

Rocking Horse Preschool



2017/2018
HANDBOOK

Rocking Horse Preschool
The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity
102 Apple Street
Leesport, PA 19533
610-926-7176 ext. 3
rhps@comcast.net

The Rocking Horse Preschool is Sponsored by The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity

Please direct any question or concerns to us. We will be happy to answer them or set up a time to talk with you. Emails are an acceptable form of communication as well.

Special theme days will be celebrated throughout the year. This will be an opportunity for your child to dress for a theme, share related toys or books, etc. and participate in related activities. They will be announced on the calendar in the hall.

Separation anxiety is a common occurrence. Please discuss any concerns with us personally. Many times it takes at least six weeks for adjustment to be made. We understand how difficult this is emotionally for both parent and children and we will help you in any way possible.

Progress Reports: Please check the information wall on a daily basis to see what your child has done during their class time. We will also be completing developmental checklists twice a year to keep you informed and updated concerning your child's growth and development. Please feel free to contact us at any time regarding these issues.

Church Secretary is Amy Staub; office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Office phone number is 610-926-7176 ext 1.

Preschool Board Members:

- Aliesha Woods
- Adrienne Leshner
- Pat Miller (*treasurer*)
- Renee Lenning (*church liaison*)

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SIGN THE FOLLOWING FORMS AND RETURN TO THE STAFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

- Photo Release
- Injury Release
- Handbook Acknowledgement

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RHPS Objective

Our goal here at Rocking Horse is to encourage growth and development through play and educational activities. We feel that it is important for each student to have the opportunity to learn and grow in a safe environment with the guidance of teachers who are caring and educated.

Letter from the Church Council

Dear Preschool Parents:

We personally want to express our gratitude to you for enrolling your child in Rocking Horse Preschool! We here at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity are delighted to sponsor this outstanding preschool program as an outreach ministry to the community. We celebrate that for many years Rocking Horse has benefited hundreds of young children in the Leesport, Hamburg, Fleetwood, Oley and surrounding areas. We are happy to provide a safe environment for children to gather and play. Our bright and cheerful room is an ideal learning center for young minds. In addition, our playground offers children many hours of outdoor fun.

The staff of Rocking Horse Preschool – Aliessa Woods and Adrienne Leshner – have planned many exciting and educational experiences for students during the 2017-2018 school year. The calendar is filled with fun-filled activities, meaningful learning experiences, a few field trips as well as plenty of opportunities for social interaction with other children. We're sure that your child will thoroughly enjoy her/his experience here at Rocking Horse Preschool.

If your family is not already part of a church family, we cordially invite you and your family to attend our church sometime on a Sunday morning. Worship Services are held at 9 a.m. (with a Children's Sermon each week) and Sunday School for all ages is held at 10:30 a.m. (During the months of June, July and August, Children's Church is held during church service.) Come, and we're sure that you'll enjoy our congregation's warm fellowship.

Again, thank you for selecting our Rocking Horse Preschool for your child! We look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Church Council

National Emergencies

In light of the September 11th terrorist attacks and ongoing threats of violence against the United States, the Rocking Horse Preschool has adopted the following Critical Management policy:

In times of a National emergency, families should be together. The board and teachers are requesting that you come pick up your child as soon as possible should such a situation occur. If you are unable to pick up your child within one (1) hour of an emergency, please contact the preschool teachers at 610-926-7176 extension 3 so that other arrangements can be made.

We certainly hope that we will never need to initiate this policy, but should it become necessary, we want to assure that the children are safe and with their families.

Church Funerals

There are occasions when class time interferes with a church funeral. If this were to happen, you will be notified and given details as to what changes to the day's schedule will be made.

General Information

⇒ **Please mark all your child's belongings** with his/her first and last names, especially outerwear and **school bags**.

We suggest children wear play clothes and sneakers, as we will be going outside when weather permits. Children can dress up for special days or holidays.

