



731 Peachtree Street NE | Atlanta, GA 30308
404.600.4321 | www.MidtownLutheranPreschool.org
Play | Projects | Dual Language

2019-2020 FAMILY HANDBOOK: POLICIES, PROCEDURES, and General Information

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overview

Mission

Midtown Lutheran Preschool nurtures and educates children in a Christian setting to be wholehearted, compassionate, principled individuals who contribute positively to the world community.

Program & Curriculum

We offer an emergent, play-based and playful curriculum. Themes and lessons are taught based on natural cycles of the school year and current events and happenings as well creating units based on the interests of the children. We value time outdoors. We offer dual-language classrooms.

Governance & Oversight

Midtown Lutheran Preschool fulfills its mission in collaboration with the Redeemer Preschool Ministry Team. Ministry teams are governed by the council of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. The MTLPS director is a staff person of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer and reports to, and is evaluated by, the Senior Pastor of the church.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Enrollment at Midtown Lutheran Preschool is open to families regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or family structure in administration of its educational policies and other organization-administered programs.

Family Responsibility

By signing the preschool family contract submitted annually (in the preschool forms packet) at the start of the academic year, families agree to the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook. You may inquire at any time for clarification or details from the director.

Contact Information

Midtown Lutheran Preschool

- Preschool office
- Preschool email
- Preschool website
- Multiage Oaks email
- Young Preschool Saplings email
- Toddler Acorns email

404-600-4321

preschool@redeemer.org

www.midtownlutheranpreschool.org

oaks@mtlps.org

saplings@mtlps.org

acorns@mtlps.org

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

- Website
- Main line

www.redeemer.org

404-874-8664

Program POLICIES & PROCEDURES

School Year

Our calendar generally follows Atlanta Public Schools (APS). We typically start classes a week after APS begins and end our academic year a week prior to APS end date. We generally follow the vacation calendar of the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) system but have some unique exceptions for professional development days and religious holidays. Holidays and special dates will be posted online under the calendar tab of the website and communicated via email in newsletters.

For weather related cancellations we will follow the call of APS and/or our church building closings.

Calendar & Weather Policy

We generally operate under the calendar and weather cancellations of the Atlanta Public Schools (APS). However, through the year there may be exceptions to this for professional development, church holidays, weather exemptions, or other unexpected events (power outages, etc.) which will be communicated through our online calendar and email newsletters or text messaging.

Hours

MTLPS opens for students at 9:00 AM. Parents arriving earlier must remain with their child in the foyer area or library until teachers open classroom doors. All programming ends by 12:50 PM and students must be dismissed no later than 1 PM.

Parking

- **Drop off and Pickup Parking Expectations:** Families are required to park IN a designated parking space and enter the building to drop off and pick up children.
 - DO NOT park alongside the sidewalk near the reception door, in a crosswalk, in a fire lane, in the middle of the side driveway, in a coned space, or double park behind parked cars.
 - If your family has a specific need (eg. physical limitation, etc.) for closer parking, this must be discussed with the director and church security and we will find a parking solution.
- Lutheran Church of the Redeemer has free available property parking behind the main building, behind the playground/mission house area, and in the 4th Street Parking LOT. ALL street parking is city-monitored and must be paid for at a kiosk or you risk ticketing, booting, or towing.

Arrival

- Drop-off: 9:00-9:10AM. Doors to rooms open at 9 AM sharp. We do not offer care prior to 9 AM. We ask that you do your best to arrive within the 9-9:10 AM timeframe so your child has sufficient time to settle into class for the day and work on activities that may be unique to the mornings.

- Instruction starts by 9:20 AM. Families arriving late prolong the start of the day. We request parents be cognizant of classroom routine and help your child to quickly enter and settle into the classroom if you arrive past 9:15. We understand, and embrace, family good-byes but request you keep these a reasonable length and that longer routines are taken care of in the hallway outside the classroom.
- If you anticipate arrival after 9:20 AM, families must email classroom teachers. If you arrive without notifying us of your tardiness, we ask you to bring your child, and his/her belongings, to the director's office to be escorted to the classroom. Unless previously scheduled, or with sufficient notification, we will not allow late arrivals to class unannounced after 10 AM.

