

# Shepherd of the Valley Preschool

## Parent Handbook 2022-2023



### Our Mission:

With God at our center and parents as our partners,  
our goal is to nurture the total child, emotionally,  
intellectually, physically and spiritually.



Shepherd of the Valley  
Preschool

Shepherd of the Valley Preschool

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# Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

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## Philosophy

**Shepherd of the Valley Preschool (SOTVP)** strives to provide a developmentally appropriate educational experience that is filled with the wonder of learning. The staff sets up an intentional environment that fosters the growth of self-esteem, self-awareness, and self-confidence. Your child will have varied opportunities to learn:



- About the world as a place full of things to explore
- About being a person among other people
- About being loved by God

### **It is our goal to provide:**

- A happy atmosphere where your child is understood and accepted.
- A place where your child can test his/her abilities and gain self-confidence among peers.
- A place where your child will grow in his/her ability to control emotions and impulses.
- A place where your child will practice respect for other people and property guided by appropriate expectations.
- A place where your child will experience creativity at his/her developmental level.
- A place where your child is nurtured physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

We strive to provide teachers who will respond by listening, comforting and encouraging your child.

**Play is an important part of our daily preschool program.** Young children learn best by playing and following their own curiosities. We work toward organizing the play space to make it attractive, stimulating and functional for the children. The children are able to dramatize, organize, and problem solve whether independently or with other children.

Our curriculum includes hands-on experiences in art, music, language, science, social studies and cognitive readiness activities that may occur individually, in small groups or large group settings. Our program encourages the development of motor skills and coordination through the use of large and small equipment. Our daily schedule includes interest center times, a play period outside and/or in the large activity room, large group times and snack.

This is outlined further in our “child care program plan” which is on file in the office. You may ask to see it at any time.



## Parents and SOTVP

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Preschool will bring about changes in your relationship with your child. The children will become more independent and will have experiences in which you do not share. They will find opportunities for satisfying relationships with other children and their teachers. However, growth seldom proceeds smoothly or in one direction, so it is important that parents and teachers work together.

There will be many opportunities for you as parents to become involved in your child's school experience. Beginning with the child-teacher-parent **orientation conference**, where you will be able to meet the staff and hear an overview of school policies. An **open house** will be held prior to the beginning of school in September. There are two **parent/teacher conferences** offered (fall and spring) to discuss your child's overall development. We will have a family **Advent Celebration** in December and an **end of the year celebration** on the last day of school in May.

Parents are welcome to volunteer. Beginning in October, parents will have the opportunity to sign up to volunteer in their child's classroom. We value the extra individual attention that this makes possible. The children attending preschool need our undivided attention; we therefore ask that arrangements are made for sibling care if you come to volunteer. Each classroom has different guidelines for volunteers. Watch the newsletter for more information. If you are not able to volunteer in the classroom, talk to your child's teacher about volunteer opportunities outside the classroom.

We are always open to talking with you about your child's adjustment to school. It is best not to try and confer with the teachers during school hours or upon arrival and dismissal. Please ask the teacher to call or set up a time before or after school to do so. It is best to work through the director to set this up. They are more available to coordinate.

You are welcome to come and observe at any time. We feel a strong responsibility for the trust you have placed in us by sending your child to SOTVP and it is our wish to work cooperatively with parents at all times. The happiness, growth and development of your child is our main concern. We appreciate any suggestions or criticism you may have.

## General Information

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SOTVP is a nonprofit, community service organization of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church located at 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Road, Apple Valley. It is viewed as an outreach service and ministry of the church. Christian traditions and holidays will be celebrated. The school is administered by the Preschool Director, the Senior Pastor and a Financial Advisory Member.

The staff consists of the director, lead teachers & teachers. Teachers in every class meet state requirements to be a preschool teacher in a licensed facility.

## License

Our preschool is licensed by the State Department of Human Services of St. Paul, Minnesota (651-431-6500). This assures families that high standards have been met regarding space, equipment, program and staff. We are licensed for 50 children at one time. If you suspect possible violations of statutes or rules, they should be reported to the Department of Human Services.

## Student Insurance

SOTVP does not furnish accident insurance covering student injuries received in preschool or on the playground. Parents are responsible for carrying any insurance coverage on their children.

