	
Special Needs	
Emergency Procedures.....	page 34-37
Evacuation Plan	
Security Plan	
Fire, Risk of Explosion or Natural Disaster	
Lost or Missing Children	
Utility Failure	
Lockdown Procedures	
Volunteers & Family Involvement.....	page 38
Referrals & Community Resources	
Resource Library	
Program Goals.....	page 39-41
Pre-K2	
Pre-K3	
Pre-K4 & 5	
Program Fees & Scholarship Information.....	page 42-43

PARENT HANDBOOK

These policies were written to provide a clear description of what parents can expect of Abiding Presence Lutheran Church Day School and what the Day School expects of parents.

--PHILOSOPHY & GOALS--

MISSION STATEMENT

Together we are called to reflect God's presence in our lives through our worship, learning, service and support of others. We actively support the cultures and languages of our children and families. Abiding Presence Day School intentionally promotes the acquisition and growth of both English and Spanish.

PHILOSOPHY

We at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church Day School believe that children are a gift from God and it is our privilege to love and care for them on God's behalf. We want them to learn about God's special love and we intend to reflect that love in the way that we teach and care for your children. We also believe that a healthy self-concept is one of a child's most valuable assets. Every aspect of our program is concerned with encouraging a child's positive image of him/her self.

We believe that young children learn best by doing. Our age-appropriate curriculum is stimulating and geared towards concrete, hands-on learning. This is achieved by offering a variety of activities with the use of age and developmentally appropriate materials. Lessons are developed for the class as a whole, in addition to taking the individual needs of each child into consideration. We encourage creative expression and independence, and believe that a child's early experiences provide the foundation for a lifetime.

Our program will provide experiences for a child to grow socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually. All children receive Christian teaching as a part of our program through daily prayer, holiday celebrations and weekly chapel time.

DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM GOALS

The primary objective of our APLC Early Childhood Dual Language Program is to implement cultural and linguistic education which is a developmentally appropriate curriculum in preschools, where children develop their first language and are exposed to a second language. Together, native English speakers and Spanish speakers engage in rich educational experiences that will provide positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors which they will maintain throughout their adult lives.

What are the Dual Language benefits?

The Early Childhood Dual Language Program advocates the use of learning and teaching strategies that are founded on developmentally appropriate practices such as:

- cooperative learning
- thematic approach
- learning centers
- hands-on teaching and learning

- appropriate use of technology

An Early Childhood Dual Language Program offers unique opportunities for participating students to:

- Develop two languages,
- Form a positive self-image,
- Augment a better understanding and respect for other cultures,
- Develop necessary social skills.

The program presents parents and the community with optimum and on-going opportunities for communication, understanding, and collaboration between home and school.

This information is adapted from the following research and material at:

http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol4/nov2000_duallanguage.html

APLC Dual Language Program Model

Dual language programs are utilized by schools to educate children in two languages simultaneously. Each school determines the percentage allocated to each language. Our Dual Language program is very intentional in the addition of the Spanish language. This will be accomplished within our natural classroom setting, for example, circle activities, transitions and center times.

APLC Day School program is **designed for children who do not understand or speak Spanish but is also perfect for native Spanish speakers.** At least one teacher in each classroom is fluent in Spanish. Our preschool provides an opportunity for children to be exposed to the Spanish language through the experiences presented in a typical childhood curriculum. Children learn developmentally-appropriate, functional use of the Spanish language.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Our curriculum:

- Encourages the development of the “whole” child to include the domains of cognitive (early literacy, early mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and appreciation for the arts, health and safety, and social studies when age appropriate), language, social, emotional and physical development.
- Uses Early Learning Standards (Creative Curriculum – Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment System) to plan activities for both the individual child and the class. Standards are incorporated into play, exploration, projects and studies, and large and small group times.
- The developmental (cognitive, social, emotional, physical) and content-based (literacy, math, science, etc.) domains are presented and experienced in an integrated manner.
- Reflects diversity (gender, age, language, and abilities) and is culturally sensitive and responsive of individual family’s values, beliefs, and home language. This can be observed in interactions as well as evident in equipment and materials.
- Is primarily “child-centered” and emergent. Activities, materials, and themes are “driven” by the developmental needs of children in the classroom as well as their interests. Input into the curriculum also comes from children’s families and the community. The teacher capitalizes on these and uses them as an avenue for intentional teaching. Project work is valued and encouraged.

- Is play-based with large blocks of time allocated to children’s self-initiated learning choices, which include creative expression and play. The schedule provides opportunities for small-group and large-group activities as well as individualized instruction.
- Provides materials and experiences that are presented in an organized learning environment (both indoors and outdoors) to include learning centers for preschool children and learning zones for infants and toddlers. Children freely explore and experiment with materials and other children as well as with teachers who attempt to scaffold with them.
- Uses assessment and curriculum goals and objectives that are interrelated and viewed as a “Curriculum Braid” that weaves together early learning standards, activities and materials, and observation and assessment.

CURRICULUM GOALS AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

The curriculum is designed to:

- ❖ Develop safe and healthy habits in young children with an emphasis on proper hygiene, sound nutrition, exercise and physical care.
- ❖ Foster positive self-esteem.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for creative expression.
- ❖ Support the development of social skills such as sharing, cooperation, generosity and empathy.
- ❖ Stimulate cognitive problem-solving skills with an emphasis on the concepts of cause and effect, classification, serialization, space, time, numbers, shape, and colors.
- ❖ Strengthen communication skills necessary for listening, reading, writing, and speaking by providing an environment rich in the practical use of words.
- ❖ Enhance fine-motor and gross-motor skills.
- ❖ Reinforce Christian principles of sharing, caring and loving.
- ❖ Expose children to different ethnic cultures.

Developmentally appropriate activities are planned and implemented in each group. The daily schedules provide for a balance between child-directed and teacher-directed activities, quiet and active time, and inside and outside play. Children have daily opportunities to read books, use a variety of art media, and explore math and science materials, music experience, and work alone or together with friends.

GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

For every family of Abiding Presence Day School, we hope to provide the following goals and outcomes:

1. To feel supported in terms of your individual family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language.
2. To partner actively with our staff in facilitating your child’s learning.
3. To have the opportunity to volunteer and participate in our early childhood program.

--PROGRAM INFORMATION--

PROGRAM QUALITY

High quality early-care and education programs benefit children. Children who experience a quality program have greater academic success, enhanced self-esteem, and increased self-control. There are four factors present in high quality programs:

1. Lower staff-child ratios
2. Smaller group sizes
3. Staff educated in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
4. Parent involvement

The ratio of children assigned to each staff member at APLC is lower than the *Minimum Standards* requirements. We also keep our group sizes smaller. There are two teachers in every classroom and the teachers to child ratios are low. APLC Day School is also committed to employing well-trained personnel. All teaching staff receives a minimum of 24 hours of training, Directors receives 30 hours of training a year, as well as training in CPR and first aid. We are very proud of the educational levels of our staff.

For more information about program quality and staff qualifications, call:

National Academy of Early Childhood Programs 1-800-424-2460

Texas Association for the Education of Young Children 1-800-341-2391

The Council of Early Childhood Professional Recognition 1-800-424-4310

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Abiding Presence Lutheran Day School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. APLC Day School does not discriminate against any child based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disabilities in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies & scholarship. Reasonable accommodation will be made to provide services to persons with disabilities. All children are accepted on a probationary basis. The staff will assess your child to insure that the program is able to meet the needs of your child.

HOURS OF OPERATION

APLC Day School is open from 9:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Tuesday – Friday.
Drop off is available beginning at 9:00 am.; school starts at 9:15 am.

PreK-2's Program: Tuesday – Friday Ratio: 1:4

PreK-3's Program: Tuesday - Friday Ratio: 1:6

PreK-4 & 5's Programs: Tuesday – Friday Ratio: 1:8

Ratios may change at the discretion of the director.

ALL PROGRAMS MEET FROM 9:15 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.