Dismissal

- Our school programming ends at 12:50 PM. Pick-up must be completed by 1 PM. A late fee will accrue in the rate of \$1/minute beginning after 1 PM for late pick-ups. Once you have checked your child out of the classroom, you are responsible for the supervision of him/her.
- Child supervision - as we are part of a larger organization, we ask that you make sure your child stays close to you and refrains from running through the building. Please be aware of your child's location and safety. Be sure your child is with you when approaching the exit door near the receptionist desk as this door has a sensor and opens easily for little ones. Families are welcome to socialize on the playground after school dismisses. If families need space to socialize within the church building, the director must be contacted and a formal request made to the Facilities Director of LCR.

CHILD and FAMILY POLICIES

Health

- We require, with enrollment forms, submission of your child's current immunization record or religious exemption form.
- We expect multiage-class children (age 3+) to be fully toilet learned/trained and mostly accident free before the start of the school year. Exceptions are made for medical and developmental delays. In this circumstance, families must alert the director, submit a note of medical exemption and prognosis from your child's physician, and meet with staff to come up with a toileting plan BEFORE your child starts school.
- Sick Policy: children who have had a fever, diarrhea, or have vomited may not attend or return to school until all symptoms have subsided without the use of medication for 24 hours. We reserve the right to require a doctor's note at any time for a child to return to school and to send them home at our own discretion.
- In cases where a child gets sick during the school day, parents will be texted to come pick up their child. Texts will be followed up with a phone call if not responded to within 10 minutes. After this, emergency contacts will be called.
- In the event where there is a reportable contagious illness at the school, we will communicate information on the illness and treatment via email to families.

Medications

- Families must have signed the over-the-counter medications release for staff to apply topical medications such as sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper cream or 1st aid ointments – even if verbal permission is stated.
- For allergy, prescription, or other over-the-counter medications, a family must submit a signed doctor's medication plan and see the director for forms and to make necessary medical plans. These plans should be for urgent medication uses only.
- Medication that is dosed (eg. seasonal allergy, cough, antibiotics, etc.) is requested to be given at home before and/or after school.

Clothing

- It is the family's responsibility to make sure each student is dressed appropriately for the day – consider the weather, appropriate footwear, etc. Children should wear comfortable clothing with closed-toed shoes or socks with open-toed sandals. Flip flops are NOT permitted with the exception of water day play.
- Please make sure that clothing and shoes are kid-friendly and teacher-time friendly. This helps us as we diaper and assist in toilet learning and because we expect children age-appropriately to dress, shoe, and toilet themselves.
- Label ALL of your child's belongings. You can do this with a Sharpie or by ordering labels online.

- Additionally, we ask that at all times your child has a FULL extra change of clothes and undergarments (or two) at school in the cubby or backpack.
- If your child is still diapered, please keep a stash of diapers at school. Teachers will inform you when you need to replenish.

Food

- Children must bring a water bottle (preferably one that does not leak) every day they attend preschool.
- Families are responsible for their child(ren)'s snack and lunch each day. If your child needs warmed food we recommend families purchase a thermos as teachers cannot heat food for students (for time and safety reasons). Please use cold packs in lunchboxes if the lunch needs to stay cold.
- Please send healthy choices and choose familiar foods you know your child will eat.

Birthdays

- Birthday celebrations are to be coordinated with child's teacher with sufficient time (preferably at least a week in advance) so staff can plan timeframe and communicate dietary needs and considerations of classmates.
- Please limit treats to one item type and we encourage families to lean towards a healthier option when possible (eg. muffins vs. cupcakes). Typically snack/treats will be distributed, and "Happy Birthday" sung, around 12:30 PM for a post-lunch dessert. Families are welcome to come in for lunch with their child that day to celebrate. You can send in the treat or bring it in the afternoon.
- Be mindful that this is not a time for a birthday party but a time to acknowledge your child's special day with teachers and classmates. Please no decorations, goodie bags, party gifts, etc.
- We will distribute off-site party initiations as long as all children in a class are invited. Otherwise, families are expected to make connections amongst themselves to get personal information for invites.

Absences

- We do not offer make-ups for sick or vacation/travel days. If you are interested in additional daily drop-ins for a fee, please see the director and teacher for availability of space.
- **Absence communication**
 - **Planned travel, vacations, etc: we request families inform teachers ahead of time of absences in person or email**
 - **Last minute due to illness, family emergency, etc: email (or text) teachers.**
- If a child is absent from MTLPS for 10 consecutive school days without communication, or tuition payment, they will be assumed withdrawn from the

school and family must reapply for enrollment. All fees and tuition are forfeited to the school.