We strongly suggest each child use a backpack or school bag large enough for school projects, each day. This will help eliminate forgotten or lost papers and will discourage comparison of students' individual work. Please send an extra set of clothes in case of toilet accidents or spills. School Bags and coats should be hung on the hooks underneath the shelf in the hallway.

Birthdays will be noted on a day as close as possible to the actual date. In case of duplicates, each child will have his/her own day. Children may bring in a special treat.

Please notify us of any changes in records or changes in your child's life. All information will be strictly confidential. Please inform us if someone other than the usual person will be transporting your child to or from school by sending a note with your child, and hand the note to one of the teachers.

Discipline Policy

This discipline policy is in effect to protect and ensure the safety and well being of all RHPS students and staff.

Our teachers work hard to prevent unacceptable behaviors from occurring through the use of positive reinforcement and redirection, through encouraging children to express their needs using words, and by helping them make choices that respect others.

The RHPS Discipline Policy will be enforced for inappropriate conduct or behavior including acts against students and or teachers such as biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, foul language disrespectful language, bullying or any other conduct or behavior determined to be inappropriate, unacceptable or unsafe by the staff.

First Offense: Teacher will talk to the student about the behavior and advise as to why the behavior is unacceptable and or inappropriate.

Second Offense: If behavior is repeated, the child will be in time-out and the parent will be contacted and privately advised of such conduct.

Third Offense: If necessary, the parent will be required to come immediately to school to take the child home.

After Third Offense: A child may be required to leave the program with no tuition reimbursement.

Special Information from Home

In the event of a significant change in the home, which may effect your child's behavior, security or general well-being, please inform the staff as soon as possible. We will accept the parent's judgment as to what changes may effect the child. Common causes of stress include: either or both parents being away from home for an extended time for any reason; a new person living in the home; illness of either parent, illness of a sibling; any hospitalization, accident or death; new caretaker; moving; or a death of a pet. The staff will keep parents informed of any significant changes in the school environment, which may effect the child.

Staff

Aliesha Woods, Teacher: Mrs. Woods resides in Mohrsville with her husband Ashley and three sons ages 15, 13, and 9. Her children attend Schuylkill Valley Schools. She received her Associates degree in Early Childhood Education from RACC in 2002 and her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education in 2013 . She has over 15 years of teaching experience in the early childhood field. She has been a part of the Rocking Horse program for over 12 years as a board member and substitute while her children attended the preschool until seven years ago when she took over the teaching position.

Adrienne Leshar, Aide: Mrs. Leshar resides in Leesport with her husband Nathan and her 9 year old twin children. Her children attend Schuylkill Valley Elementary School and attended Rocking Horse Preschool. Mrs. Leshar had worked as a substitute classroom aide at both SVES and Rocking Horse Preschool for 3 years before taking over the position of classroom aide at Rocking Horse Preschool in October of 2016.

Contacting Teachers

During class time, teachers can be reached by calling the church phone number, 610-926-7176, and pressing 3 for the preschool. If the teachers are not available during school hours, there is voice mail for you to leave a message. Teachers can be reached at home after school hours.

Aliesha Woods
209 Bucks Hill Road
Mohrsville, PA 19541
484-824-1514 (cell)

Adrienne Leshar
302 Nichols Street
Leesport, PA 19533
610-451-5061 (cell)

RHPS Addresses

Mailing Address: Rocking Horse Preschool
The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity
102 Apple Street
Leesport, PA 19533

Email Address: rhps@comcast.net

Tuition

Tuition is \$120 per month for the Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday AM Group; and \$145 for the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday PM Group.

Tuition is due the first of the month; a \$5 late charge will be due if tuition is not paid by the 5th of the month. Checks should be made payable to "Rocking Horse Preschool". A \$35 fee will be charged for checks returned for insufficient funds. Please put the tuition in the **BASKET** inside the classroom door.

If payment is overdue by one month, the student will be asked to withdraw. Any withdrawal from class by the parent or guardian must be in writing 30 days in advance.