CALENDAR

The Day School follows the same holiday schedule as North East ISD, with some exceptions: starting and ending dates, Thanksgiving Week, Parent Teacher Conference Workdays – one day in the Fall and one day in the Spring and sometimes an additional holiday. We begin approximately a week and a half after NEISD begins and our school ends approximately four days before NEISD ends. In addition, we follow the same

bad weather closing days; please stay advised by radio or television for information. All calendar dates of school closings are listed in the school directory and on the website.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the following school year and summer sessions (if applicable) takes place in late January and Early February. After the “in-house” registration period for families already enrolled in the program, “open” registration begins for families on the waiting list. Registration fees are due upon registration and are non-refundable. **The registration process is complex involving a combination of factors taken into consideration when placing children in individual classrooms.** These factors include but are not limited to: chronological age, appropriateness of a class based on developmental and readiness factors, teacher recommendations, number of days enrolled and/or schedule desired and days available. These factors are discussed with families so that they may make an informed decision before registration. The program understands individual preferences for specific classrooms/group and/or teachers, but the center is not always able to honor such requests or cannot guarantee the placement of teachers or teaching teams prior to the start of the school year or summer program. While the bulk of the registration process is completed through on line forms completed by the parents, the Director will contact individual parents, as needed, to discuss any special circumstances, individual scheduling concerns, developmental placements, or specific situations before the registration process is completed. Parents should also notify the Director of any special circumstances, scheduling concerns or special needs in writing with their registration materials. **September tuition is due by June 1st prior to the beginning of the school year and is a non-refundable fee.**

ENROLLMENT

All children must be enrolled in the program before attending the Day School. All information is kept updated at least quarterly. **The following must be completed on line with a hard copy of your child’s immunization record and Admission Requirement Form submitted to the Day School office:**

- ❖ Application and enrollment packet
- ❖ Vision and hearing screening for all 4 year olds enrolled.
Immunization record & Admission Requirement Form (Must be current, have child’s name, birth-date, dose number and type of vaccine, and date the child received each immunization, with a stamp, or signature from physician or health department)
- ❖ Emergency medical release.
- ❖ Permission to Access File form – permission for APLC staff, Licensing Representatives, Health Department and NAEYC for accreditation to view your child’s file.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

A limited amount of scholarships are available. Scholarship applications are reviewed and awarded based on availability. Scholarship applications are available in the Day School office.

PARENT/CHILD ORIENTATIONS

Before school begins, each family is required to attend a **mandatory** Parent Orientation. During this orientation our policies and procedures are reviewed and each family will receive a new Parent Handbook for the new school year. A Child Orientation is held before school starts for students to see their new classroom and have an opportunity to meet new friends. In addition, new and returning families to our school are offered an opportunity to have a home visit with their teacher. These visits are optional, but

encouraged, especially with the younger children. We have found the incidence of separation anxiety is reduced and your child is more comfortable as school begins.

HOME LANGUAGE

APLC will make every effort to work with families that speak a language other than English in the home and/or are bilingual. At least one teacher in every classroom is fluent in Spanish can join in with you or Director for the enrollment process, parent-teacher conferences, and other meetings as needed, and written materials will be provided in Spanish when available. If translations are needed to understand school communications, we will make every reasonable effort to find a translator in the designated language. Families that speak languages other than English or Spanish are encouraged to share some simple words and phrases to use in conversations with the teachers while the child is in our care. Teachers will make an effort to provide visible signs of the home language throughout the classroom through books and other relevant materials. The teacher will model appropriate use of English and provide the child with opportunities to use newly acquired vocabulary and language.

GROUPING OF CHILDREN

Each classroom is staffed with a lead teacher, and/or co-lead teacher and assistant teacher who have primary responsibility for working with that group of children. Children stay with their designated teachers throughout the day for indoor and outdoor play. The children stay with their designated teachers and group for the entire school year from September through May. The goal for all classes is continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children and their families. Children will stay together as a group with the same teachers for at least 9 months or more. The teachers provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to protect children's well-being. We use the NAEYC *Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size* as a guideline for teacher –child ratio and group size. To facilitate children's transition from one classroom to another, time is allowed for "move up" days. These occur during the last month of school in May before the actual move to the new classroom. For children moving to a new program, opportunities are provided for them to visit their new school. Children who join the program during the year have opportunities to visit the classroom before their initial start day.

PLACEMENT

The placement of children in a classroom are determined after thoughtful consideration for each child individually and as a class member. Once placed, children will remain in the same classroom for the duration of the school year. The continuity of care and peers is important to your child's development, so every effort is made to minimize disruptions.

TRANSITIONING TO A NEW CLASS OR KINDERGARTEN

To assist your child and family in the transition from our pre-kindergarten program to kindergarten we do the following:

- Provide basic general information on enrollment procedures and practices, visiting opportunities, and program options for local public and private schools
- Encourage parents to attend kindergarten "round-up" and/or other orientation sessions that are planned for incoming children and parents as well as conversations with current and former parents of kindergarteners during our Parent Coffee Gathering in April.
- Read books to the children that discuss changes and moves.
- Invite a kindergarten child or older sibling to visit the class and talk about school.

SLEEPING AND NAPPING ARRANGEMENTS

The Pre-K2's will take a nap each time they are at school. We provide mats and sheets for the children to lie on. The sheets and mats are sanitized regularly. **Children are required to rest or sleep for a period of one hour as mandated by TDFPS Minimum Standards.** If a child is unable to remain on their mat and rest without disturbing the other children, we will in collaboration with the child's parents, possibly suggest an early pick-up or other strategies we have found to be successful. Soft music is played during nap time with the child's teachers positioning themselves so that can see and hear all the children. Blankets and other comfort items from home are encouraged for the child's comfort and warmth. If they awake earlier, they will be given a book, puzzle or other quiet activity to do while the other children are sleeping. The Pre-K3, 4 & 5's classes do not take naps.

SPEECH/HEARING/VISION SCREENING

All children who turn four years of age by September of each school year are required by the State Health Department to have a hearing and vision screening by a licensed physician, qualified professional or certified screener. A record of the screening must be turned into the Early Childhood Office. Results of the hearing test must be indicated on the health form to be turned in before school starts.

IN-HOUSE AND OFF CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS

We have several "In-House Field Trips" scheduled each year for example, "Miss Anastasia", Learn Nature with Tom Kinsey, SAWS water presentation, Tooth Fairy and a Fire Truck visit. Careful consideration is given for any field trips taken off campus. We limit off campus field trips to one or two experiences and only for the PreK-4 & 5 classes. Some field trips may require an additional fee. Parents will be notified regarding field trips by posted notices. Parents are encouraged to participate in the field trips with their children. You must sign a permission form or your child will not be allowed to participate. Parents driving on field trips must abide by the following guidelines:

- All children under the age of eight unless the child is taller than 4ft. 9 inches must ride in a car seat or booster seat, to be provided by and installed by each child's parent.
- Drivers must be at least 21 years old.
- Parents will carry an emergency information card on each child riding in the car.
- Before leaving on the field trip please leave a copy of your driver's license and proof of insurance in the office to keep on file.
- We are unable to accommodate siblings on our field trips.
- It is **necessary** that all drivers follow the map provided.
- Every car will carry a fire extinguisher and first aid kit. At least one car will carry a cellular phone.

Return directly to the school following the field trip. All guidelines listed in the field trip folder should be closely followed.

PETS

Some classrooms have pets and children enjoy observing the animals and helping care for them. Parents are expected to let the teacher know if your child has an allergy related to or worsened by the presence of a small pet. If so, the animal will be moved to another classroom. Pets from home should not be brought to school for a short visit unless it is cleared with the teacher in advance (making sure that there are not any children present with allergies to the animal) and the animal is in good health, current on all vaccinations, and under the care of a veterinarian who can document that the animal is suitable for contact with young children. Pets may only stay for the sharing time with the child's parent supervising the animal

the entire time. Reptiles such as snakes, turtles, and lizards and amphibians such as frogs and toads, are not permitted as classroom pets or for visits to the classrooms.

SUBSTITUTES AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

On occasion we will need to have a substitute or volunteer in the classroom for one of your child's teachers due to illness or other unknown situations. Every substitute or volunteer is given an orientation, background check and any other requirements in order to work with the children in the classroom. They are always under the direct supervision of scheduled staff and do not work alone with the children.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY FILES

We take confidentiality seriously at APLC and all staff and board members abide by the regulations specified in §746.601 by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (Child Care Licensing) and in the *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct*. A copy of both resources can be obtained from the school office. We will not only make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your child and family but also the confidentiality of every other child, family, and staff member of APLC. Confidential files, including enrollment, medical, and incident forms, and other records of each child, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the main office. Parents must grant written authorization for files to be reviewed by APLC Early Childhood staff, representatives from licensing, and the health department or for NAEYC accreditation. In addition, permission must be granted on the Specific Permission to Access File Form to other individuals, such as therapists or other specialists, who may need access to your child's files. A copy of this authorization is kept inside the child's individual file.

