



**The Early Learning Center  
at  
Peace with Christ  
Christian School**

**Family Handbook**

**2021-2022**

**[www.pwccs.org](http://www.pwccs.org)**

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# Welcome!

**We are so pleased that you and your child have joined our educational and faith community, here at Peace With Christ!**

**We look forward to encouraging your child as he or she works and plays with other children. We especially feel privileged that you have chosen us to assist you as you raise your child.**

**Hang on...this year is bound to be quite an amazing adventure!**

"Jesus said,  
'Let the little children come to me,  
and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of  
heaven belongs to such as these.'"

Matthew 19:14

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## OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Peace With Christ Early Learning Center is to live out the mission and vision of Peace With Christ Lutheran Church through a faith community united in the love of Jesus Christ. We seek to instill the values laid out for us in God's Word by nurturing children's spiritual, cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical development, equipping and encouraging students, their families, and each other to join Jesus in His mission to have all people know Him.

## ADMINISTRATION

Peace With Christ Early Learning Center is a part of Peace with Christ Christian School, and, as such, is an arm of the parish educational program of Peace With Christ Lutheran Church. It is structured to provide a Christ-centered approach to instruction in all academic subjects. The congregation of Peace With Christ Lutheran Church has final authority for the operation of their school, just as they do for any other ministry of the church. The identity of the day school is recognized in the corporate structure of Peace With Christ Lutheran Church; and its existence, as well as function, is clearly delineated in the official constitution of the church. The Peace With Christ Lutheran Congregation sponsors and maintains its school and early learning center, supplying the facilities and utilities. Administrative control and the formation of school policy rest with the governing body of the parish. The Board of Christian Day School Education (aka "School Board" or "Board") is appointed within the parish to develop school policies, regulations, and practices. The Principal and Director, accountable to the School Board, directly administer the school and Early Learning Center, respectively, and their day-to-day operations.

## ACCREDITATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Peace With Christ Early learning Center is accredited with the day school through the National Lutheran School Accreditation and is licensed by the State of Colorado. All staff members meet the educational and experience requirements for their positions according to the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). All staff members have received background checks in accordance with CDHS guidelines. The director is a member of the Denver Area Lutheran Director's Association. Staff members have been trained in Standard Precautions and will take appropriate measures to protect themselves and students in incidents involving bodily fluids.



## REPORTING ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Under the "Child Protection Act of 1987" (C.R.S. 19-3-301) in the Colorado Children's Code, our staff are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Arapahoe County Department of Human Services. The phone number is 303-636-1750.

## FILING A COMPLAINT

The Early Learning Center wants to resolve any concerns in a timely and cooperative manner. We encourage parents and guardians to speak with a classroom teacher, the Director or Principal about concerns. Concerns may also be registered in writing and given to the Director, Principal, or Pastor; or contact the Colorado Department of Human Services at 303-866-5958.

## MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

**MISSION:** Partnering with families to:

- Share the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- Provide an excellent Christ-centered education
- Prepare 21<sup>st</sup> century servant leaders

**VISION:** Peace With Christ Christian School and Early Learning Center will:

- First and foremost, focus on the spiritual development of its students and families
- Provide a challenging and age-appropriate curriculum
- Offer a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners
- Differentiate student instruction
- Provide a highly-skilled, dedicated and caring team of Christian educators
- Ensure a spiritually, emotionally, and physically safe school environment
- Develop a partnership relationship with families
- Create opportunities to cultivate servant leadership qualities
- Nurture genuine, Christ-centered, respectful relationships



## OUR PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor of God and men." (Luke 2:52) Young children, as all people, are creations made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). Even as Jesus in Luke 2:52, above, is shown to have grown cognitively, physically, spiritually, and socially, all children must be nurtured so that the whole child, which includes the creative and emotional selves, grows in the likeness of God. Children need loving, caring adults to provide opportunities and safe environments in which they may develop at their individual rates and according to their own individual characteristics. Individuality is celebrated, for all are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

As children grow, they develop in sequential stages. Because children of the same chronological age may develop at different rates, it is important for teachers to provide curriculum that challenges at many levels at the same time, so that all children can find opportunity for growth and success wherever they may be on the learning ladder. Children learn best through experience and exploration in the context of play. A discerning teacher will

facilitate a child's learning by creating an environment that draws the child into a variety of forms of play.

