



3K and 4K Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

“Compelled by the love of Christ, St. Matthew’s Evangelical Lutheran Church and School seek to reach out to our families, community and world, using Law and Gospel to make disciples, growing and nurturing them in their Christian faith and life.”

MISSION OF ST. MATTHEW'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

It is the mission of St. Matthew’s Lutheran Early Childhood Programs to assist parents in the Christian training of their children, while also providing opportunities to successfully develop basic learning and living skills.

OBJECTIVES OF OUR PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

St. Matthew’s 3K & 4K provide the following for each child enrolled:

Spiritual Development

Daily opportunities to hear and apply God’s Word as it is taught in its truth and purity.

Intellectual Development

An educational experience in a Christian environment which provides age-appropriate activities in basic language arts, communication skills, science, reading and math readiness.

Physical Development

Daily opportunities to develop large and small motor skills.

Social Development

Daily opportunities to develop social skills based upon Christ-centered, God-pleasing principles of love and concern for each other’s safety.

Emotional Development

An atmosphere in which each child can feel accepted as a redeemed child of God and is encouraged to express his or her feelings.

Creative Development

Daily opportunities to develop self-expression through art, music and movement, play, exploration and problem solving.

CLASS SESSIONS

Our 3K program offers either a 2 day or a 3 day session. The 2 day session meets on Tuesday and Thursday. The 3 day session meets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The class meets from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. The minimum days for enrollment is 2 for the 3K.

Our 4K program's core days are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. We offer 3, 4 and 5 day options. Prior to the beginning of the school year, a choice of days must be made. The minimum days for enrollment is 3 for the 4K. Changes to the 4K enrollment agreement may be made at the semester. A classroom schedule is listed below:

A TYPICAL MORNING AT 3K/4K

7:20 - 8:00	Library/Welcome
8:00 - 8:05	Morning Meeting
8:05 - 8:20	Bible Time
8:20 - 8:50	Large Motor
8:50 - 9:15	Snack
9:15 - 9:35	Readiness Skills / Literacy Skills
9:35 - 9:50	Social Studies/Music /Science
9:50 - 10:50	Center Time - Dramatic Play Art, Readiness Skills
10:50 - 11:00	Clean Up and Closing

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Any care needed before school or after school will be provided through First Steps on a first come first serve basis. Contact Amber Terry Center Director at aterry@smls.org to register your child.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL / TRANSPORTATION

Parents are asked to bring their children to our classroom. Children should enter the school through the main school doors. Teachers will bring the students to the main entry for dismissal. Student transportation to and from 3K or 4K is the responsibility of the parents. Children will not be released at pickup time to anyone other than their parents unless parents send a note or personally contact the teacher.

Students arriving at school prior to 7:20 will be signed in to First Steps. Students continuing on to First Students after preschool will be picked up by First Steps staff and checked in at 11:00. Students not picked up by 11:15 will be signed in to First Steps. All First Steps charges apply for early and late pick ups.

3K/4K CALENDAR and NEWSLETTER

Our 3K & 4K calendars coincide with our St. Matthew's School calendar. A copy of the school calendar will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. A classroom calendar will also be distributed, listing any classroom events or special days. You will also receive a weekly newsletter to inform you about weekly themes, Bible stories and verses, upcoming events, and fun homework projects. In addition a school newsletter, The Cardinal Connection, will be sent home electronically.

OUR CHRISTIAN CURRICULUM

Each school day begins with a Bible lesson. Our religion course, called Christ-Light, teaches the children that God loves them so much that He sent His Son to be their Savior. The Bible lessons are presented through flannel board presentations, puppets, role playing, and songs. All other units and daily activities are taught from a Christian viewpoint.

Our 3K and 4K classes sing in Sunday church services at St. Matthew's during the school year. They participate in our Christmas Eve service.

The school chooses four mission projects a year. Our class receives information about these missions and is given the opportunity to give money which is used to help others learn about Jesus. The mission offerings are collected every Thursday/Friday in 3K, and on Fridays in 4K.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE



St. Matthew's encourages all families to attend church worship services regularly for their spiritual blessing. During worship services we unite before the Lord along with our fellow Christians. Together we hear God's Word. Together we pray, praise and give thanks.

There will be times during the course of the year that your child's class will be asked to participate in the worship service, usually by singing a hymn or anthem. We encourage you and your family to join us for worship on those days! A schedule is supplied to parents each year so that plans can be made to attend the appropriate services.

PARENT / TEACHER

Young children have a short attention span and it isn't uncommon for them to come home with things out of context. Please feel free to phone the teacher at any time if a question, problem, or grievance should arise, rather than discuss these things with others. Working together helps to foster a good educational experience. Parent/Teacher conferences are held at the end of the first and second quarters and are for informational and evaluation purposes. Additional conferences may be held at anytime during the year at the request of the teacher or parent.

ADMISSION POLICY

Those children enrolling in 3K must be 3 years of age by September 1. All 4K students must be 4 years of age by September 1 to enroll. Children must be potty trained to enroll in 3K or 4K. All admission policies listed in the St. Matthew's Lutheran School Policy Handbook apply to 3K and 4K.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Mrs. Beth Plitzuweit is the 3K teacher and Early Childhood Director. Mrs. Plitzuweit graduated from Martin Luther College in 1997 with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She taught one year in a K-4 classroom and has 20 years experience in 3K/4K classrooms.