All children's files are kept in the Day School office in a secure and locked location. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators, regulatory authorities, parents/legal guardian and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access records.

LICENSING INFORMATION

Our center is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. A licensing representative visits us at least once a year. The inspection report is posted on the bulletin board in the Day School office and a copy of the minimum standards, which lists the criteria we are responsible for, is located in the day school office as well. If at any time you would like to contact a licensing representative you may call 1-800-862-5252 or the web site at www.txchildcaresearch.org. Locally, you may reach licensing at 210-337-3399.

--ATTENDANCE--

ATTENDANCE

Please call the Day School by 9:00 a.m. if your child is going to be absent. If your child is sick, please keep us informed so we can alert other parents of possible communicable diseases. Parents will be alerted in the event of a communicable disease by note, phone call or both.

ILLNESS

One of the most serious challenges facing group care situations for young children is preventing illness. The staff will strive to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness. Proper hand washing procedures will be followed and taught to the children. The toys, eating surfaces, and toilet or and diaper equipment will

be sanitized between uses. One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of ill children. We need your help in this matter. Do not bring ill children to the Day School. If your child becomes ill at school, please pick up the child immediately.

According to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, children cannot attend the Day School if one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff is able to provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
3. The child has any one of the following:
 - a. Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - b. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting illness (two or more episodes in 24 hours) rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior change, or other unusual signs.
4. The child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer communicable and is able to participate in the facility's activities.

If the child is too ill to stay in school, the child will be provided a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives. The child will be supervised at all times by someone familiar with the child. A child with a potentially communicable illness that requires that the child be sent home from school will be provided care separate from other children with extra attention to hygiene and sanitation until the child leaves the facility.

In addition, the Day School's policy requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness: temperature, diarrhea or vomiting for at least 24 hours. Please keep in mind that if we send your child home because of illness, the child will not be admitted to the Day School the next day because the 24-hour period will not have elapsed. The Day School reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be re-admitted to the Day School.

You know your child better than anyone. If your child has a loss of appetite, shows unusual signs of listlessness, irritability, or fatigue, your child may be coming down with an illness and should be kept home. Many illnesses are infectious. Please do not send your child to school if you suspect your child may be getting sick.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Some communicable diseases must be reported to public health authorities so that control measures can be used. APLC Day School will obtain an updated list of reportable diseases from the health department annually. At the Staff Orientation and Parent Orientation prior to the beginning of school, families and staff will be reminded to notify the director or assistant director within 24 hours after the child or staff has developed a known or suspected communicable disease and to inform the director or assistant director if any member of their immediate household has a reportable communicable disease. While respecting the legal boundaries of confidentiality of medical information, the director or assistant director will notify the appropriate health department authority about any suspected or confirmed reportable disease among the children, staff, or family members of the children and staff. Families of children who have been exposed to a child with a communicable disease or reportable condition will be informed about the exposure according to the recommendations of the local health department verbally and in writing including signs,

symptoms, mode of transmission and period of communicability. Families of children that are under-immunized will be notified immediately in order to exclude them from school.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

The director, assistant director and under special circumstances a staff member will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent- with the child's first and last names, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container with prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication as well as directions for administration and storage. A special form must be filled out by the parent that will be provided by the director. Non-prescription medication will be administered only if it is in the original container and will be administered only according to label directions. If the label states "children under 2 (or 6) years, consult a physician," the medication cannot be given without a physician's signature. A non-prescription drug form can be obtained in the Day School Office, filled out in advance by your physician, and kept on file at APLC in the event you request that your child be given non-prescription medication. No medication will be administered to a child without written permission of the parent on an APLC Medication Authorization form. Administrators will document each dose of medication given and will keep all medications in a locked container and inaccessible to children at all times. APLC will not give fever-reducing medications to reduce or mask a child's fever (children with a temperature over 100 degrees will be sent home). It is the parent's responsibility to retrieve the medication at the end of the day. All medications will be stored in the locked closet in the day school office.

If your child requires individualized medical attention such as a nebulizer treatment for asthma, a daily on-going medication, or other special treatments, you must provide the program with a written individualized medical action plan from the prescribing healthcare provider. Additionally, you must meet with the Early Childhood Director and your child's teacher to discuss the medical action plan. Our program may not be able to accommodate children with certain medical conditions.

--LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS--

APLC provides a supportive, nurturing environment that promotes the emotional, social, physical, cognitive, and spiritual development of young children. We work in partnership with families to provide an atmosphere not only for children to learn and grow, but for families to develop friendships which nurture their well-being.

CREATIVITY

Our teachers provide an environment that supports creativity by providing a large variety of open-ended materials, ones that lend themselves to various uses. We emphasize process, not product. In the process, the child can learn to experiment, explore, discover, enjoy sensory experiences, communicate, relive experiences, and work out fears. Any end product is usually secondary to the enjoyment of doing the activity for a young child.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Children begin acquiring language from infancy by listening to the sounds of the voices and observing the print that is present in their environment. Teachers promote language acquisition by conversing with children during their play, regular routines, and at mealtimes. Experiences with books, flannel boards, discussions, puppets, storytelling, and other activities aid in the child's language development, help him/her learn about the world, and promote an early appreciation of literature.

LITERACY

Our approach to literacy development is based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) position statement. A continuum of reading and writing development is used as goals of literacy instruction. We will work with each child based on his/her developmental needs; some children will master skills earlier; some will need more time to develop these skills. Our primary goal is to develop a love of reading and writing while nurturing each child's development in a positive and supportive manner.

In Phase One of literacy development, awareness and exploration are the goals. In this phase, children explore their environment and build the foundation for learning to read and write. At APLC teachers:

- Share books with children and model reading behaviors
- Talk about letters by name and sound
- Establish a literacy-rich environment (labeling items in the classroom, having a variety of books)
- Reread favorite stories
- Engage children in language games (silly songs and finger plays)
- Promote literacy-related play activities (using items such as magazines, notepads and pencils in dramatic play)
- Encourage children to experiment with writing

In Phase Two of literacy development, experimental reading and writing are the goals.

In this phase, children develop basic concepts of print and begin to engage in and experiment with reading and writing. At APLC teachers will:

- Encourage children to talk about reading and writing experiences
- Provide many opportunities for children to explore and identify sound-symbol relationships in meaningful contexts
- Help children to segment spoken words into individual sounds and blend the sounds into whole words
- Frequently read interesting and conceptually rich stories to children
- Provide daily opportunities for children to write (writing name, inventive spelling of words, journal writing)
- Help children develop a sight vocabulary
- Create a literacy-rich environment for children to engage independently in reading and writing (materials which promote literacy development throughout the classroom)

In Phase Three of literacy development, early reading and writing are the goals. In this phase, children begin to read simple stories and can write about a topic that is meaningful to them. At APLC, teachers:

- Support the development of vocabulary by reading daily to the children, transcribing their language, and selecting materials that expand children's knowledge and language development
- Help children build list of commonly used words from their reading and writing
- Model strategies and provide practice in identifying unknown words
- Read, write, and discuss a range of different texts types (poems, informational texts)
- Give children opportunities for independent reading and writing practice

MATH

The following fundamental mathematical concepts and skills are integrated into our curriculum based on the developmental needs of each child:

- One-to-one correspondence (understanding that one group has the same number of things as another)
- Number sense and counting (the connection between quantities and counting)
- Sets and classifying (things that can be put together in a group based on common criterion such as color, size, shape, or use)
- Comparing (finding a relationship between two things or sets of things on the basis of a specific characteristic or attribute such as size, height, or number)
- Shape (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, rhombus, and ellipse)
- Space (position: on-off, over-under, in-out, above-below, etc.; direction: up-down, forward-backward, around-through; distance: near-far, close to-far from; organization and pattern: arranging things in a pattern until they fit or until they please the eye; construction: change the size and shape of the space to fit what is needed for things)
- Parts and wholes (understanding the idea that some things are made of special parts, that sets of things can be divided into parts, and that whole things can be divided into smaller parts)
- Ordering (higher level of comparing – placing things in a sequence from first to last)
- Patterning (making or discovering patterns such as sequence by color or number, patterns in nature, patterns in movement, such as clapping or marching)
- Measurement of volume, weight, length, temperature, and time (introducing measurement using informal tools such as nonstandard units and estimation)