As Christian educators, we realize that we teach for eternal purposes. God desires for all people to be in relationship with Him. Children are no less able than adults to receive the gift of salvation freely given through faith in Jesus Christ, so it is the Christian educator's primary vocation to reveal Biblical truth within the constructs of early childhood education. Faith cannot be compartmentalized; instead, it must permeate the child's experiences.

In the community of Christian education, it is the teacher's role to reinforce the faith and values provided in the home. Peace With Christ teachers work in collaboration with parents and families to provide consistent, loving development of each child in an environment that is safe and emotionally supportive. Teachers do not see themselves as the chief educators of the child; rather, they work to support the parents and guardians of children in raising the whole child.

### **CURRICULUM**

Each child is provided opportunities for personal growth through experiences that encourage age-appropriate skills in self-reliance, self-confidence, self-control, and problem solving. Individual and small group activities are included in each day's schedule, as are group sharing experiences and outside play. Special activities are planned as they fit in with the unit of inquiry.

Our learning centers create the environment for children to learn and grow. Each room has the following learning environments:

- Dramatic play center
- Library/book area
- Block center
- Manipulative toys and games
- Open art activities
- Science center
- Listening center
- Music, dance, and gross motor activities

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."  
Ephesians 4:32

### **HOURS OF OPERATION AND CALENDAR**

Peace With Christ Early Learning Center is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are closed occasionally for holidays and professional development. Please ask for an annual calendar in the school office, or find it online at [www.pwccs.org](http://www.pwccs.org).

## ADMISSIONS

Peace With Christ Early Learning Center (PWCELC) is licensed by the state of Colorado for children ages 2 ½ (and toilet-trained) to 6 for preschool and pre-Kindergarten. Our license capacity is 60 children. The ELC may admit non-immunized or under immunized children if proper waivers are provided.

## ENROLLMENT

An application for registration must be completed and a registration fee of up to \$180 paid before enrollment is confirmed. Enrollment is not confirmed until all registration forms are completed and received by the administration, and administration has met with the child and parents. These forms include:

- Enrollment Form (2-sides)
- ACH Tuition Payment Form (optional)
- General Health Appraisal Form
- Immunization record/waiver.
- Emergency Information Card
- Medication Administration form (as needed)
- Sunscreen Permission
- Topical Cream Use Form (as needed)



## WITHDRAWAL, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION

If for any reason you need to withdraw your child from the Early Learning Center, we require a written two week notice prior to the disenrollment. There are times when a child may not adjust well to our program. In the event that our care is not a good fit for your child and your family, we may request that you withdraw your child from our program; however, we will give you a two week notice to find alternative care.

Our staff are well-trained and work hard to identify the social, emotional developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when a child may need additional care that our staff are not able to provide. If we feel that your child's behavior endangers the safety of the other children, we will notify that parent(s)/guardian(s) and begin with a parent-teacher conference and develop a plan of action to better accommodate the child. During that time, if the child is a danger to themselves or other children, we may choose to suspend your child for a discussed upon period of time. Once the child returns to our program, if the child is still a danger, we may recommend that the parent(s) withdraw the child from our care.

## **TOILETING**

Peace With Christ Early Learning Center (PWCELC) is not a regular diaper-changing facility. Children who enroll are expected to be toilet-trained. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a child is considered to be toilet trained when he or she initiates going to the bathroom and can adjust clothing necessary to urinate or have a bowel movement. Additionally, a child will feel more self-reliant if he or she is learning to wipe his or her own body after urinating or having a bowel movement.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Peace With Christ Christian School and Early Learning Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, athletics or other administered programs.

Children with special needs may be enrolled if, after a consultation with a qualified specialist, it is determined that the program is suitable for the child. Our present staff must have skill in the understanding and management of the needs of the child with special circumstances. The child must be able to be integrated into a group.

## **TOURS AND WAITING LIST**

We welcome parents and children to tour the school prior to registration. We ask that interested parties schedule a tour in advance, so that we may ensure for the safety of our children and limit the number of interruptions to our classrooms each day.

Children are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis. Families wishing to place a child on a waiting list may do so with a written request for the specific class group they wish their child to enter. Parents will be offered classroom positions for enrollment as they become available. Open positions are offered in the order requests are received with the following exceptions: 1) priority is given to a child whose sibling is already enrolled in a PWCELC class, and 2) priority is given to a child whose older sibling is enrolled in our K-8 school.