Travel and Vacation

We understand the great value of travel for families. However, we rely on family commitment of tuition for financial functioning. Therefore, tuition will not be prorated or exempted for trips during the school year. Families will be expected to continue tuition payments through absences to hold a child's seat. Families that refrain from tuition payments forfeit their child's seat immediately and are considered withdrawn and must re-enroll upon return.

OTHER POLICY & PROCEDURE INFORMATION

Communication

- Our teachers and administration communicate primarily through email, face-to-face, message boards in classrooms, and private Shutterfly site (request membership: <https://midtownlutheranpreschool.shutterfly.com/>), and in urgent matters via text messaging.
- **We expect families to take time to consistently read email** to watch for important newsletters and information. *Please search newsletters if you have general questions regarding school before emailing staff.*
- Director newsletters are emailed Thursdays of each week and contain information on community happenings, reminders, updates, child development information, and important calendar dates.
- Additionally, we post on social media so interacting with us on Facebook is also helpful for your information and for our online presence.
- We offer texting services for urgent messaging alerts from the school. Please be sure to keep all family information up to date online at www.myProcare.com and inform the teacher or director immediately if there are any contact changes (ie. new email, new address, phone number changes, etc.)
- Home environment changes: please be in communication with the teachers if there are any changes in your home no matter how small. If changes have legal ramifications, you must contact and discuss with director immediately.
- When needing information regarding your child, the classroom, or the preschool in general, we encourage you to consider the chain of command:
 1. *General inquiry:* search email newsletters.
 2. *Regarding your child or the classroom:* discuss/inquire with the classroom teachers. Set up a conference time
 3. *If an issue or question isn't resolved, or is above the teacher's realm of duty, or a general preschool question not answered in emails:* contact the director.
 4. *Larger organizational concern:* Redeemer's Pastor for Faith Formation and Senior Pastor of Redeemer are the supervisors of the director and to our program.

Student Adjustment

- We work hard, and do our best, to accommodate the needs of each child and family during the adjustment-to-school period. We strive for this experience to be fun and enjoyable.
- Beginning of school: we welcome parents to stay a few minutes the first couple drop-offs and then we ask you to transition to quick good-byes. Our parental anxieties are often the issue transferring onto our children at the start of school.

- We feel children should show signs of adjustment within one month of school starting. If at this time your child does not show any signs of adjustment, we will convene to evaluate the situation and strategies. If adjustment issues are extreme, a family may be asked to withdraw from the program.
- **1 Year Olds:** we will start our 1 year old program, and any new enrollees in the 1s age group, as follows (subject to change as a group or individual basis): 2 hour blocks for 3 sessions, 3 hour blocks for 2 sessions, then we will move children to the full 4 hour per day schedule.

Child Development

- Families are strongly encouraged to participate in fall conferences for updates on their child(ren)'s start to the preschool year.
- Families will receive an in-depth developmental assessment at the end of the academic year which includes a checklist and observation narrative.
- It is our ethical duty as a preschool to work with families over all aspects of their child's development. We see your child in a frequency usually second to you and we take our educational responsibilities very seriously. We strive to create an environment where your child will flourish into their best young self which means we are committed to discussing concerns with you when we observe development and/or behavior that we feel is off the typical trajectory of child growth and development. If families ever have questions or concerns from your point of view, please come to us as we can give you feedback from our observations and guidance to next steps. NAEYC Code of Ethics Sect. III, P-2.15: *We shall be familiar with and appropriately refer families to community resources and professional support services. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been appropriately provided.*
<https://tinyurl.com/ydyd4rva>
- There may be times where our school does not have the resources (experience, education, training, etc.) to accommodate children with special needs. We will do our best to work with families that have children with developmental and behavior concerns. However, as school there are times where we, with the family, may need to decide that a different school environment would be more appropriate for a child and a family will be released from the preschool contract. See details under "Program Termination."

Child Safety

- All staff of MTLPS and Lutheran Church of the Redeemer are regularly background checked and have training in child protection and mandated reporting.
- Georgia Law OCGA 19-7-5(c)(1) states that certain professionals, including those taking care of children, are mandated reporters of abuse and neglect. If we have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, we must make a report immediately to the Department of Family and Child Services (DFCS)

office, or law enforcement, and we are subject to criminal penalty for failing to do so. Please inquire with the director for any questions regarding our procedures around this policy.