SCIENCE

The science curriculum is based on a “wonder why” approach. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment in a hands-on environment that encourages the discovery of cause and effect. They are encouraged to investigate how the world works and to take responsibility for protecting and caring for the environment. The following basic science process skills are introduced to allow children to gain new information through concrete experiences:

- Observing – using the senses to gather information about objects or events
- Comparing – looking at similarities and differences in real objects
- Classifying – grouping and sorting according to properties, such as size, shape, color, use, and so on
- Measuring – quantitative descriptions made by an observer either directly through observation or indirectly with a unit of measure
- Communicating – communicating ideas, directions, and descriptions orally or in written form such as pictures or graphs so others can understand

GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

We promote gross motor development by giving children opportunities to use their large muscles in a variety of ways such as crawling, walking, running, jumping, and hopping. We have playgrounds with equipment and activities which promote the development of competence and confidence in each child’s use of their body. Additionally, children experience dance and movement as well as taking nature walks and playing ball. We promote fine motor development by providing numerous activities such as finger painting, playing with play dough, cutting with scissors, working puzzles, stringing beads, building with blocks, drawing and “writing”.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We support a child's developing sense of self. We provide a nurturing environment of encouragement and genuine respect so that children are able to develop confidence and competence by being given chances to take initiative, experience success in performing difficult tasks, and figuring things out for themselves. We encourage children to learn self-help skills such as toileting, washing hands, and cleaning up after themselves. Developing these skills adds to the child's feelings of accomplishment and self-worth.

ASSESSMENT METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The teachers and/or Director of APLC Day School use a variety of formal and informal measures to assess routinely the growth and physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of each child. The teaching staff has received training in child assessment techniques and receive on-going training each year. We use an on line system called Teaching Strategies Gold. Assessment will occur within the natural setting of the classroom and the playground. The information from the rating scales, assessment portfolios, parent input and screenings for the children will be integrated with the curriculum goals and lesson planning to support individual learning styles and needs.

CHAPEL

Chapel time is provided for the Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 & 5's once a week in the Sanctuary. Children's birthdays are recognized and the parents are invited to attend. **You are also given the opportunity to donate a book to the school in honor of your child's birthday. Books are available for purchase in the day school office.** Children are exposed to bible stories, puppet shows and songs that include sign language. It is an interactive approach to learning about Jesus in a developmentally appropriate atmosphere. Sometime during the spring semester, and after careful consideration, the two year old classes are invited to begin attending chapel.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

We believe that discipline and guidance should be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs and development. Like all aspects of child development, emotional development progresses in stages; time and maturity are needed for children to develop emotional mastery and behavioral control. Our goal is to help children develop independent, responsible, and caring behavior and to develop positive self-esteem. Our teachers help children find constructive ways to express needs and feelings in ways that are reasonable for particular levels of social competence and maturity. A positive guidance technique promotes self-discipline and acceptable behavior.

Positive guidance techniques used by the APLC Day School staff will include but are not limited to:

- ❖ recognizing and encouraging appropriate behaviors
- ❖ developing reasonable clear rules and expectations in each group
- ❖ explaining the consequences of inappropriate behaviors
- ❖ redirecting children into positive behaviors
- ❖ modeling pro-social behaviors
- ❖ enforcing limits and rules consistently and fairly
- ❖ helping children to identify and express feelings in acceptable ways

Please discuss with your child's teacher specific guidance techniques that work best with your child. Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at the Day School. The Day School staff is eager to work with

you regarding behavioral problems at the Day School or home. You will be notified immediately in case of continued behavior that is potentially harmful to your child, other children or property.

If a child's behavior becomes a chronic problem and is unresponsive to the staff's attempts to alter the behavior, the Day School may follow any of these steps appropriate to the situation:

- Hold a conference with the parents, teacher and director to discuss the situation and to develop methods of correcting the behavior problem.
- Ask the parents to have the child evaluated by a pediatrician and/or child guidance professional.
- Ask the parents to seek professional help to increase their abilities to respond to the needs of the child.
- When all else fails, the Day School reserves the right to request the immediate withdrawal of a child. Tuition for the remainder of the month may be prorated and refunded at the Director's discretion. All other fees will be forfeited.
- According to the U.S. Constitution, as a private school, we can set our own guidelines in terms of discipline and enrollment or withdrawal of children. That being said, EVERY effort will be made to work with the staff and family for a successful outcome.

Biting

Many pre-verbal children go through a stage of biting. They bite for many reasons such as:

- Lacking the language skills necessary for expressing important needs or strong feelings like anger, frustration, joy, etc. Biting is a substitute for messages the child can't yet express in words.
- Are experimenting to see what will happen.
- Are over-tired
- Are teething.
- Have a need for oral stimulation. We recognize that biting, while it may not be acceptable, is normal and natural for toddlers and is not unusual for two year old's and preschoolers. It frequently occurs in groups of children just on the verge of fluent language. When a biting incident occurs:
- Staff will carefully monitor children.
- Staff will model appropriate gentle behavior and pro-social play, encouraging children to use words.
- Staff will quickly respond with a clear message to the biter: "No! I won't let you bite. Biting hurts!" Tone of voice, body language, and facial expression all will clearly express disapproval. Staff will recognize the biter's feelings: "I know you are angry, but I can't let you bite."
- Staff will comfort the "bitee" with ice, a Band-Aid (if necessary), and TLC until the child is ready to return to play.
- Staff will suggest age-appropriate alternatives to biting behavior. "Next time, say MOVE, please!" The seriousness of the incident may need to be reinforced: "No! It's not funny. Biting hurts. No biting."
- Parents of both children involved in the incident will be notified. Biting is a part of the young child's normal developmental process. We take a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach. Each biting situation will be handled in the manner outlined above. We will not discuss personal information with any parent about a child other than their own. Biting is an upsetting, but normal, part of many children's development, and we ask you to trust that each biting incident will be handled in a developmentally appropriate and professional manner. Any concerns of the family should be handled by talking to the teacher and/or the Director.

- A meeting with the parents of the biter, the Director, and teacher will be arranged to discuss strategies to help the child, if needed.

--SAFETY--

SUPERVISION POLICY

During hours of school operation the children attending Abiding Presence Lutheran Church Day School will be supervised by staff members at all times. Staff of toddlers need to be able to see and hear all children at all times (if not in the direct line of sights, then by looking up or slightly adjusting one's position). Preschool children may be supervised for short intervals by sound (for example, using the toilet) with staff checking on them frequently. Head counts will be taken, using the face to name method, before leaving the classroom and returning to the classroom from the playground, chapel or gym and after going through a doorway. A staff member will be at the beginning and end of the line when children are moving from one place to the other. If a child needs to get or put something in their bag – they will be supervised by a staff member. Children will be reminded often of the importance of not leaving the classroom unless accompanied by a staff member.

SECURITY & ACCESS

The safety and security of children is our top priority. Parents may only use the main door by the Day School office when arriving and departing with their children. From 9:30 am until 1:30 pm the door will be locked. To be admitted into the building you must ring the doorbell. A camera is located in the day school office allowing us to see and speak to anyone wanting access to the building. Visitors must sign in and out in the day school office.

All visitors that will be eating or interacting with the children or staying in the classroom or on the playground for more than a couple of minutes must wash their hands upon arrival.

Additionally, drugs, firearms, weapons, and other items deemed dangerous are not permitted on the premises at any time.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

You must accompany your child into the school and to their classroom/classrooms during arrival and pick them up from their classrooms at departure. We want to give you every opportunity to interact with the teachers with questions, events or other information that could affect the success of the day. You will be given a code to sign your child in and out of school. The monitor and numeric pad is located outside the day school office. **Please remember that children are not allowed to enter in the codes.** The earliest children will be accepted at the Day School is 9:00 am. If you arrive earlier, you may wait in the lobby outside the day school office. Children must be brought into the Day School and released to the assigned staff. Be sure the staff sees you and greets your child. If your child will not be at school or arriving late, please let your child's teacher know in advance, or call the school.

Parents who arrive after 9:30 am with their child need to stop by the office before going to the classroom. In order to minimize disruptions in the classroom, the office staff may need to take your child to the classroom. If you arrive while your child's class is in chapel, you may take your child to chapel and sit and

wait with him during chapel, or you can wait with your child in the school lobby until the teacher returns with the class from chapel.

Please check your child's bag every day for artwork, soiled clothing, and notes to parents. Please be prompt when picking up your child. **A late fee of \$15 per 15 minutes will be charged for all children picked up after 2:05 pm.** If you know you will be late, please call the Day School so we can let your child know that you are on your way.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children are released only to persons authorized by written permission from the parents (on emergency form or letter written or emailed by parent). Before the child is released, the designated person will be required to show a picture I.D. to the office where a photocopy will be made and kept in the child's file. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. Any person picking up a child in an impaired condition (under the influence of drugs or alcohol) will not be allowed to take the child, and by law, Child Protective Services will be called. If a parent calls to authorize the emergency release of a child when note or fax is not possible, we will verify the caller is actually the parent.

If your child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany your child. The Day School provides an accident policy for the children, but it is the parents' responsibility to assume any costs incurred for emergency care.

PARKING LOT/CAR SAFETY

Please be very careful walking your child to and from the classroom in the parking lot. As you are approaching and leaving the parking lot in your vehicles, be mindful of adults and children walking to and from the school. Our utmost concern is for the safety of all families attending APLC. At no time will any vehicle be permitted to park in a handicap designated space unless the vehicle bears a permit issued by Texas Department of Public Safety. APLC encourages parents to follow all car safety guidelines by using seat belts for all passengers, appropriate car seats and/or booster seats for young children and not transporting children in the front seat of any vehicle.

Do not leave children unattended in a parked car, and do not leave the car idling when you are picking up your child unless the vehicle needs to idle in the extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures. Do not leave purses or other valuables in your car where they are visible.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

It is the Day School's intent to meet the needs of children, especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as a divorce, separation, or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to school staff and will be held in the strictest confidentiality. The Day School cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parents from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records, or picking up the child unless the Day School has been furnished with legally filed, executed and current documents. Copies of all court documents must be submitted to the Day School. In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

CHILD MALTREATMENT

In an effort to protect the well-being and safety of children, the State of Texas requires anyone who suspects child maltreatment to report it to the proper authorities. The Day School staff has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of child maltreatment. All suspect indicators will be documented and reported. The Day School is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child maltreatment.

You will be notified if your child is questioned as part of the investigation. The number to report any child maltreatment is 1-800-252-5400.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Parents will be notified any time there is a situation related to the safety or health of their child. Parents will be called in the event there is an injury to the child's head – bump, scrap, bruise, etc. You will be notified if there are any communicable diseases within your child's classroom and information will be distributed to everyone. Some situations such as policy or procedure changes or changes in the enrollment agreement require written notification to parents. Written notification will be provided to parents regarding any changes in center policies or procedures.

SANITATION, CLEANING & RENOVATION

Carpets are cleaned quarterly or on an as needed basis. A contracted cleaning crew sanitizes the classroom tables, furniture, sinks, faucet and toilet handles, and other areas of the classroom on a daily basis and the teachers clean as needed throughout the day. Toys and mouthed items in all classrooms are a) washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized, and air dried **or** b) washed and dried in the dishwasher before it will be used by another child. Washable toys, pillows, etc. are washed in the preschool classrooms periodically.

Using the model of Integrated Pest Management, APLC makes every effort to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. While pesticides protect children and property from pests, such as insects, rodents, and weeds, under some circumstances the pesticides may also pose a hazard to children and staff. To minimize potential exposure of children and staff to pesticides, pest control practices will involve a variety of non-chemical and chemical methods. A licensed exterminating company treats the facility and playgrounds with pesticides for common household pests on a quarterly or as needed basis. The treatment is always done after school hours and under the supervision of church staff.

Areas of the school that have recently been painted, carpeted, tiled or renovated are ventilated before they are used by the children.

SMOKING & OTHER POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Smoking within the Day School building is prohibited at all times. Smoking outside the building is permitted in designated areas only. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children. Firearms and other significant hazards that pose risks to children and adults are prohibited at all times.

--CLOTHING & SUPPLIES--

CLOTHING AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPLIES

Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. In the cold winter months, please have your child wear clothing that can be layered for warmth. During warmer temperatures, please apply either sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to exposed skin before arriving at school. Many of your child's favorite activities may tend to be a little messy, like finger painting and digging in the dirt. Clothing and shoes should be easy for children to take off and put on during toileting

and napping. Children should wear closed footwear such as tennis shoes. **The children will go outside every day (unless it is raining) so dress them accordingly.** Each child also needs a complete change of clothing including underwear and socks. An extra pair of shoes would be appreciated. If public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used -staff will apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission. We will only apply sunscreen if we have written permission from a parent. All insect repellent and sunscreen will be kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom and cannot be kept in your child's basket.

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

Children frequently want to share nature items and treasures from home with their class. Such items are especially welcomed if they support the topic being studied. For example, children may bring in shells during a unit on the beach, or a picture of Grandpa and his garden during the *Grandpas and Grandmas* topic. It is always a good idea to check with your child's teacher before bringing objects to the Day School.

We discourage your child from bringing toys from home; although we do allow items of comfort, such as a soft, cuddly stuffed animal, to be brought to school to help your child sleep more comfortably. We know that bringing toys from home makes it difficult for any child to share, and the toy could get lost or broken. The staff will not be responsible for lost or damaged toys. The Day School does not allow toys of violence, such as guns, swords, or violent action figures. Also, children will not be allowed to bring cosmetics, candy, gum, or money to the Day School.

TOILETING AND TOILET LEARNING

Teachers will work with families whose child is showing signs of readiness to learn to use the toilet. Children who are in the toilet learning process should bring several extra pairs of underwear and at least two complete changes of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear). Toilet accidents will be handled in a calm, pleasant, and casual manner. Information about toilet learning will be provided upon request. Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces will be placed in a bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering. Cloth diapers are not allowed unless required by the child's physician. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag secured by a tie, placed in a closed container (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

--FOOD--

APLC Day School is committed to good nutrition as an integral part of your child's school experience. The children not only benefit physically, but also learn the principles of good nutrition. Our food policy is based on the Child and Adult Care Food Program and what is developmentally appropriate. A copy of "[Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals: A Menu Planner for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)" is available in the Day School Office. Staff will abide by the same food policy. If food brought from home does not meet the food policy guidelines, it will be replaced with an appropriate food item. Staff will check for food allergies before substituting any food item sent from home.

Please send food that is ready to serve, cut into appropriate sizes, washed and ready to eat. Avoid foods that require heating or refrigeration. If food needs to be kept cold, please include an ice pack or blue ice

with your child's food. Lunch containers must be labeled with the child's name and date each day they attend school.

If you chose to send a drink, please send only 100% fruit juice. Juice cocktails, juice drinks, or juice beverages are not permitted. Be sure the label says 100% fruit juice. Lemonade and juice coolers are not 100% juice and should not be sent to school. We will provide water at snack and lunch. We encourage you to allow your child to drink water while at school. We do not serve milk; however, if a parent sends milk, it must be whole milk for children under the age of 24 months.

The following ideas are intended to help you choose appropriate foods for snack and lunch. The list is not inclusive of all appropriate foods but serves as a guideline.

PreK-2 and Pre-K3's classes' food must be cut into pieces no larger than ½ - inch square, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. Children are not permitted to walk around with food, bottles or sippy cups and will be asked to sit at a table to finish their food or drink.

Children with Food Allergies

All meals and snacks must be provided from home for children with food allergies. With your permission, the food allergy information will be posted in the classroom. As required by the licensing standards of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children requiring dietary considerations (such as food allergies) must have a written statement from the child's physician or a registered dietitian stating which foods that must be avoided and suggesting alternatives. The staff will post the food allergy/sensitivity, nutritional needs, or other medical needs of the child for all staff caring for the child to review only if written permission to do so has been given by the parent. With severe food allergies, such as that to peanuts, a letter to all families in that room will be sent out to advise them of the severe allergy and to ask them to take it into consideration when preparing their own child's snacks and lunches. **If your child suffers from severe food allergies, you are strongly advised to send foods from home that you deem safe for your child's consumption. Every effort will be made to ensure that your child is not exposed to foods to which he/she is allergic.**

GOOD IDEAS FOR SNACK & LUNCH

Bagels & cream cheese	Pancakes & waffles
Goldfish	Fresh or canned fruits
Cut fresh vegetables	Cheese sticks or cubes
Raisins	Yogurt – Not in a tube for the Pre-2 class
Granola bars	Muffins
Dried fruits	Graham crackers
Applesauce	Ham and Cheese wrap
Hard boiled eggs	Tuna salad
Pasta	Peanut butter & jelly
Baked pitas with hummus	Pita Sandwiches
Crackers with cheese	Soup in a thermos
Flour tortillas with filling	Sliced grapes

FOODS NOT PERMITTED

baked or fried chips
foods with chocolate – i.e. chocolate teddy grahams, granola bars with

m & m's, etc.
fruit roll-ups
fruit chews
fast foods
lunchables
pudding
jello
kool-aid
candy
cookies
hawaiian punch
marshmallows

For Safety reasons, the following foods are not allowed for children under 4 years:

Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds)

Hard pretzels

Whole grapes, spoonfuls of peanut butter (including dipping cups of peanut butter)

Nuts or peanuts, raw chunks of carrots, vegetables or meat larger than can be swallowed whole

Popcorn

Raw peas

MEALS AND SNACKS

For all classes, parents will pack a mid-morning snack and lunch with label indicating the current date. Check the daily schedule outside each classroom for snack and lunch times. Snack and lunch will be approximately two hours apart; however we are flexible to meet the needs of the children. We encourage you to send foods that are nutritional and that do not include candy or high sugar/fat products to promote proper eating habits. Please refer to the attached food policy for a list of accepted foods. **Please do not send foods that require heating or refrigeration.** Staff will not heat foods brought from home. If food must be kept cold, please include a blue ice in the lunch container. Program staff will check food sent from home for expiration dates. Expired food will be thrown away and replaced something from our approved list of foods.

CELEBRATIONS/BIRTHDAYS

If you are having a birthday party for your child, we are happy to distribute invitations as long as all the children in the class are included. Please bring the invitations to the Day School Office and we will put them in the children's bags. **You are also given the opportunity to donate a book to the school in honor of your child's birthday during Chapel. Books are available for purchase in the day school office.**

Due to our church affiliation, Halloween is not observed. Please do not send your children to school in costume. Please share with the Day School staff other celebrations that are important to your family. Every effort will be made to be culturally sensitive.

Each year the school as a whole celebrates two local festivities, Trail Riders and Fiesta. Please refer to your school calendar for exact dates of these celebrations. Celebrations take place during the school day, and a

variety of activities are provided on the playground. Family members are welcome to attend, and parent volunteers/assistants are always appreciated.

--DAY SCHOOL BOARD--

APLC DAY SCHOOL BOARD

All parents are invited to participate on the Day School Board. The Day School Board reports directly to the Church Council and is composed of a variety of members who serve designated terms and meet the specific requirements for the position. Members include representation from the general public, church, and day school parents. When positions are available, an announcement is made and applications are accepted. The board serves as a clearinghouse for recommendations and complaints from parents. The board also assists the director in various projects to enhance the services to children and families, as well as planning parent education meetings, teacher/parent appreciation, and other events. All policies listed in this handbook can only be changed through the Board, subject to approval by the Church Council. All changes in policy will be reported in the monthly newsletter.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any parent who has a concern about the program is encouraged to express that concern. When appropriate, the concern should first be addressed with the child's teacher. If no resolution is reached, bring the concern to the Director. If a resolution has not been reached within seven (7) working days, the concern may be brought to the Chair of the Day School Board. The Chair will decide if and when the concern will be brought to the Board. If resolution has still not been reached, the concern would be taken to the Executive Board of the Church.

--HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION--

We believe that direct, effective communication is at the heart of a stimulating, safe, caring program for young children. If you have questions concerning day-to-day operations, the program, or your child's care or education, we expect you to discuss them with your child's teachers at an appropriate time and setting. Open, respectful communication often clarifies a situation before it becomes a problem. Additionally, we want you to share information that will help us better plan for your child's learning in our program. For families of PreK-2's, teaching staff will communicate with them on a daily basis regarding activities and developmental milestones, as well as shared caregiving issues and any other information that affects the well-being and development of their children (Daily Sheet). Our staff uses a variety of methods to communicate effectively with you about your child: informal conversations at arrival and departure, notes, phone calls, informal and formal meetings, bulletin boards, and monthly newsletters, weekly updates and message boards. If in-person communication is not possible, either a daily written notation or phone call will be made to parents or guardians. At least once a week, the teaching staff will communicate with families of preschool-age children on the areas listed above. If in-person communication is not possible, either a weekly written notation or phone call will be made to parents or guardians.

MESSAGE BOARDS

Please read daily messages on the dry-erase board at the Day School entrance and outside your child's classroom door.

MESSAGES FROM HOME

All important messages -a change in schedule, a different person picking up your child, child going home with a friend, etc.) –must be by telephone to the Day School office, in writing (dated, and signed) or emailed. **In order to have adequate supervision of your child, teachers will not check or respond to text messages during the school day.**

NEWSLETTERS/FLYERS

Newsletters and/or flyers will be sent home to keep you informed of program activities, reminders, and other information. At the beginning of each month a school-wide newsletter will go out to each family by email as well as a monthly hard copy calendar of important dates. We feel that it is very important for each parent to stay informed!

CLASSROOM BULLETIN BOARDS

Information including lesson plans, daily schedules, and other relevant information will be posted on the bulletin board outside your child’s classroom. Additionally, an information bulletin board is in the hallway across from the Day School office. Please check regularly for current information.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Day School encourages parent involvement. Training and educational opportunities are held periodically for parents. These meetings cover a variety of safety procedures as well as educational issues such as nutrition and guidance. We readily accept help from parent volunteers in the areas of library, special programs, field trips, paperwork, classroom aid, making games, etc. We ask parents to please contact the classroom teachers for optimal times to visit your child’s classroom, the center operation, and program activities. Be aware that long visits may be difficult for your child when you leave. We do ask visiting parents for understanding in a few concerns related to group care:

- Regular and frequent visits in the classrooms may require additional forms from parent volunteers due to licensing requirements for adults in child care classrooms
- Only volunteers and substitutes (including parents) who have submitted criminal history and central registry affidavits and adult immunization records to comply with Minimum Standards are able to perform child care routines for other children in the room
- Too many adults in children’s classroom space during regular activities could put children at risk due to space limitations; parents may need to alternate visiting times to allow more space in children’s classrooms. At APLC, children always come first; so, we are asking parents to consider all the children when planning visits to the room.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent conferences will be conducted at least twice a year. During these conferences, the staff will share information about the progress your child is making and show you samples of your child’s work. These conferences will be scheduled once in the Fall and once in the Spring and are very important to ensure close communication between the Day School and home (school will be closed on these days). The first conference will give you the results of a developmental screening of your child evaluating language, cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, and social and emotional development. If we have any concerns in these areas – a parent conference may be conducted earlier. You may request to schedule a conference at any time you feel it necessary to discuss your child. Assessment portfolios consisting of work samples, observations, anecdotal records, Individual Planning Profile (IPP), and other methods to assess and record development and abilities, will be kept by the classroom lead teacher each year for each child and updated regularly during the year. The assessment portfolios will be shared with the family at parent-teacher

conferences in the fall and spring and as requested at other times during the year. A written report will be given at the parent teacher conferences. The assessment portfolios are kept in a locked cabinet or filing cabinet in the classroom and will be passed on to the next teacher at the beginning of each school year.