Mrs. Elizabeth Schmidt is the 4K teacher. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Martin Luther College. Mrs. Schmidt has experience teaching Kindergarten-3rd grade and 3K. She also has run an in home childcare, been a classroom aid and was a childcare provider at First Steps. Mrs. Schmidt has been teaching 4K at St. Matthew's since 2019.

TRANSITION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

We want your child's first school experience to be a rewarding one. Here are some tips for parents to help your child transition from home to school.

1. Let your child know that school and learning are exciting.
2. Send your child regularly and promptly.
3. Inform the teacher of anything about your child that will help her understand him/her better.
4. Be interested in what your child brings home from school.
5. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest, has a regular bedtime, and eats a good breakfast before coming to school.
6. If your child has a fever, or other symptoms of illness, follow the schools illness policy. Children should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.
7. Let your child feel the confidence you have in his/her teacher.
8. Get involved - volunteer to help in the classroom, attend Cardinal Nest meetings and other school functions.
9. Always emphasize what your child CAN DO, not what he/she doesn't know. Development of skills will come when the body and brain are ready. Be patient!

FACILITY

Our classroom provides developmentally appropriate learning spaces and gives us room to display our projects. Within our classroom, the dramatic play area changes themes as we move from one unit to the next. We have access to a large playground behind school, which we use in the spring and fall. In winter we use our school's full gymnasium and its large supply of athletic equipment.

ABSENCES

We hope to see your child for each session. If your child is sick, notify the school office prior to school on the day of the absence. Teachers should be notified of planned absences.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather, stay tuned to local radio and television stations for possible closings. St. Matthew's Lutheran School will not be mentioned specifically, but we will be closed if the Oconomowoc Public Schools are closed.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In accordance with state law, we instruct the children in orderly fire, tornado and safety drills. Drills are conducted in a manner designed to minimize fear but to maximize the importance of the plans. St. Matthew's students are under constant, trained supervision, and so far as possible, dangerous situations will be foreseen and prevented. St. Matthew's is equipped to deal with minor accidents. In the event of an emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents. If the severity of the emergency dictates it, we will obtain whatever medical assistance is deemed necessary for the child.

SUPPLIES

A school bag, labeled water bottle and a folder should be brought to school each day. This helps very much in distributing notes and in keeping belongings together. Other supplies are listed on the yearly school supply list mailed out in July. Please do not bring toys to school as they may become lost or broken.

DRESS

Clothes should be practical, durable and washable. Keep in mind the activities in which the children will be involved (painting, gluing, outdoor play, crawling on floor). It is very frustrating for a child to have to worry about a new shirt, or being unable to run because of slippery dress shoes. Also, children like to be self-sufficient. Whenever possible dress your child in clothes he can open, close, put on, or remove without help. Please bring a change of clothing in a labeled bag to be kept at school.

We will use our outdoor playground as often as weather permits in fall and spring. Please send jackets, caps, mittens, etc. whenever necessary.

HEALTH / IMMUNIZATIONS

Upon registration, current immunization information must be supplied to the school. Children with a sore throat, fever within the last 24 hours, acute runny nose or cough, rash, lice, vomiting, diarrhea, inflammation of the eyes, or any other illnesses should be kept at home.

LIBRARY

Students are encouraged to borrow books from our classroom and school library. Please help your child to be responsible with his/her book at home and return it when finished.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are taken throughout the school year. A permission slip for the child to participate in and to be transported for field trips will be filled out prior to each field trip. All transportation and field trip policies listed in the St. Matthew's Lutheran School Policy Handbook apply to 3K and 4K.

SHOW AND TELL

Students will be assigned a day for Show and Tell. In 4K, a specific theme will be announced in the weekly newsletter. Please encourage your child to share one item, even a picture is enjoyable for all. In 3K they will each get multiple opportunities to take home the "letter of the week" bag and bring three items to show at school.

SNACK TIME

We will have a snack time each day. Our classroom will have a snack schedule which will assign snack duty to each family during the school year. During the week that your child is the assigned helper, please send in simple snacks to share with the class. Pretzels, crackers, and graham crackers are examples of snacks that can be easily distributed. The children also enjoy fresh fruit or vegetables. Milk and water are provided by the school free of charge. Snack foods need to be nutritional. Please try to avoid foods that are high in sugars or offer little nutritional value. **Our classrooms are peanut/tree-nut free classrooms. Please consult the peanut/tree-nut free snack list that will be handed out and posted on the school website.**

Children are more than welcome to bring a special treat on their birthdays. Those children with summer birthdays will be assigned a day toward the end of the school year on which we will celebrate his or her birthday. A treat can be sent to school on that day if you wish.

At snack time we will encourage common courtesies and appreciation for snacks shared by others. Most importantly, the habit of praying before snack will remind the children that our food comes from God.

OUR SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to help our classroom in many different ways. Special projects and field trips are examples of ways parents can help out while spending part of the school day with us. There are also ways to help out from home, such as preparing items for art projects. Anyone interested in observing a classroom session is welcome to visit at any time.

Another way to volunteer is through the Cardinal's NEST, our school's parent/teacher organization. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities to sign up to help in a variety of ways.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is designed to help the child develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others. Children will be disciplined through positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear-cut limits. We teach children to apologize and receive forgiveness in situations where they have wronged someone. Jesus' love and forgiveness is also announced whenever a child corrects his/her own behavior. We continue to train children to be Jesus' children by exhibiting kindness, love, courtesy, cooperation, and respect for others.

CONCLUSION

This is a special privilege to be entrusted with instructing your child. We are here to serve you and pray this service will be to the glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ.