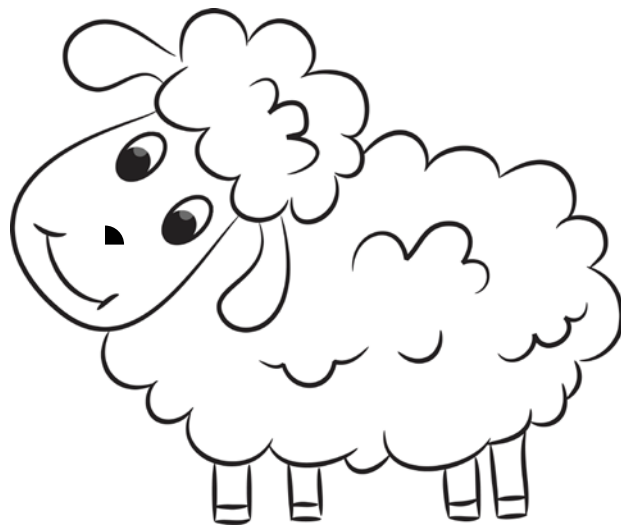


**Little Lambs
Preschool**

**Parent
Handbook
2017-2018**



**Good Shepherd Catholic Community
1000 Tinker Road
Colleyville, Texas 76034
(817) 421-1387**

**Little Lambs
Preschool Program**

Mission

To provide a positive preschool experience that helps develop social skills, promotes independence and fosters a love of learning in a caring, Catholic environment.

Policy Statement

Little Lambs Preschool Program is open to all children regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender or religious affiliation.

The program encourages a high level of learning where all students can learn and participate at their appropriate developmental level in a caring, loving and Catholic environment. A variety of activities and opportunities support and advance the physical, social and cognitive growth and development of each child. Little Lambs Preschool Program will offer appropriate age level instruction to each child in the program.

The goal of Little Lambs Preschool Program is to include all children wishing to attend the program. We also recognize that most children require some time to adjust to a new class situation and environment. However, any child requiring behavior assistance, physical assistance, medical assistance, or specialized educational instruction exceeding the level normally provided by the program may not be able to be served in the program. Any such situation will only occur after all relevant issues are reviewed by the Director and a meeting has been held with the child's parents to discuss the issue.

Lambs Program

The Lambs program is designed for students 2 years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year. It focuses on providing early learners the opportunities to explore, enrich and expand their adventures in Language Development, Mathematics, Art Expression, Religion, Music and Rhythm, Science Exploration and Society Studies.

Shepherds Program

The Shepherds program is for students 3 years of age or older on or before September 1 of the current school year. It is designed to increase the student's developmental level of learning through Language Studies, Mathematics, Fine Arts, Music, Religion, Music and Rhythm, Science Exploration and Society Studies.

All students will receive an assessment of skill and ability level before the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the assessment is to determine the developmental level of each child and more appropriately place each child in a class group. All students in the Shepherds program will be placed into a class group based on development level, with age being a factor, but not a definitive indicator of development. While there are certain recommended milestone markers for each age, we recognize that each child develops differently. During the assessment, Little Lambs Preschool Program will take all relevant factors and abilities into account.

Students in the Shepherds program who will be eligible for Kindergarten the following school year will participate in an afternoon Kindergarten readiness enrichment program. The goal of this program is to increase the student's developmental level of learning in key areas (Language development, Reading, Math, and Science) as well as enhance learning through games, individual activities and group activities. Students in this program must be able to focus on an activity for an extended timeframe, listen and participate appropriately in a class group. Enrichment students **do not nap**. Participation eligibility will be determined by an assessment of developmental level.

Program Implementation

Curriculum

The Little Lambs Preschool Program focuses on language and early literacy, mathematics, science exploration, fine arts, religion, and society studies. We also encourage the development of both fine and gross motor skills as well as reasoning development.

In the younger groups, the distinctive characteristics of each letter of the alphabet is presented to help young children learn the letter shape and each sound that it represents in the written word. Stories, songs and puppets help develop language and vocabulary and make learning fun. In addition, games and letter and word recognition activities at the more advanced levels help students learn each letter as well as each letter sound to encourage a pathway to reading.