Use and Purpose

APLC uses children's assessment for the following purposes:

- To describe the developmental progress and learning of children
- To improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment
- To identify children's interests and needs
- To identify children who may require intervention and arrange for developmental screening and referrals for diagnostic assessment
- To communicate with families
- To plan program improvement

Parental Input

Parents are given the opportunity to provide their input regarding their child's interests, strengths, and emerging abilities at the beginning of each year on the Student Information Form. Additionally, parent input is encouraged throughout the year. Input from parents is combined with information obtained from the assessment portfolios to guide the teachers in planning activities to meet the individual developmental needs and interests of each child and to determine the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

Assessment of Family-Desired Outcomes

The successful outcomes for families is assessed through feedback from families during parent-teacher conferences, informal meetings with parents, input from our APLC Day School Board, and the annual NAEYC Family surveys.

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Annually, in May, program evaluations are distributed to families, staff and administrators to measure our progress in meeting the program's goals and objectives. This is the time for the families to let us know how we can best meet the needs of every child in our program. The results of the evaluations will be announced in the May newsletter.

SPECIAL NEEDS

APLC recognizes that any child at any time may have "special needs" due to family emergencies, divorce/separation, moving, illness, allergies, etc. The program requests that parents keep the classroom teachers and/or Director informed of any situations that may be upsetting to the child or causing disruption in the child's regular routine or typical behavior. The program welcomes the input and suggestions of families in such instances to help us better meet the needs of your child and family. Conferences with the Director and/or classroom teachers can be also arranged as needed throughout the school year. The program will also discuss with parents and/or make appropriate professional referrals to parents with children needing further screening or when possible developmental delays or other concerns arise. Parents of children with identified disabilities or special learning needs are expected to share the Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs)/ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and/or any other specialized learning plans or recommendations from the child's doctor, therapist or school district. This information together with input from the parents will be used to help us plan individualized learning activities and assess the needs of your child while in our care so that we can better meet the special needs

of your child. Likewise, the APLC Director and/or teachers will provide, with written parental permission, information to therapists, doctors, school districts, and/or private schools about the behavior and abilities demonstrated by a child while in our care and/or copies from the child's assessment portfolio. Specialized consultants, including speech, occupational, and physical therapists and other professionals as needed, are welcome to arrange with the Director to observe the child while at the program and to use a classroom or meeting room to provide therapy for the child on site at APLC only with written parental permission and payment made directly to the therapist by the child's parents. Therapists or specialized consultants may obtain information from the teacher about the child and/or review the child's assessment portfolio only with parental permission. In addition, teachers and/or the Director will meet with the parent and therapist to determine the needs of the child while in our care. APLC staff welcomes the input of specialized consultants in helping us meet the special needs of a child under our care. The Director has contact information for several San Antonio agencies, consultants and therapists that the center has worked with in the past as well as others that can provide support services for children with special needs. APLC Day School attempts to be inclusive of all children. The program will work as best as possible with families with children with identified disabilities and/or special learning or developmental needs by making developmentally appropriate placement, adjusting staffing patterns or schedules, providing additional staff training, and/or modifying the physical environment within reasonable limits. The reasonableness of the adjustments needed for the specialized needs of the individual child in addition to meeting the needs of all the children enrolled will be considered seriously by the APLC Day School Director. Should accommodations be made to include a child with special needs, such as an adult trained in particular medical or dental procedure that must be present when the child is in school; parents will be responsible for additional costs beyond those included in the school's tuition. APLC may be unable to accommodate the special needs of all children.

--EMERGENCY PROCEDURES--

Fire drills are held monthly to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. The evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. In case of a toxic fume release or if the building must be evacuated, the children will be taken to Coker Elementary. Severe weather and lockdown drills are held every three months. Parents or emergency persons listed on the Emergency Release form will be contacted if necessary. If your child is injured, first aid will be provided and you will be contacted. If necessary, your physician will be notified and 911 emergency personnel will also be called. Below are emergency response plans.

EVACUATION PLAN

1. Child: staff ratios will be maintained, and the children will be evacuated to the Outdoor Chapel area located on the east side of the parking lot.
2. Children who cannot walk out of the building on their own will be evacuated with the help of the Directors.
3. The Director will check that each staff member knows a specific assignment as listed below:
 - ✓ PreK-5 Teacher 1 - will lead children out of the building taking a head count before leaving the classroom and taking emergency cards and attendance information
 - ✓ PreK-5 Teacher 2- will check the bathroom and classroom to ensure that all children have left the classroom and close classroom door.
 - ✓ PreK-4 Teacher 1 – will lead children out of the building taking a head count before leaving the classroom and taking emergency cards and attendance information

- ✓ PreK-4 Teacher 2 – will check the bathroom and classroom to ensure that all children have left the classroom and close classroom door.
 - ✓ PreK-3 Teacher 1 - will lead children out of the building taking a head count before leaving the classroom and taking emergency cards and attendance information
 - ✓ PreK-3 Teacher 2 - will check the bathroom and classroom to ensure that all children have left the classroom and close classroom door.
 - ✓ PreK-2 Teacher 1 - will lead children out of the building taking a head count before leaving the classroom and taking emergency cards and attendance information
 - ✓ PreK-2 Teacher 2 & 3 - will check the bathroom and classroom to ensure that all children have left the classroom and close classroom door.
4. Staff will count the children in each group being evacuated and count the children again when they reach the evacuation destination.
 5. Staff will give children clear, simple instructions about exiting the facility. Children will stop their activities immediately at the sound of the alarm and proceed to the exit door.
 6. Teachers from each class will carry attendance and emergency contact information from the facility to the Outdoor Chapel Area and compare attendance at the Outdoor Chapel Area to the attendance sheet to be sure no children or staff have been left behind.
 7. To assure complete evacuation has occurred, the administrative staff will conduct a final, thorough “sweep” of all areas accessible to children.
 8. If reentry into the building is not possible, children will be evacuated to Coker Elementary, 302 Heimer. Children will be taken by staff in cars to Coker Elementary carrying the emergency forms for those children in the car.
 9. Families will be notified by telephone.
 10. Evacuation procedures will be posted in the facility on the bulletin board across from the Day School Office.
 11. Evacuation drills will be held monthly. Children will be appropriately prepared for and reassured during drills. The Directors will complete the Evacuation Drill Log at the end of each drill. Natural disaster drills are held twice a year. Staff and children will gather in the hallway located outside the classroom and away from windows and doors. If a group is in the gym, staff and children will gather up against the wall connected to the kitchen.
 12. All new staff will receive pre-service training on the evacuation plan.
 13. In the event that the director is absent, the assistant director will assume authority.

SECURITY PLAN

1. Entrances will be protected from unauthorized access by keeping all doors into the facility locked (to the outside).
2. In the event of an admission of an individual who subsequently demonstrates threatening behavior, the administrative staff will call the church office by inter-office phone to notify them to call police. All caregivers and children will be notified to remain in their rooms.

FIRE, RISK OF EXPLOSION OR NATURAL DISASTER

1. Anyone who discovers smoke, fire or risk of explosion will pull the fire alarm located outside the Day School office, and notify the fire department by calling 227-9341 from a safe location after being sure that evacuation of the building takes place.
2. Staff will follow the posted Evacuation Procedures.
3. The last person to leave a room will close the doors of that room.
4. All staff is authorized to use the fire extinguisher where necessary and safe.
5. The Directors will report a fire or explosion to the child care licensing within 24 hours.
6. In the event of a natural disaster (flood, storm or tornado) and we must evacuate – we will travel by car to Coker elementary, 302 Heimer. Care will be taken to transport the children as safely as possible in staff vehicles with each child’s emergency form.

LOST OR MISSING CHILDREN

1. To prevent lost or missing children, staff will count children frequently while on a field trip or at school. A staff person will be responsible for performing a ‘sweep’ of the area or vehicle the children are leaving to be sure that no child is overlooked. Children are encouraged to wear the school t-shirts on field trips so that they can be identified easily. Staff will not make the child’s name visible on field trips to a stranger who might use the child’s name to lure the child from the group.
2. If it is determined that a child is missing or lost, the teacher will immediately notify the local police or sheriff, the program director, the parents or legal guardian and other authorities as required by state regulation.