## Registration and Tuition

There is a \$65 non-refundable registration fee payable when each child enrolls in our school. This fee applies to processing and start-up costs. Monthly tuition is \$145 for the 3 year old classes, \$175 for the 4 year old classes and \$210 for the High Five class. Tuition is due on or before the fifteenth of each month for the following month. September tuition is collected at the time your child is enrolled into the program. October tuition is due on September 15, November tuition is due on October 15 and so forth. If you are having a problem paying tuition on time, please talk to the director. Tuition checks should be made payable to SOTVP. If you have payment and the box is not out, give payment to the SOTVP Director. If you fall more than 2 months behind in your tuition payments, your child's ability to attend school may become effected. There are automatic withdrawal option, see director for more information. Tuition is the same whether it is a short or a long month. If your child misses school because of vacation, illness or cancellation due to weather, the tuition is the same.

## General Information (cont.)

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### Hours of Operation and Budgeting

Our session days are:

3 year old Yellow class-M & W	9:30 am-12:00 pm
3 year old Blue class-T & Th	9:30 am-12:00 pm
4 year old Green class-T, W & Th	9:30 am-12:00 pm
4 year old Red class-T, W & Th	12:45-3:15 pm
High Five Purple class-M,T, W & Th	9:30 am-12:00 pm
*High Five Orange class-M,T,W & Th	12:45-3:15 pm

\*Class offered if high enough enrollment.

Each year SOTVP has a total of 8 1/2 months of school. This is what we base our budget and fees on. Obviously, not all months have the same number of school days, but we have divided the tuition into equal monthly payments to allow families and the school to budget their expenses.

### Eligibility

Children must be 3 years old by September 1 and be able to bathroom independently wearing non disposable underwear to participate.

### Transportation

Transportation is not provided by the school. Children are brought to school by parents or designated parties and escorted to outdoor staff at drop off and picked up at their classroom doors.

### Messages

Messages for the staff may be left by calling the Preschool Office at 952-985-7370 or the Children Youth & Family Office at 952-432-6385 or email to [linda.nelson@sotv.org](mailto:linda.nelson@sotv.org).

## Health Information, Special Needs, Discipline

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### Immunization Records

Your child's immunization record must be turned in before your child can attend school. Immunizations must be up-to-date as required by the Minnesota Department of Health. The State also requires us to have a health care summary, signed by your health care provider on file at your child. The summary must be completed, signed and received at school by October 15. If there are conscientious objections, that portion of the form must be completed AND notarized and kept in the child's file.



## Health Information, Special Needs, Discipline (cont.)

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### Illness

Please do not send your child to school if she/he shows signs of illness. We appreciate a call or email letting us know that your child is ill and will not be coming to school. Please keep your child home if without medication they...

- have infectious diarrhea.
- have vomited within the last 24 hours.
- have significant respiratory distress.
- have unexplained lethargy and will be unable to participate in all the program activities with reasonable comfort.
- may require more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Have signs of the common cold such as sneezing, coughing, running nose, flushed face or headache.
- a 100 degree Fahrenheit axillary or higher temperature **before fever reducing medicine is given.**

Licensing regulations state that children must be excluded and the school must be notified if your child has a communicable disease. SOTV Preschool will notify other families in your child's class that their child has been exposed.

If your child has any of the following, they must be kept home, and we **must** be notified:

1. Chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious and lesions are crusted over.
2. Contagious conjunctivitis (pink eye) and has not completed 24 hour of antibiotics.
3. A bacterial infection such as strep or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antibiotics.
4. Head lice, ringworm or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others.
5. An undiagnosed rash or a rash attributed to a contagious illness or condition.
6. COVID-19 = Please let us know when you, your child, or a family member gets a positive diagnosis. We will then conduct contact tracing and notify those exposed. **(for detailed COVID-19 information, please visit our website)**

## Health Information, Special Needs, Discipline (cont.)

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You will be called and requested to pick up your child from school if he/she has:

1. vomited since admission that day.
2. had two or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day.
3. has shown inability to participate in the day's program due to fatigue, illness or signs of a fever.
4. shown signs of respiratory distress.

## Illness and Accidents at School

If symptoms of illness appear during school, your child will be isolated from the group, with adult supervision, until a parent or an emergency contact person arrives. If poisoning is suspected, we will call the poison control center for instructions.

When there is an injury requiring medical attention, the parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the numbers on the emergency form will be called. If no one is available and medical attention is needed, the child's physician or source of health care will be called, and we will follow their instructions. In case of an extreme emergency, 911 will be called and the child will be taken to an appropriate medical facility. Parents are responsible for expenses such as the cost of transportation. Staff members will NOT transport children. Signed emergency release forms are required by the parent and are kept on file. **Please notify us whenever your work, home or emergency phone numbers change, so that we always have current numbers in our files.**

## Health Problems and Medications

If your child has any health problems, allergies, or is taking medication, please notify the director and teacher(s). Staff cannot administer medication without written authorization from the doctor **and** the parent. Medication permission forms for parents and physicians are available in the Preschool Office. Full allergy policy is available in Preschool Director's office.

**Each student with an allergy is handled individually.**

**Medications must be unopened and in the original packaging.**

## Medical Consultant

We will utilize the services of a medical consultant from the Apple Valley Medical Center.

## Health Information, Special Needs, Discipline (cont.)

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### What If I Have Special Concerns About My Child?

Any special concerns or problems should be discussed with the director and/or teacher in your child's class. During the year, we would appreciate knowing when there are any unusual circumstances or changes in the family/home environment which may have an effect on your child.

### Child Abuse or Neglect

Minnesota State Law requires that we file a report with Dakota County Protection Services (952-891-7459) if we suspect child abuse or neglect or if we suspect that a child is in immediate danger. A copy of our policies on Child Abuse and Neglect is available upon request. To report suspected maltreatment of a child by a school employee, call Dakota County Protection Services (952-891-7459) or the Minnesota Department of Human Services (651-297-4123).

### Discipline Policy

SOTVP utilizes Positive Behavior Management Strategies. SOTVP believes discipline problems can be minimized by providing an interesting and varied program. Teachers model acceptable behavior and redirect children when necessary to constructive behavior. When the occasional problem does arise, the teacher will discuss the problem with the child and explore alternative ways to solve the problem. A child may be asked to sit on a chair for a few minutes to reflect on appropriate choices. The teachers will work with the parents to develop plans to deal with any persistent problems.

### Grievance Procedure

When a parent has a grievance with a staff member or policy at SOTVP, the center's grievance procedure is as follows: 1) The grievance should be taken first to the staff member involved. 2) If necessary, after meeting with the staff person, the parent can then take the grievance to the director. 3) If necessary, after meeting with the director, the parent can then take the grievance to the highest level authority at the program, the Senior Pastor, at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church. 4) Within 10 working days the grievance will be addressed and action will be taken.

## Miscellaneous

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### Clothing

Please mark all removable clothing with your child's name. This includes school bags, boots, hats, mittens and coats. Please dress your child in durable, washable clothes that he/she can easily play in and handle personal hygiene independently.

Please include an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack. This will be used if they have an accident or get wet/dirty at school. Clothes may get dirty while your child is at preschool, so it may be best not to come in fancy clothes.

### School Bags

Your child will need a school bag, clearly marked with their name. This is to be brought to school every day for notes to and from the teacher/director, craft projects and shoes when wearing boots. An open top book bag style is best. When you select your child's bag, please try to avoid packs with difficult snaps, buckles and zippers.



### Show and Tell

Children may bring carefully selected items at the teacher's request. See individual classroom newsletters for details. Whenever possible, put your child's name on items brought to school. Please do not send money, toy guns, combs or glass items.

### Outdoor Policy



Our daily plan is for all children to participate in outside play unless the weather does not allow it. If you feel your child should not play outside on a day when we are going outside, you are responsible for supervision of your child during outside play time. The staff will determine on a classroom basis whether it is appropriate for the children to play outside and may adjust the length of time accordingly. **The approximate temperature for going out is 0 degrees and above** but we take a variety of factors into account, including: temperature, wind chill, ice, mud and rain will be factors in our decision. Bring your child dressed appropriately for the weather at the time of their outside play.

Each classroom makes an independent decision on outdoor play.

## Miscellaneous (cont.)

### Snacks

A mid-session snack is served daily. Snacks must include two of the five basic food groups and must be store bought and commercially packaged. This is a requirement of the Minnesota Health Department. Please bring any snack that requires washing or preparation, ready to serve. Exceptions would be apples & bananas which can easily be cut into servings at school.