Program Termination

Enrollment will be considered terminated under the following circumstances:

- The Center receives a 30-day advance written notice of withdrawal. We understand that a situation may arise, where you will need to withdraw your child from MTLPS. A 30-day written notice will give us time to enroll another child.
- The Parents fail to comply with the Parent Handbook, or any other rules of MTLPS or Lutheran Church of the Redeemer.
- Children who are absent for 10 consecutive days of school without family communication to the teachers or director.
- The center, in its sole discretion, determines it is unable to meet the needs of the child, or that it is not in the best interest of the center or other children enrolled to have the child continue in attendance. However, there are several measures that will be taken before dismissal occurs:
 1. Staff will document behavior.
 2. The director, parents/guardians, and teachers will meet to discuss any concerns and a plan will be created and agreed to by staff and parents/guardians (behavior consultants may be used to support the staff).
 3. Staff and parents/guardians will have frequent communication to evaluate the success of the behavior plan.
 4. When the efforts to bring about change have been exhausted, parents/guardians and the director will meet to determine the next course of action.
- The Center and its staff reserve the right to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of enrollment.

TUITION & Fees PROCedures

Fees & Deposits

ALL fees and deposits are non-refundable.

- *Fees:* MTLPS requires a one-time registration fee upon enrollment to receive class placement. 2019-2020 Registration/enrollment fee is \$75.
- *Deposits:* Class placement is confirmed after receipt of deposit which is 10% of tuition.

Tuition

MTLPS is a non-profit, self-supporting private preschool. All fees and tuition are used to provide teacher/staff salary, curriculum, and resources. Enrollment is a commitment. tuition is not optional, not negotiable*, and not based on attendance or completion of the school year. All tuition payments will be expected through May on the first of each month and are not refunded (without a 30 day written notice for life changes), put on hold, or prorated for illness or travel (including extended trips). See complete tuition agreement at the end of the handbook below.

**If your family is in need of financial assistance, please contact preschool director.*

*Needs based tuition support information is available upon request.**

- Items included in tuition and fees: staffing, facilities, supplies, special enrichment, field trips and events, t-shirt.
- **Annual tuition for Midtown Lutheran Preschool is as follows*, with no deductions, or make-up days, for absences due to sickness, travel/vacations, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our anticipation and control.** We depend upon tuition and fees for the financial stability of our school. Tuition is an *annual* commitment and is not prorated by the month. By signing the tuition agreement found in this packet, you are responsible for the full tuition amount as follows unless otherwise specified an approved by director:

2019-2020 - Days/Week and Annual August-May Tuition Total:

***2 - \$3050 *3 - \$4150 *4 - \$5150 *5 - \$6050**

Continued on next page

Payment Schedule

When	What
2019-20 School Year	
DUE August 16th	<p>*Tuition payments DUE by check or www.MyProcare.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Full annual tuition due for yearly payers. -First of 3 payments for three payment payers. <p>*Tuition payment DUE <u>with</u> AutoDraft Form-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monthly tuition – Auto Draft forms DUE <p>https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.procaresoftware.com/pdfs/Tuition-Express/Tuition-Express-Parent-Authorization.pdf</p>
1 st of the month November and February	Tuition due for 3 equal payment payers.
1 st of the month Sept- April	Monthly tuition DUE – will be done automatically through Tuition Express for ALL monthly payers. See first note below for downloads.
May 1	Re-Enrollment Deposit for May 2021 tuition DUE.

- Monthly payers are **required** to opt-in to Tuition Express Automatic Draft Payments with a bank account or credit card. You can download the form here and return with this packet: <http://bit.ly/2pl6kAQ>
Learn More about Tuition Express at www.tuitionexpress.com.
- Tuition is posted and due the first school day of the month. Director will send out reminders for unpaid tuition on the 10th of the month. If payment is not remitted by the 15th, an invoice will be sent with a \$25 incurred late fee.
- Contact the preschool director for invoices, tax records, or FSA receipts. We require a minimum of 3 business days for requests to be fulfilled. Please plan accordingly.
- **Needs based tuition support information is available upon request.*

Withdrawals:

- **Notice is REQUIRED 30 days in advance.**
- Monthly tuition is non-refundable and partial following-month tuition will not be prorated for student withdrawals. Additionally, if a student withdraws with less than 30 days notice, MTLPS reserves the right to charge for the next month's services and not refund any pre-paid tuition for the following month.
- Paid-in-full or 3-equal-payments require a 30 day notice for withdrawal from the school for refunds. Paid tuition for the month of withdrawal, or the following month if notice is filed mid-month, will NOT be refunded.
- Any child who withdraws and returns will be a "new" student and must re-enroll.
- School will consider a student withdrawn if there is a lack of communication/contact, or tuition payment, for 10 consecutive school days.