UTILITY FAILURE

1. Day School staff will comfort the children, explain the situation, and model for them how to remain calm. Staff will use the flashlight located in each classroom as needed.
2. The Directors will discover if the power outage is confined to the facility or includes the neighborhood or surrounding areas.
3. Unless the power failure is accompanied by an emergency situation requiring evacuation, (e.g., fire or flood) children will be kept inside. Should it be necessary to leave the building, staff will follow emergency evacuation procedures. Staff will look for and avoid any downed power lines.
4. The Directors will call CPS and explain the situation, and request assistance.
5. If weather conditions do not permit the maintenance of safe temperatures within the facility, families will be notified by telephone.

“Lock Down” Procedures

In the event of a “Lockdown” the following procedures will take place:

1. Staff will be notified of a lock down situation with the term – EDNA (Emergency Developing Needs Assistance).
2. Close doors in each classroom – doors automatically are locked from the outside.
3. Cover window on the door with a piece of construction paper – so that no one can see in.
4. Close blinds
5. Move children to the same side of the room as the doors.
6. Get a cell phone and notify police.
7. After the children are seated – each teacher will stand by one of the doors in their classroom. If it has been determined that an intruder is threatening to come in one of the doors – both teachers will stand by that door in an effort to disarm the intruder.
8. If you are outside on one of the playgrounds – on the large playground – go into the North building and exit out the back of the building and go to a nearby building if you feel it is not safe. If you are on the PreK-2 playground – exit and proceed south to the business offices for safety.
9. You will be notified by an administrator or police officer with an “All Clear” when it is safe to resume normal activities or leave your room.
10. Parents will be reunited with their child when it has been determined that it is safe to leave the building or at the normal pick-up time, whichever is deemed appropriate.

****Each class will identify which staff member will stay with the children in the event it is necessary to help subdue the intruder.**

--VOLUNTEERS & FAMILY INVOLVEMENT--

Family involvement is essential to the success of our program. Families are encouraged to take an active role by sharing their ideas, energy, and support. You will be asked to fill out a “Parent Volunteer Form” during the Parent Orientation. Volunteer jobs include: making learning games for classrooms, assisting on field trips or in classrooms, helping with special events, soliciting donations for the silent auction, helping with the Trail Rider Breakfast, Fiesta, class basket coordinator, Parent Communicator etc. Informational meetings will be held on two days to allow all parents to attend. Your willingness to help will enhance the quality of our program.

REFERRAL/COMMUNITY RESOURCES

To effectively serve our children and families, the Day School Director is prepared to refer children with special needs to other professionals in the community if it is deemed desirable by mutual agreement of parents and staff. We support and encourage families’ efforts to negotiate health, mental health, assessment, and educational services for children by maintaining a current list of child and family support services available in the community. Upon request, we can share the list with you and assist you in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support your child’s and your family’s wellbeing and development.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

APLC Day School maintains for our families a resource library with books and videos, child development, child rearing, toilet learning, discipline, siblings, dealing with death, Love and Logic, etc. Parents are encouraged to check out any books or DVD's that may be helpful.

(Revised 8/19)

PROGRAM GOALS

PROGRAM GOALS: Pre-K2

To provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities, within a consistent routine, that draws from the curriculum areas of: art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, social studies, dramatic play, language arts, and manipulative activities.

To provide a nurturing, flexible, and calm atmosphere where physical affection is freely given, self-concept is enhanced, independence is encouraged and expectations are made clear.

To be supportive of parents by encouraging involvement, as well as open and honest communication while using tact and discretion.

To establish room awareness among staff so that a safe environment is always present both indoors and out.

To meet each child's physical needs while setting the stage for future independence in self-care.

To provide ample opportunity for the use of large motor skills and outdoor activity, knowing that large muscle activity is important for brain development.

To provide an atmosphere where the foundations of respect for others is established.

To begin to encourage social development through cooperative play.

To establish respect for the equipment and materials.

To establish an observation system in which developmental notes and assessment criteria on children are kept.

To expose them to the Spanish language and culture through intentional activities involving songs, transitions, stories and routines.

PROGRAM GOALS: Pre-K3

To promote emotional growth.

- a. To build self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by allowing choices within limits and to build on successful experiences.
- b. To provide a warm accepting environment for the children to work and play in.
- c. To encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder with emphasis on self-motivation.

To promote social growth

- a. To promote and instill a sense of caring for, and sensitivity towards others.
- b. To help recognize group needs vs. individual differences.

To promote intellectual growth

- a. To instill a sense of curiosity.
- b. To provide an atmosphere where children discover and explore – to teach independence through teaching how and where to find solutions.
- c. To provide a wide variety of activities within a routine where cooperative play is encouraged. Curriculum areas of art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, dramatic play, language arts and fine motor activities. Through these activities, children are learning to be able to trust their own feelings about what they learn, hear, see and to begin sharing these experiences with others.

To promote physical/motor development

- a. To provide opportunities for children to use their bodies in a variety of active ways by participation in fine and large motor activities both indoors and outdoors.

To be supportive of parents by encouraging involvement, as well as open and honest communications while using tact and discretion.

To establish an observation system in which developmental notes and assessment criteria on children are kept.

To expose them to the Spanish language and culture through intentional activities involving songs, transitions, stories and routines.

PROGRAM GOALS: PreK-4 & 5

To meet each child's physical needs while encouraging independence in self-care.

To provide an atmosphere in which children have respect for others.

To establish respect for the equipment and materials.

To provide a relaxed, loving, and calm atmosphere where self-concept is enhanced, independence and choices are encouraged, and self-discipline is gained in an environment where the child knows the limits and expectations.

To provide a wide variety of activities, drawn from the curriculum areas of art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, social studies, practical life, dramatic, play, language arts, and manipulative activities.

To develop in each child an active curiosity about the world in which he/she lives and an enthusiasm for learning which stimulates exploratory behavior and creativity.

To develop in each child an appreciation for beauty and nature.

To provide ample opportunity for the use of large motor skills and coordination through physically active play in either indoor or outdoor activities.

To establish an observation and assessment system in which developmental notes on children are kept.

To establish room awareness among staff so that a safe environment is always present both indoors and out.

To be supportive of parents by encouraging involvement, as well as open and honest communications while using tact and discretion.

To expose them to the Spanish language and culture through intentional activities involving songs, transitions, stories and routines.

**ABIDING PRESENCE DAY SCHOOL
Program Fees
2019-2020**

	Registration Fee	Supply Fee	Monthly Tuition
PreK2			
2 day/week	125	160	325
3 day/week	125	180	480
4 day/week	125	200	630
PreK3			
2 day/week	125	160	325
3 day/week	125	180	480

4 day/week	125	200	630
PreK4			
3 day/week	125	180	350
4 day/week	125	200	420
PreK5			
4 day/week	125	200	420

(All classes are 9:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

Registration Fee is a onetime non-refundable fee due at the time of registration.

First Month’s tuition: September tuition is due by June 1st or upon enrollment after June 1st. This is a non-refundable fee unless we are able to fill that spot immediately or at the discretion of the Director.

Supply Fee is paid in two installments – half in September and the remaining half in January.

APLC DAY SCHOOL FEE, DISCOUNT AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEE

All children attending Abiding Presence Lutheran Church Day School will be required to pay a \$125.00 registration fee. This fee is due at the time you register your child in the program, regardless of the time of year. **The registration fee secures a position for your child in the program and is non-refundable.**

SUPPLY FEE

The supply fee is paid in two equal payments—one in September and the other in January. The supply fee may be prorated if enrollment occurs after the school year begins, and you may be refunded for the portion of the supply fee that was not used.

TUITION FEE

September tuition is due by the June 1st or upon enrollment after June 1st to secure your child’s spot for the coming school year. This fee is non-refundable. Beginning in October, the tuition fee is due at the beginning of each month. **There will be no credit for holidays or day missed.** A \$5.00 a day late fee will be collected for tuition paid after the 8th of each month. The rate is not reduced for school holidays or absences. In the event you must terminate enrollment, two weeks’ notice is preferred. Church members will be given a 20% discount on their tuition; however this benefit will be reviewed annually.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Abiding Presence Lutheran Church Day School does have reserved fees for annual scholarships. Scholarship applications are available in the Day School Office. Each scholarship is reviewed and awarded on availability and the status of enrollment of the Day School.

Silent Auction Fee

A one-time Silent Auction fee of \$5.00 is paid in September. This fee is used to offset expenses for class projects auctioned at the Silent Auction and Family Night.