**3s classes**—Parents are asked to contribute snacks for their child's class.

**The 4s classes and High Five class** - provides their own snack each day.

### Birthdays

We will acknowledge your child's birthday either on the day or another planned day. If you sign up for snack for your child's birthday, please remember that it needs to fit into two of the four food groups. Treats such as cake, cupcakes, popsicles, etc. will not be served. Also, no small gifts will be allowed to be passed out to the other children. Please do not bring birthday party invitations to school to distribute. We want to avoid hurt feelings of children who are not invited.

### Arrival and Dismissal

3s and 4s will be allowed in the building at 9:30 or 12:45 depending on the class. High Fives' classroom door opens at 9:25.; we ask all students come in as they get here and no later than 9:35.

All children must walk with the person responsible for them to the door. A child running creates a dangerous situation for the child, as well as others who are in the building. We ask that you discuss this with your child and provide the necessary guidance in having your child walk in the hallways. Children found running will be asked to walk. If they continue to run, they will be dismissed from their class last for a period of time. It is a matter of safety and respect.

Dismissal for all morning class is 12 pm and afternoon is 3:15 pm. Only people on the Authorized Pick Up for will be allowed to take your child from the building. If you are having someone not on the list picking up, please email the preschool director or bring a note with your child to school.

Please do not leave any valuables in your car. Even if you are just running in and out, they may not be safe in your vehicle. SOTV and SOTVP are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### Withdrawal

When you register your child, we plan for them to stay the full year. If circumstances arise where you need to withdraw your child, SOTVP requires 2 weeks written notice prior to withdrawal date. You will be responsible for the tuition payment that follows the withdrawal. If there was just a payment made, you will still be expected to pay the next payment. Contact the director with any issues or questions.

## Miscellaneous (cont.)

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### Curbside Drop Off (3s and 4s only)

Cars will pull up to the curb outside the door 1. Maps with specific instructions will be given at time of orientation. Parents are responsible for getting the child out of the car. Staff will get them into the building safely.

### Pick Up

Parents picking up their child from preschool are asked to park in the parking lot . Do not park your car by the curb while you come in the building. This creates a dangerous situation for the others who are entering and exiting the building.

Under no circumstances should siblings be left in the car when you come in to pick up your child.

Please make sure to lock your vehicle when you come in and out. SOTVP and SOTV are not responsible for any lost or stolen items

### Late Pick-Up Policy

Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. A \$1 per minute assessment will be made for any time beyond a five minute grace period. The teachers need the time before and after school to prepare and clean up. We will make allowances for late pick-up in the case of emergencies.

### Field Trips/Special Events

We occasionally may take walking field trips. The permission slip signed in the fall gives permission for such trips. If trips requiring transportation are planned, a special permission slip will be sent home.

### Pets

Classrooms may have a pet/pets. A child may bring their pet to school to show if the parent or other adult stays with the pet and the director is consulted prior to the visit.

### Directory

Each family will receive a copy of the names, addresses and phone numbers of the children/families in their class at CCP. This information is for personal use only. This information may not be used for solicitation or given to others for marketing purposes.

### Emergency Contact

Call the Preschool Office, 952-985-7370 or the Children Youth & Family Office, 952-432-6385. SOTV main number, 952-432-6351.

For a major emergency (such as evacuation) the director will be available on her cell phone: 612.810.6127

## SOTVP Weather Policy

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Should District 196 close or move to distance learning because of weather conditions, Shepherd of the Valley Preschool will close.

District 196 closings are announced on WCCO radio, on their Facebook page and their website. If there is a late start at District 196, there will be no preschool that day. Watch your email and the preschool Facebook page for closing announcements.

We will email you if we decide to close preschool, but District 196 remains open.

REMEMBER: We do not close when District 196 has conferences or teacher workshop days.

## Crisis Management Plan

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At SOTVP, we plan for the worst as we hope for the best. We have a crisis management plan available for families to view in the Preschool Office or on our website—<http://sotv.org/preschool/>. You are welcome to view it at ANY time.

In the event that we need to evacuate the building, we will notify families when it is safe to do so. The locations of the evacuation sites are:

**(1) South Suburban Evangelical Church**

12600 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd, Apple Valley

**(2) Easter Luther Church**

4200 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan

\*Which site we use depends on the reason for evacuation

Shepherd of the Valley Preschool admits students of any race, color, national or 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 or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, athletic or other school administered programs.

Shepherd of the Valley  
Preschool

952.985.7370



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church  
12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Road  
Apple Valley, MN 55124  
952-432-6385 (Children, Youth & Family Office)  
952-432-6351 (Main Office)