## **VISITORS**

All adults must announce their intentions to visit the ELC at the lower entrance to the building, adjacent to Floyd Avenue. Visitors to the ELC are required to sign in at the Visitor Registration, located in the lobby to the Early Learning Center.

## PROGRAMS

The Early Learning Center offers 2 types of programs. Our full day classes serve children year-round, Monday-Friday, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6 p.m. Please note the annual calendar, as we have several days off each year for holidays and professional development.

Part-day programs provide early childhood education on a traditional school year basis, as classes begin at the end of August and run through the third week of May.

Part day *preschool* is offered to children who are 3 by September 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. This class is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Part day *pre-Kindergarten* is offered to children who are 4 by September 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. This class is offered on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8:30a.m. to 11:30 p.m. or from 12:00p.m. to 3:00 p.m. if interest allows for enrollment of an afternoon class.

The school calendar and closure policy information are posted in separate sections in this handbook.

## SCHOOL CLOSURES

The Early Learning Center does not have delayed start. It is always your choice whether the road conditions are suitable for driving your child to and from school.

We will send you an email as early as possible to communicate any closure. Our normal intent is to post closures by 6:00 a.m., but it could be later depending on circumstances.

In case of severe weather or emergency, the school may be closed. Two ways to check status:

- TV CHANNELS 4 and 9: Watch for closure announcements for "Peace With Christ Christian School" at bottom of screen. We do not follow Cherry Creek or Aurora Public Schools.
- INTERNET: Go to [cbs4denver.com](http://cbs4denver.com) or [9news.com](http://9news.com) and click on "Closures." Both sites show a full listing of schools. Look for "Peace With Christ Christian School."

## TRANSPORTATION AND AUTHORIZED PICK-UP INFORMATION

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians. The Early Learning Center does not go on field trips, and children remain on campus while under the care of the staff. We require written authorization from parents if another adult will be picking up your child. Children will only be released to adults (age 18+) who are listed on the child's emergency card. Photo identification is required. If the adult is late, all attempts will be made to contact authorized adults from the emergency card.

A teacher will remain with the child until the child is picked up. Business hours close Monday-Friday at 6:00 p.m. A late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child may be charged for each minute after 6:00 p.m. After three late fee charges have been incurred at the former rate in the same school year, the charge per minute per child may go up to \$5.00. The official time is kept by the teacher using her mobile phone.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is determined by the Board of Christian Day school. Tuition rates are listed in the registration packet. The use of ACH payment is strongly encouraged. Late fee charges may apply if payment is not made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. A service charge of \$30 will be assessed for all returned checks.

### **PART DAY PROGRAMS**

#### **2021-2022 RATES**

#### **REGISTRATION FEES**

**We offer a \$50.00 discount on registration if you sign up for auto pay.**

Enrollment fee	\$130.00
Class Materials Fee	<u>\$50.00</u>
<b>Total fees due at registration</b>	<b>\$180.00 or *\$130.00</b>

\*If you complete the VANCO auto payment authorization at the time of registration.

### **TUITION PROGRAMS**

<b>PRESCHOOL</b> <i>Tuesdays &amp; Thursdays, 8:30 -11:30 A.M.</i>	<b>9-MONTH PLAN</b> <i>August 2021- April 2022</i>	<b>Yearly Tuition</b>
<b>One child</b>	<b>\$185</b>	<b>\$1665</b>
<b>Additional children, each <i>Siblings receive a discount.</i></b>	<b>\$165</b>	<b>\$1485</b>

<b>PRE-KINDERGARTEN</b> <i>Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 8:30 -11:30 A.M.</i>	<b>9-MONTH PLAN</b> <i>August 2021- April 2022</i>	<b>Yearly Tuition</b>
<b>One child</b>	<b>\$240</b>	<b>\$2160</b>
<b>Additional children, each <i>Siblings receive a discount.</i></b>	<b>\$220</b>	<b>\$1980</b>

### FULL DAY PROGRAMS

**Rates effective: July 1, 2021 through June 2022**

#### **REGISTRATION FEES**

We offer a \$50.00 discount on registration if you sign up for auto pay.

Enrollment fee	\$130.00
Class Materials Fee	<u>\$50.00</u>
<b>Total fees due at registration</b>	<b>\$180.00 or *\$130.00</b>

\*If you complete the VANCO auto payment authorization at the time of registration.

#### **TUITION PROGRAMS**

<b>FULL DAY PRESCHOOL OR PREKINDERGARTEN</b>	<i>Monthly</i>
<b>4 – 5 Day Regular</b>	<b>\$895</b>
<b>3 Day Regular</b>	<b>\$725</b>
<b>2 Day Regular</b>	<b>\$635</b>

<b>FULL DAY PRESCHOOL OR PREKINDERGARTEN</b>	<i>Monthly</i>
<b>Sibling</b>	
<b>4 – 5 Day Sibling</b>	<b>\$805</b>
<b>3 Day Sibling</b>	<b>\$660</b>
<b>2 Day Sibling</b>	<b>\$570</b>

#### SUPERVISION AND ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

While in the Early Learning Center, all children must be under direct supervision by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher. Direct supervision means to be physically present, or within an immediate distance of each child, such as in the classroom, on the playground, in the hall, and available to respond to the needs of any child under one's supervision.

Children must be signed in and out each day. The parent or designated adult (over age 18) shall sign his/her child in and out for each session/day. The responsible adult is to walk the child to the ELC entrance and greet a staff member to acknowledge the transfer of supervision.

Likewise, upon pick-up, the staff must visibly acknowledge the transfer of supervision from staff to designated adult.

Staff members will also sign children in and out each day, recording arrival and departure times to groups. The staff member signing a child in/out will initial the time in/out. Staff members will record attendance verification (name to face) of each group of children (a minimum of hourly in the same location), identifying name to face, and checking off attendance on daily verification forms. Each time attendance is recorded, note the time and location of the count. Additional (name to face) verification opportunities are taken at each transition or location change in the same manner. Multiple forms may be used daily as needed.

The staff will conduct a final visual headcount at 6:00 p.m. to ensure all children have left for the day. If a child is not picked up by the close of the day, an appropriate staff member will stay with the child until he or she can be picked up. If no one on the child's emergency contact card can be reached by 6:15 p.m., Social Services and/or the police may be notified.

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be located, the police will be notified immediately and the parent will be contacted.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Throughout the year, the school will participate in fire and tornado drills. Children are escorted out of the building or to safe zones, according to the plans posted in the rooms and hallways. Emergency drill and lockdown procedures are practiced throughout the year for internal and external security concerns, including lost children, active threats, or breaches.

Please refer to our disaster preparedness plan for more detailed information regarding other emergency situations.

### **PLAN FOR EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION AND REUNITING PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

If the need to evacuate the campus of Peace With Christ Lutheran Church and School (including the Early Learning Center) arises, children and staff will relocate to: **St. Michael's Catholic Church, 19099 E. Floyd Avenue, Aurora, 80013 (303-690-6797)**. This church is located directly east of Peace With Christ on Floyd Ave.

If the evacuation is short term, children and staff will return to Peace with Christ Lutheran Church and School, where they will either resume the school day with parent pick up as usual, or parents will be notified, according to the contact information provided on the child's emergency information card, to pick up their child as directed by staff.

If the evacuation is not short term and reunification with parents at St. Michael's is deemed necessary, parents will be notified by staff, according to the contact information provided on the child's emergency information card. If circumstances do not allow the use of technology to contact parents, parents finding the Peace With Christ campus evacuated or inaccessible should proceed directly to St Michael's Catholic Church to locate their child.

### **ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS**

Teachers provide a verbal and written report to parents when a child is injured in school. Parents will be notified as soon as possible in the event of medical emergencies of any type.

### **MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION**

Our school is required by state law to comply with the guidelines of CDHE and the Office of Early Childhood regarding the distribution of medication at the school. The main school office and some of the ELC staff have been delegated to administer medication. Medication will only be given to children with a doctor's authorization and parent permission. Forms are available from the school office. All medications must be in the original containers with the original prescription label and are kept in a secure location out of reach of the children. A medication log is used to record appropriate dosage information each time medication is dispensed. Medications are signed in and out of the ELC by responsible parties.

### **HEALTH POLICIES**

Certain symptoms of illness will result in the exclusion of children or staff. Peace With Christ ELC follows the School and Child Care Illness Policy outlined by CDPHE, including the "How Sick is Too Sick" guidelines for symptoms of illness (updated October 2020).