Tuition Payment Schedule: To avoid confusion concerning our tuition payment schedule our policy is as follows:

Tuition is calculated on a yearly basis and divided into nine (9) monthly payments. The first payment is due September 1 and the last payment due May 1. If your child starts classes at a date later than the designated date in September it is your responsibility to coordinate your payments to the payment schedule. A \$5 late fee will be assessed for payments made after the fifth of the month due.

We have made an allowance in the payment schedule for school closing due to inclement weather. This has been figured into the tuition fee at the following rate:

- Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday AM class – 4 closings
- Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday PM class – 5 closings

We will make up any additional days missed beyond those allowed for in the schedule.

Field Trips: Your child may have the opportunity to participate in special programs or field trips. Field trips may result in an additional field trip fee and may require you to complete a permission slip from Rocking Horse Preschool.

Parking Lot Safety

The safety of the students at Rocking Horse Preschool is always one of our most important concerns. We teach safe playground play and non-aggressive play in the classroom. We will be discussing safe trick or treating and throughout the year we will touch on bicycle, car and parking lot safety.

Please help us to emphasize care in the parking lot by holding your child's hand while walking to and from the classroom. While driving in the lot, please approach the building slowly and stay alert for small children. **When picking up and dropping off your child we ask that you park in the spaces along the hill (cemetery side) and down the middle of the parking lot. Please do not park in the spaces on the other side of the parking lot as these are for the secretary and church members.** Please do not park on the sidewalk. When backing from a space make sure there are no children behind your car. Remember they are small and you may not see them easily.

Thank you for your cooperation. We can all work together to keep our children safe and happy.

Playground Guidelines

Playground guidelines have been established to insure each child's safety. It is appreciated if you reinforce the rules of the playground when your child visits before and after class. We are delighted to have the children enjoy the equipment and want them to do so safely. Thank you!

Sliding boards:

1. Go UP the ladder and DOWN the slide.
2. Go DOWN the slides on "sitters" only, facing forward.
3. DO NOT climb from the top of the slide to the rings.

Swings:

1. DO NOT walk in front of the swings, or walk behind them.
2. STOP the swing before you get off, do not jump from the swing while it is moving.
3. DO NOT twist the swing chain or alter its length.
4. Sit on your "sitters." Never stand on the swing or lay on your belly.

Fence:

1. DO NOT climb, hang on, or lean on the fence.
2. DO NOT leave the fenced area without a teacher or parent.

Note: We strongly discourage any play using real or imaginary weapons of any type: guns, swords, knives, or "karate chops." We also request that sneakers be worn.

Weather

In case of bad weather, please listen to the local radio stations: WEEU (830 AM), WRFY (102.5 FM), or call the church and press 3 for the preschool; information regarding school closing will be on the recording by 8:00 a.m.

You may also call either teacher at home between 8 – 8:30 a.m. If your last name begins with A-K, please call Mrs. Woods at 484-824-1514, L-Z please call Mrs. Leshar at 610-451-5061. Do not hesitate to call, do not assume we are having class.

The preschool follows Schuylkill Valley School Districts closings – if they are closed, we are closed. If they have a delay, our morning classes are cancelled. Parents of afternoon classes, please call us at home between 11 – 11:30 a.m. to see if afternoon classes will be held. Check your email as well.

Bathroom Policy

Please note the following items to make things easier for your child:

- Please have your child wear elastic-waist pants; they should only wear buttons, snaps or zippers if they know how to fasten them themselves.
- Please show your daughters how to lift up their skirts or dresses to use the toilet rather than removing them.
- If your child is younger and prone to accidents please have them wear pull-ups, and send extras in their school bags.
- Please send an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack, accidents do happen. Be sure to send a complete outfit; shirt, pants, two pair of underwear and socks, in a Ziploc bag.
- If your child is not potty trained please send two extra diapers and baby wipes in their school bag.
- If your child is potty training, please send him/her to play group wearing a diaper or “pull-ups”. We make every effort to encourage potty training, but many times the child is not able to give us enough advance warning.