The mathematics program introduces children to a range of topics to cover numerical representation and modeling, algebraic reasoning, shape geometry, graphing and patterning. The lessons and activities include developmental activities which encourage a variety of learning styles.

The science curriculum focuses on encouraging children to experience science concepts, skills and language through hands-on activities in a variety of areas. The children learn the scientific method of asking questions and testing hypotheses through experimentation, exploration and guided activities.

The presentation of the core elements of the Catholic faith is essential in religious formation and instruction. Little Lambs Preschool Program's religious instruction provides a basic and comprehensive understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church. We use teaching methods that will help us effectively communicate the content to our students presented on a preschool appropriate level.

Spanish words and phrases are taught using simple rhythms and repetition.

Additional Activities

We provide a variety of activities and opportunities that support the physical, social, and cognitive growth and development of all participants.

Activities:

- Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Fine arts
- Music
- Society Studies
- Religious Instruction
- Spanish

All of these activities require critical thinking, self-direction, risk taking, thoroughness, curiosity, imagination, expressiveness, movement and communication.

Recreational Activities

Recreational activities create opportunities for developing fine and gross motor skills, socialization skills, positive self-esteem, and oral language skills. These include:

- Physical activity
- Athletics
- Music/Rhythm
- Self-selected activities
- Playing of games

Evaluation

As a component to a well-rounded program, evaluation is important to measuring outcomes and is used for on-going program planning and improvement. Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled once a year and on request.

Registration Policy

1. Registration is held once a year in early spring with first priority given to students currently enrolled in the program and their siblings.
2. Currently enrolled students who do not re-enroll by the registration deadline will forfeit their slot in the program.
3. Open enrollment begins after the registration deadline for current students.
4. A separate waiting list will be started for the Lambs, Shepherds 1 and Shepherds 2 classes once they have been filled.
5. Students on the waiting list will be called in order as openings occur in the appropriate age group.

Fees

(all checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd Catholic Community)

1. Registration and Supply Fee: \$225 (non-refundable, due upon registration and admission to the program)
2. Monthly Tuition: \$225 GSCC parish member/\$240 non-member
3. Monthly tuition is due on the first day of each month. A \$30 late fee will be charged for tuition not paid by the 10th day of the month.
4. There is a \$25 discount for each additional child in the same family.

Children should arrive no earlier than 8:50 a.m. and should be picked up by 2:30 p.m. A \$10 charge will be assessed if a child is picked up after 2:40 p.m.; an additional \$5 will be charged for each quarter-hour thereafter.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

The registration and supply fees are non-refundable. The decision to withdraw should be in the form of a letter written two weeks prior to withdrawal.

Supplies

1. A complete change of clothing in case of accidents. We will keep this set of clothes throughout the year for use when needed. This includes pants, shirt, socks, underwear or diapers. Please provide us with a plastic zippered bag labeled with your child's name in which to put these items. If used, please replace them **immediately**.

2. Small blanket for nap time, labeled with the child's name (*All students except those admitted to the afternoon Enrichment program*).
3. Container of Clorox wipes (for cleaning surfaces) **and** a container of baby wipes (for cleaning hands and faces).
4. Diapers/Pull-Ups **and an additional** container of wipes, if not toilet trained.

Immunization & Registration Requirements

1. All children shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment. Parents must provide an updated health record of your child's immunizations from your pediatrician:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hib
- DTaP
- MMR
- PCV
- IPV (Polio)
- Varicella

2. Must complete and sign the following forms:

- Registration form
- Media release form
- Directory release form
- Immunization form (signed by a physician)
- Food Allergy and Health form

Program Hours

Little Lambs Preschool Program begins the school day at 9:00 a.m. and ends the school day at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The main entrance doors will be unlocked at 8:50 a.m. and locked again at 9:15 a.m. for security and safety purposes. **If your child arrives late, please use the church office entrance.** The main entrance doors will be unlocked for dismissal at 2:20 p.m.

The program runs from September through May.