A child who has been ill will not be re-admitted until his or her temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications. This consideration helps prevent passing contagions to others. Please report all illnesses to the classroom teacher. If a child is too ill to be included in the daily activities or needs medication such as cough syrup, antibiotics, etc. during school hours, he/she should not be brought to school. For the protection of all children, the teacher will have the right to decide whether a child shall be allowed to attend if he does not appear well.

If your child should become ill while at school, we will do our best to contact you. If neither parent can be reached, we will call the person (s) listed on your child's emergency card. If a child becomes sick at school, we request parents to pick him/her as soon as possible.

Under appropriate circumstances, non-immunized or under immunized children may not be allowed to attend the ELC during an outbreak of illness.

## REST TIME

The Early Learning Center provides a rest period for all children enrolled in a program that is scheduled for over 4 hours, which includes all children in our full-day program. Cots are provided for each child. Children will never be forced to sleep, and after a reasonable period of time, will be provided with appropriate quiet materials, such as books or puzzles.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND CLOTHING

Each child has a place for a backpack and other personal belongings, such as a change of clothing. Full-day children also have a classroom “cubby” for extra clothing and other personal belongings. Please help by labeling your child’s belongings that are brought to school. Children should not bring valuable personal items or money to school.

Please help your child be prepared to play and rest in all of our environments by dressing in comfortable, washable clothes that allow freedom of movement and some “messy” activities, as well. Because active exploration and inquiry is expected in early childhood, we caution against sending your child in dressy clothes or uncomfortable shoes.

## OUTDOOR PLAY IN EXTREME WEATHER

We have all kinds of weather in Colorado. On excessively hot days, we may go outside, usually in the early morning and late afternoon. While outside, children are provided drinking water in order to maintain healthy hydration. Plenty of shade is available throughout the playground. When weather or temperatures prohibit outdoor play, children may enjoy time in the gym for gross motor activity. Sunscreen should be applied *before* your child is dropped off. Staff will assist to reapply sunscreen as directed on the sunscreen permission form.

“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 18:4

## SNACKS AND LUNCH

For Part-day families only: morning snacks are provided by the classroom families. The teacher will distribute a calendar at the beginning of the school year on which you may sign up to bring snacks for the entire class.

For Full-day families: morning and afternoon snacks are provided by the school. Please see the snack calendar posted in the hallway near the restrooms. Because the building does not house a commercial kitchen, lunches are the responsibility of the parent. All full-day children need to bring a nutritious lunch. Milk and water are provided as beverages by the school. Please notify the school of any food allergies or other food concerns you have regarding your child.

## **GUIDANCE**

Children are special and significant in God's eyes. Children should be guided and disciplined under the same rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself" as all other ages and stages of people should be.

In the Early Learning Center, children and adults focus on using words to express feelings, rather than acting out physically. Discipline practices in the classroom are guided by Love & Logic principles. Children are typically redirected when their actions are deemed "out of bounds", and sometimes we may remove a child from an environment to break a cycle of emotion or activity that is not beneficial to the class and child. A child may spend time in another part of the room, another classroom, or in the administrator's office to cool down and regroup before returning to his or her class.

In the Early Learning Center, we value relationships with children and their families. We strive for open communication with parents, and when a situation occurs that make a child's needs difficult for staff and parents to adequately address, the family will be given information on how to access an Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist to support their child.

## **DAILY PROGRAM, ROUTINES AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING VIDEO USE)**

Teachers will post a daily planned program suitable to the needs of the children in the hallway outside of the classroom. Any temporary changes to the schedule must be age-appropriate and not interfere with age-appropriate needs, such as napping and meal times. Occasionally, age-appropriate videos may be viewed in the classrooms. Parents will be notified in advance of any changes in scheduled activities, such as special events. The ELC does not conduct field trips off campus.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Some scheduled parent-teacher conferences are held once a year in February. Conferences may be held at any other time, upon request. Parents are encouraged to speak with the staff at any time regarding their child's behavior, progress, and physical, social, and spiritual needs.

## **...IN CONCLUSION**

Any other information about the Early Learning Center, including fire and health inspections will be made available upon request. If you are interested in additional information about our K-8 school, please contact the school office at 303-766-7116, or refer to the K-8 family handbook. We invite your suggestions and involvement in helping us better serve our families.