Registration

Registration information is available from the staff. The completed registration form, along with a \$50 registration fee should be sent to:

Rocking Horse Preschool
102 Apple Street
Leesport, PA 19533

This fee is non-refundable. After a registration form and fee have been received, one of our staff will contact parents to confirm that the child has a place in one of our classes.

Nondiscriminatory Policy: The Rocking Horse preschool 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. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. However, if an applicant needs a specialized program, we reserve the right to determine his or her eligibility.

Enrollment

Children who will be 3 years old by August 1st will be eligible for our AM Group. Class size averages 16 children.

Children who will be 4 years old by August 1st will be eligible for our PM Group. Class size averages 20 children.

* Class placement will be at the discretion of the staff.

* Class size will be at the discretion of the staff.

Class Hours/Days

AM Group: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday mornings
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

PM Group: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
afternoons 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Class Arrival/Departure

The Classroom will be open five minutes before and after class. Please be prompt. We appreciate if you arrive promptly at dismissal time. Thank You. Please knock first before entering if you need to talk to the teachers before these times. Class times are as follows:

AM Group: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday mornings from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

PM Group: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday afternoons from 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Entrance Doors: The church has instituted a child protection policy to ensure the safety of all children who use the church facilities. Due to this policy, we will be locking the side door entrance at 9:45 until 11:25 a.m. and 12:45 until 2:55 p.m. Please plan your arrival accordingly; use the doorbell at any other time. If the door is not open at dismissal time, please ring the doorbell. We most likely have been busy with the students and have forgotten to unlock the door. All other doors of the church remain locked.

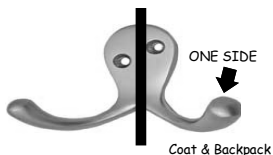
Classroom Sign In/Sign Out: Parents/Guardians will be required to sign in and sign out their student daily.

Daily Routine

- Arrival and Free Play
- Clean Up
- Large Motor
- Snack
- Songs/finger plays/story time
- Seat work/academics
- Dismissal

We want to make learning an exciting and successful experience for your children. Each craft they complete and bring home will incorporate the introduction and reinforcement of many skills.

ATTENTION PARENTS !



When hanging up coats and backpacks, please use only ONE HOOK per child. This will ensure that everyone has a space to hang their belongings.

Snacks (Boy or Girl of the Day)

Each child will be assigned a day to bring snacks on a rotating basis. This day will also be their show-n-tell opportunity with the class. For show-n-tell, one item should be brought in to share with the class (please, no weapons). They will be the special helper for that day and will announce dismissal also. Please send drink and snacks. We will provide paper products. If you forget the snack on your appointed day, please send one can of juice and a boxed snack on the following school day. Please check the label for serving size per container and be sure to send enough for the whole class. We will notify you if there are any allergies in the class.

Some suggestions for drinks are: Minute Maid Fruit punch, lemonade or Juicy Juice (*please no juice boxes or bags as this eliminates being able to give seconds to most children*)

Some suggestions for snacks are: Rice Krispy bars, Granola bars, graham crackers, Popsicle's, fruit (cut up), snack crackers, pretzels, cheese cubes, animal crackers, ring bologna slices, goldfish crackers, seedless grapes, veggies and dip, ice cream . . .

Snack Servings: Please send the following per class:

AM Group: food to serve 18 and 1 gallon juice

PM Group: food to serve 22 and 1 gallon juice

We do figure in extra servings in case a child drops or spills food. Please be sure to wash all fruit and vegetables, and cut into serving sizes.

Sickness

Please do not send your child to school ill. We will send them home if we notice a fever or illness. Please notify us of a contagious disease (i.e. Chicken Pox). For the safety of all students and their families, please be certain all your child's immunizations are current. Check with your physician if you have any questions.