Make-up days

There are no make-up days for holidays, bad weather days or absences due to family vacations, illness or any other reason.

In case of inclement weather, please follow the Grapevine/Colleyville School District's radio and TV announcements. We will close if they close, and remain open if they remain open. If there is a delayed opening of two hours for the school district, we will open at **10:30 a.m.** Every attempt will be made to also send out an e-mail notice.

Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

At drop-off time, parents or guardians must escort their children into the building and sign them in. Parents or guardians should then escort their children to their assigned classroom, tell them goodbye and leave.

At pick-up time, parents or guardians assume full responsibility for their children as soon as they pick up their child(ren) from the appropriate Little Lambs Preschool classroom. Parents should stand at the door of the classroom and wait for the teacher to bring the child to them. If someone other than the registration-listed parent or guardian will pick up a child from the classroom, you must identify that person either on the check in sheet at the classroom door, or by sending an email notice to the Director. This individual will be asked to provide a photographic ID at the pick-up time.

If a parent wishes to speak to a teacher about a concern, please schedule a conference time with the Director.

Presence of Parents in the Classrooms

To foster a sense of independence, parents should tell their child goodbye and leave the building. If a parent lingers on the premises, a child's fears are confirmed by their parent's anxiety. When a parent has a positive attitude about leaving his/her child at school, the child senses this positive attitude and is reassured.

Health

Children who attend our program will not be admitted for the day if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Severe cold or flu symptoms: lethargy, unable to function in school.
- Fever of 100 degrees F or higher: Your child should be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol, Motrin or Advil before returning to school.
- Vomiting: If your child is vomiting he must stay home and may only return 24 hours after vomiting has ended.

Should your child have a contagious illness, please keep your child home and return when he or she is no longer contagious. This is for the benefit and safety of your child and all the children in the school. If your child will be absent due to illness, we encourage parents to notify Little Lambs by either calling the church office at 817-421-1387 or sending an email to the Director.

The staff members may not administer medication of any kind to any child at any time. The only exception to this rule will be Epinephrine auto-injectors such as EpiPen and EpiPen Jr., which must be provided by a parent and include the prescription label with the child's name and specific instructions for use.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a life threatening emergency, we will immediately call 911 and begin CPR, if needed. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible after emergency services have been called. The Colleyville fire and police departments are close by and are familiar with our church facilities. We have an AED in the hallway outside our classrooms. Teachers are trained in CPR and carry cell phones for emergencies.

Snack/Nutrition

Nutrition education is a key component to learning together and building a healthy community. We will model these concepts by providing healthy snacks, with sufficient time to eat and socialize.

- Students are asked to bring their own lunch in an appropriate and **clearly labelled** bag or lunch box.
- A snack and water is offered mid-morning to all students. Each family will be asked to provide the snack for the school (37 students total) for one week of the school year. A schedule will be provided at the Parent Orientation.
- Children who require any kind of special diet must bring written instructions indicating all restrictions and special treatment. The child's parents **must** provide **all** meals and snacks for these students.
- If a student wishes to celebrate a birthday at school, the parents may send a special treat to be shared with his/her class during the school day. Please schedule the treat day with your child's teachers. All students with a summer birthday will have the opportunity to celebrate the occasion during the final weeks of the school year before the summer break.
- We maintain a peanut free environment. **No peanuts or peanut butter are allowed in any food product brought to school.**
- The Little Lambs Staff is not allowed to heat a child's lunch in either a microwave or standard oven.
- No gum or candy is permitted and please, no soda/soft drinks in lunch boxes.

Expectations

- Children in the Shepherds Programs (ages 3-4) should be toilet trained.
- All children should be dressed in **play clothes** that are comfortable and appropriate for the weather. A jacket or coat should be brought **every day** when necessary due to the weather and outside temperature.
- All clothing should be manageable enough to enable your child to go to the restroom independently.
- Girls wearing dresses or skirts must wear shorts underneath.
- All children should wear athletic shoes every day to be able to safely participate in activities (**NO flip flops, clogs, Crocs, sandals, slippers, dress shoes, cowboy boots or any shoes with a slippery sole**). **PLEASE no shoes with lights.**
- In order to minimize loss, please clearly label your child's clothing, lunch box, jackets, etc.
- Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school.
- Children should finish breakfast before coming in to the classrooms.

Safe and Nurturing Environment

A safe and nurturing environment is one that:

- fosters an environment free from threats, intimidation, humiliation and other safety hazards by building trust;
- facilitates an environment where children can learn, grow and develop their potential through shared knowledge and learning;
- creates a comfortable and unrestrictive space for implementing projects and programs that nurture the well-being of children and their families;
- provides an environment in which adults and children learn in partnership by listening, being positive and collaborating with one another. This includes being prepared, thorough, reflective, thoughtful, and following through on the design of activities.

Positive Discipline

Once the three basic elements (safe and nurturing environment, consistent caring adults, and constructive activities) are in place, we will follow a Positive Discipline Model for misbehaviors. There are many different reasons for misbehaviors and many different techniques for handling misbehaviors. We will take all of these into consideration.

A basic definition of discipline is: the actions adults take to guide and direct young children toward positive and acceptable behavior. We want young children to become self-disciplined and able to control their own behavior. Our focus will be to work with young children to guide them towards finding solutions to inappropriate behaviors that focus on helping them to do better in the future.

A Positive Discipline model is based on mutually respectful relationships. Positive Discipline teaches us the skills to create healthy, interpersonal connections in an environment where each person's contribution has meaning, is valued, and expected. Adults can help young children understand rules, look at the consequences of their actions, and find alternatives and solutions for inappropriate behaviors.

How we work with young children is important to the success of this program. If we want young children to be academically and socially competent, we must encourage structure, individuality, and give-and-take. Setting boundaries and expectations gives children a sense that they are cared for and valued.

We can give children a sense of belonging by enhancing their self-concept and making sure each child experiences success in learning, allowing them to give input concerning curriculum, procedures, problem solving, and personal attention from adults. This concept will establish a proper foundation for a successful program and add to a positive environment.

Children are naturally active and playful. We understand and expect this type of behavior. However, we will not tolerate any kind of violence from any child, whether it is in language, physical action against another child or adult, or destruction of church property.

If a child continually exhibits this kind of behavior, in spite of warnings from the teachers, a conference will be scheduled between the parents, teachers and Director, at which time the mode of disciplinary action will be discussed. If the child does not show any improvement in behavior

within a given period of time and after the discussed disciplinary measures have been taken, the Program Director will notify the parents of their child's dismissal from the program.

Programs and Activities Calendar 2017-2018

August 30	Student Assessments
August 31	Parent Orientation Meeting 7:00 p.m.
September 5	1 st Day of School
October 5	Blessing of Stuffed Animals for Feast of St. Francis
October 19	Fireman Visit
October 26	Open House 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
October 30 - November 9	Food Drive
October 31	Halloween Trick-or-Treating 9:30 a.m. in church office
November 9	Chapel Service with parents 9:30 a.m.
November 11	Food Drive Mass 5:00 p.m.
November 16	Student Thanksgiving Celebration
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
November 28	School Resumes
December 19	Christmas Program and Lunch 11:00 a.m
December 20 - January 3	Christmas Break
January 4	School Resumes
January 29 - Feb. 9	Registration for returning students opens at 10:00 a.m.
February 8 or 15	Chapel Service with parents 9:30 a.m.
February 13	Valentine Party 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
February 18	Open House for Prospective Families <i>(12:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Little Lambs Classrooms)</i>
February 26	Open registration for new students 10:00 a.m.
March 12 - 16	Spring Break
March 20	School Resumes
March 27	Easter Egg Hunt
April 5	Letter People Show @ 9:30 a.m.
April 26	Family Fun Night set-up Family Fun Night Early Dismissal 12:00 p.m. (No Lunch) Program at 6:00 p.m.
May 1	Mary May Crowning 9:30 a.m.
May 8	Summer Birthday Party
May 15	Class Picnic
May 17	Last Day of School, Early Dismissal 12:00 p.m. (No Lunch) Awards/Completion Program 6:30 p.m.