

Lord's Lambs Child Care, LLC

# Parent Handbook



## Lord's Lambs Child Care

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## ***A Welcome from our Director***

Welcome to Lord's Lambs Child Care! We want to sincerely thank you for trusting us to assist you in assuring your child's early childhood years are enjoyable, productive, and educational. We want all families to know that we as a staff at Lord's Lambs strive daily to provide a quality center for the children you and God have entrusted to our care. The partnership we are building is based on mutual trust and open communication. Therefore, please feel free to talk to your child's teacher or the center director if you have any questions or concerns. We are always available to address your concerns or comments.

Lord's Lambs Child Care provides care to children ages 6 week to 6 years. We are licensed for 64 children. This handbook is designed to help families know our policies and procedures. Please read the entire handbook and keep it as a reference in the future if needed. If you have any questions about any of the policies or procedures in the handbook, please talk to the center director. We do ask families to abide by the policies and procedures of the program. It is our goal and mission that every child in our care and their family knows the love of our Savior Jesus Christ, and that through knowing His love for them, have the peace that passes all understanding in their own lives. If a difficult situation occurs or a conflict arises, it will be addressed in a manner that reflects God's love.

***Liz Croson, Center Director***

***[Director@LordsLambsElkhorn.org](mailto:Director@LordsLambsElkhorn.org)***

## **Lord's Lambs Child Care Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide a safe and Christian environment for the children to learn, play and grow in an age appropriate setting. We are committed to doing this with the help of God by:

- Showing the love of Jesus to every child in our care. Our staff will do this by caring for children in a nurturing and responsive manner.
- Offering learning activities in a developmentally appropriate manner for children to grow in all areas.
- Using curriculum that promotes the growth in all areas of development – Social & Emotional, Language & Literacy, Physical Development, Science, Math, and Creative Arts.

## **Registration**

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$100 is required to ensure that your child is registered for our program.

## **Lord's Lambs Child Care Board**

Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC is governed by a board consisting of Lord of Life pastors and four congregation members.

## **Spiritual Commitment to You**

Lord's Lambs Child Care is a viable part of Lord of Life Lutheran Church. It is our desire that the children and their families know Jesus and grow in their faith in Him. We encourage families to attend worship at their own church but if you are looking for a church home, please feel free to join us. Lord of Life offers the following Sunday services:

8:00 am Hymnal Liturgy with Organ

9:30 am Hymns & Spoken Liturgy

9:30 am Christian Education classes (adult, youth, and children 3 yrs old and up)

10:45 am Blended Worship w/Rejoice!

Children will say prayers before meals, during chapel times, Jesus times, and any other times that Early Childhood Educators find appropriate.

All age groups will have a devotion time known as "Jesus time" during their day. They will listen to and discuss age-appropriate Bible stories, sing songs, pray, and/or do a project related to the lesson. Chapel time led by one of the pastors at Lord of Life will be held once a week. During Chapel times, toddlers and preschoolers will come together as a large group to worship and learn more about God.

***Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12***

## **Licensing Regulations**

Lord's Lambs Child Care is required to be licensed with the state of Nebraska. A Parent Information Brochure is provided by the state's Department of Health and Human Services and is included in our enrollment packet. Each parent/guardian is required to read it to understand how regulations can be accessed, how child care licensing staff can be reached, and how complaints can be made. After reading the brochure, we are required to have the completed back portion returned prior to first day of child care.

We will follow the state's mandate that at least one staff member trained in CPR & First Aid will be on site at all times.

## Hours and Days of Operation

We are open Monday through Friday 6:30 am to 6:00 pm.

Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC will be closed the holidays listed below.

- Labor Day
- Columbus Day (Teacher In-service)
- Thanksgiving Day & Friday
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Presidents' Day (Teacher In-service)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday (Teacher In-service)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday.

No deductions will be made for the days the center is closed for holidays or in-service days.

## Inclement Weather

Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC reserves the right to close the center in the event of inclement weather. We will make every effort to be open, keeping in mind the population that we serve. We want to make safe decisions for the young children in our care, their families, and our staff members. **When Elkhorn Public Schools are closed due to hazardous weather and road conditions, Lord's Lambs will close as well.**

If we are closed, or the decision is made to open two hours late, it will be posted on the front page of our website, the Lord's Lambs Child Care and Lord of Life Lutheran Facebook pages, and local television stations. If the center needs to close early because of severe weather, parents will be notified by phone, text, or email. No tuition adjustments are provided for inclement weather closures.

## Confidentiality

Lord's Lambs takes confidentiality very seriously and makes every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communication between staff and parents about children should be kept confidential at all times. Conversations regarding a child's behavior, or incident, should be discussed in private, away from the child and others. Discussions in the hallways should be kept to a minimum. If a parent has a question or concern, it is recommended that they contact the administration or Early Childhood Educator through a note, email, or in person.

## **Safety & Security**

All exterior doors are locked during business hours. Everyone must enter through the main entrance. Every family will have a key card that they will use to enter the building. You will be assigned a code to clock your child in and out. Please do so at the front desk kiosk.

## **Admissions**

Any child age 6 weeks to 6 years is eligible for enrollment upon availability of space regardless of race, color, nationality, religion, or ethnic origin. If your child qualifies for Child Assistance (Title 20) please let us know during the admissions process. Parents will be given an enrollment packet with all the required paperwork to enroll their child. A nonrefundable registration fee of \$100 is due with the completed paperwork to finalize the admissions process and guarantee your child's spot in our program. Immunization information must also be up to date, completed, and returned with the enrollment packet. Immunization records need to be kept up to date according to Nebraska's state guidelines.

## **Attendance**

Please call the office by 8:30 am if your child will not be attendance for childcare, or if they will be in later than their scheduled time. If there are three consecutive no show/no calls, the center director will attempt to contact the family. If we are unable to reach the family, the child's spot will be considered open and available for new enrollment.

## **Arrivals and Pick Up**

It is the responsibility of parents to walk their child to his/her classroom and make sure that their child's teacher is aware of his/her arrival/dismissal before you leave the building. It is not the responsibility of staff to deliver children or their belongings to their appropriate rooms or teachers. Throughout the day our teachers will be monitoring your child's general appearance that the child feels well, listening for a cough, observing a runny nose, etc. Lord's Lambs Child Care is dependent upon open communication with the parents to let us know the health status and concerns of the children in our care. Lord's Lambs has the right to dismiss any child due to illness if he/she shows any signs of any form of communicable diseases. More information regarding health/illness and communicable diseases are in the Health and Safety Policies and Healthy Child sections.

If your child needs to arrive late, please avoid dropping off between 11:00am and 2:30pm. This is our lunch and naptime for our classrooms. Also, please be considerate and respectful of our meal times, the other children in your child's classroom and our teachers that are caring for the children.

Children can only leave with persons having a personal identification code. If your child is picked up by someone who doesn't usually pick them up, we encourage parents to inform their

child's teacher. The teacher will write down the information you provide. Anyone picking up a child should be prepared to show photo identification upon request. This procedure is for the protection of the children and the center as well. In the event of an emergency or change and someone else will be picking up your child, you may call the center. Please be sure to talk to a member of staff. Do not leave a message, since messages might not be checked before your child gets picked up.

## **Children's Files**

Each enrolled child has a file in our administrative office which includes:

- Child Information Sheet
- Immunization Record
- Photo Release
- Child Health & Personal Information Record
- Long-Term Medication Sheet
- Allergy Statement if needed (signed by a doctor)
- Infant/Toddler Sheet
- Photos of those authorized for drop off and pick up times (email to the center's director)

Children's records are accessible only to Early Childhood Educators, staff, administration, and authorized personnel of the state licensing agency. Please report any changes of address, work/cell phone numbers, email, or emergency contact.

## **Labeling Your Child's Possessions**

All items belonging to a child are required to be labeled with both the child's first and last names (if necessary the first name can be an initial). Some of the items that need to be labeled are: diapers, wipes, bottles, pacifiers (if possible), extra clothing, blankets, and sleeping buddies. If items come to the classroom without being labeled, an Early Childhood Educator may label them.

## **Emergency Medical/Dental Care**

In your child's enrollment packet is a form for you to fill out regarding your hospital/clinic preference and health insurance provider. You are required to sign permission for Lord's Lambs Child Care to arrange for the emergency treatment/transport necessary to preserve the health of your child until such time as a parent/guardian can be present.

You will be notified immediately if your child gets an injury that appears serious. Some examples are a bump to a head or a serious cut. Incident reports will be documented for non-emergency cuts, scrapes, or bruises. The report will include what happened to cause the injury, treatment, and signature of staff member who assisted the child. The report will be shared on our ProCare, Parent Engagement app.

If your child has special needs in case of an emergency (seizures, allergies, etc.), please note them on your child's Information Card. Please write detailed instructions regarding these needs for staff to refer to in the event of an emergency.

If we feel that an injury or medical need requires emergency services, 911 will be called. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately. It is very important that correct and complete emergency contact numbers are always on record at the center.

### **Photo Release and Consent**

Lord's Lambs and Lord of Life's website, pamphlets, and advertising are ways we communicate with enrolled families, staff, potential families, and the Elkhorn/Omaha community. In order to demonstrate what Lord's Lambs Child Care is doing, we use photos of children in a variety of activities. At times, someone from the media may cover an event. In order for enrolled children's images to appear on our website or any news publication, it is required that we have parental permission.

### **Pre-Payment of Accounts**

Lord's Lambs will accept payments through Tuition Express. Lord's Lambs will accept debit/credit cards or bank draft for weekly tuition. Checks and cash will be accepted for enrollment fee only. The billing will be completed and billed on the Monday prior to care. Tuition must be prepaid on a weekly basis. If, for some reason, your payment is not received your child will not be allowed to attend until the account is paid in full.

A two-week notice is required prior to terminating services with Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC. Payment will be required for the two weeks after notice is given.

#### **Weekly Tuition**

<b>6 weeks to 18 months</b>	<b>\$290</b>
<b>18 months to 3 years</b>	<b>\$280</b>
<b>3 years (Potty Trained) to 6 years</b>	<b>\$250</b>

A \$10 discount in childcare fees for families with more than one child enrolled fulltime in LLCC will be offered. The discounted rates would be given to the oldest child in the group. The discount can be applied to more than one child, with the full price for childcare being charged to the youngest child.

During the first year a family is enrolled full-time, the family will be offered one week of 50% tuition for family vacation. After one full year of full time enrollment, families will be offered a



week-tuition free a year. These five days **DO** need to be taken consecutively and children cannot attend child care during this time.

Families enrolled prior to June 1, 2022, will be grandfathered in and will continue to receive prior discounts and vacation offered upon enrollment.

A non-sufficient check fee in the amount of \$25 will be charged for any check that is declined for payment. If a parent has more than two non-sufficient checks, they may be required to provide payment in another manner.

### **Late Charges**

Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC closes at 6:00 pm. Parents should arrive at least a few minutes prior to closing time to ensure that staff are able to close the center at 6:00 pm. If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 pm, a charge of \$5.00 every minute will be applied to the parents/guardian's account. Please make every effort to respect the closing time.

If you know you are going to be late for any reason, call the center and let us know as soon as possible. If a parent fails to pick up his/her child after closing time, our staff will attempt to contact the parents. If that fails, emergency contact numbers will be tried. If staff is unsuccessful in reaching someone within one hour, the police will be notified to pick up your child.

### **Billing Information**

All communication from the administrative office will be sent to the primary email address attached to your account. This includes, but is not limited to: billing statements, late payment notices, newsletters, registration information, classroom notes, and classroom reminders. Talk to the center director if you have any questions regarding billing.

### **Separated/Divorced Parents**

The custodial parent is responsible for the child care bill, even if the non-custodial parent is court-ordered to pay a percentage of the bill. We must have current information for all responsible parties including name, address, phone number, employment, etc. Legal custody and visitation documentation must be on file in the administrative office. If you are in a divorce or separation situation you must supply the center with these documents. The orders of the court from the custodial parent will be strictly followed and kept confidential.

### **Delinquent Accounts**

Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC will handle all matters, including financial situations, in a compassionate and Christ-like way. In order for Lord's Lambs to offer quality and reliable child

care to the families in our community, we need to meet our financial obligations. If a family's account becomes delinquent (overdue by two weeks) we will work with the family to make a plan to get their account current, suspend care, or terminate services. If you are experiencing a financial hardship, please talk to the director. We may be able to guide and/or assist you. Communication between parents and the director in regards to billing accounts is extremely important.

## **Tax Information**

Statements for income tax purposes will be emailed out to each family no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC tax identification number will be given out upon enrollment.

## **Parent Grievances**

Parent's complaints, grievances, and concerns will be taken seriously and handled in a discreet and professional manner. When necessary, talking things over between the parents, staff, and director will be the first step towards problem solving. Many times, talking things over and clearing up any miscommunication will resolve the problem quickly. In the rare occasion that the problem is not resolved in the previous manner, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Conference with the Early Childhood Educator: Parents of Lord's Lambs are encouraged to share their problems or concerns with them. In the event that matters cannot be resolved during this exchange, parents can request a conference with the director.
2. Conference with the Director: A request for a conference should be made either by a phone call or email to the director. At the time of the request, the parent should indicate whether he or she wants the Early Childhood Educator involved be present during the conference.

At the conference, the parent and staff member, if in attendance, will explain his or her problem or concern with the director. If the staff member is not present, the director shall discuss the matter with him or her. The director may contact other appropriate parties and conduct further conferences with the parent and/or the staff member prior to taking any action in response to the matter. After he/she has had an opportunity to gather all necessary information, the Director shall determine what action, if any, should be taken. The Director shall advise the staff member and the parent of the decision. If the parent is not satisfied with the Director's decision, the parent may request further review of the concern by the Lord's Lambs Child Care, LLC, council.

## **Visitors**

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time. If you have a special talent, skill, or job that you think would be interesting to toddlers and preschoolers, please let the director know.

All other visitors must be admitted by a staff member. Visitors will never be left alone with children. The Director or appointed staff member will monitor any visitors who have not undergone a formal record-check process. This will include parents/guardians, volunteers, maintenance people, observers, prospective clients, etc. Occasionally, a special visitor will come to the center to teach, entertain, or interact with the children in our program. Parents will be notified of scheduled visitors.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

While it can be unnerving to think about situations that may require an emergency response, trusting in Christ and reviewing and practicing procedures can help everyone be prepared in the event of an actual emergency. The following is a brief description to help parents understand how our staff would handle these emergencies.

**Lockdown** Occurs if there is a crisis inside and/or outside the center and movement of children would put them in jeopardy.

**Shelter in Place** Used when there is not time to evacuate, or when it may be harmful to leave the building. Children will stay in the center until it is safe for them to leave.

**Evacuation** Means that the children and staff must leave the building for safety reasons. They will move to an area outside the building or to an offsite location. The evacuation of children from the center will be considered only when authorities have determined that occupation of the center is unreasonable due to unsafe conditions.

## **Reunification Procedures and Child Dismissal**

During an emergency, Lord's Lambs staff will make every effort to notify parents immediately. We recognize the importance of getting the correct information to parents as quickly as possible. Parents will be informed as to where the children have been relocated and will be given instructions for picking up their child. Children will only be released to adults listed on their Emergency Contact Card. Photo identification may be requested by a staff member.

## **Fire Drills**

Lord's Lambs will practice monthly fire drills. An Evacuation Plan is posted in each classroom. A fire drill has to occur once a year during nap time. Children will be taught to walk quickly and quietly as they exit the building. Evacuation cribs will be used to transport infants to a safe location outside of the building. Children with special needs will hold a staff member's hand during the drill. Each classroom's teacher will have a class list with contact information on it. Children will be moved to a designated safe area and will remain under supervision.

Once the children are safe in their designated area, a staff member will immediately double check the number of children in their care ensuring that all children are safely out of the building. Staff will notify the director immediately if all children are not accounted for. Once children have been evacuated and taken to the indicated safe area, they will be kept calm and

quiet, waiting for further instructions. After the director meets with the fire officials, the children will be transferred to another place as directed by authorities.

***God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. Psalm 46:1-4***

## **Tornado Drills**

In the event of a tornado, children will be moved to the storm shelter classroom, Evacuation Plans are posted in each classroom. Everyone will remain in the storm shelter classroom until further directions.

## **Emergency Planning**

In the event of an emergency, the director or staff members will listen to emergency broadcasts and follow their instructions. Staff members will not be allowed to leave during any type of emergency event. Emergency supplies will be accessible to staff and children when needed. Parents will be notified as quickly as possible. We request that parents keep their emergency contact information updated and current at all times.

In case of an emergency evacuation, we will take the children to St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, south of Lord's Lambs at S 206<sup>th</sup> St/Rawhide Road.

## **Healthy Child**

Lord's Lambs is a "well-child" care facility. We are not equipped to provide care to sick children. We request that parents make every effort to respect the health of the other children and their families by keeping your child home when you suspect a possible illness. When children don't feel well, they need and deserve extra TLC and comfort that group care simply cannot provide. It is difficult to free a center of a contagious illness as long as there is even one illness lingering in the building. Lord's Lambs Child Care, LLC reserves the right to dismiss any child whom they believe to be too ill to be in group care. As a licensed child care center, we are required by law to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children.

Please make other child care arrangements if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100° or more, before coming or while at the center.
- Rashes that cannot be identified or that have not been diagnosed by a physician as non-communicable diseases.
- Diarrhea that is watery, or a greenish-bowel movement that looks or smells unusual and occurs three or more times during an eight hour period or less.
- One uncontained stool.

- Vomiting.
- Lice. We have a 24 hour nit/lice-free policy.

A fever can be a sign of infection by viruses or bacteria. If your child runs a temperature of 100° or higher while in our care, we will call a parent. Parents are required to promptly pick up their child. A child has to be fever free for **48 HOURS** without any type of fever-reducing medication before they can return to childcare. Vomiting and diarrhea also require a 48 HOUR exclusion policy. When administration has a reason to believe that a child may be contagious, a doctor's authorization may be requested before the child can return to child care.

Lord's Lambs asks that, if possible, all medications be given at home. Members of the Lord's Lambs Staff will not administer any fever reducing medication. If your child requires medication, please keep them home. Medication that requires 3 doses may be brought. The medication **must** be in its original container (including the box it was purchased in) and labeled with your child's name. All medication should be registered with the teacher, a signed medication authorization must be completed for the child, by the parent. During the time you are registering the medication, instructions for giving the medication must be given. Next, the medication must then be given to a staff member who will properly store it in a locked cabinet.

In the event that a child requires medication while in our care, trained and assigned staff members will follow the 5 rights:

1. The right drug
2. The right recipient
3. In the right dose
4. By the right route
5. At the right time

Each and every time medication is given to or applied to a child, it will be documented in a confidential manner.

### **Communicable Diseases**

When a non-reportable communicable disease has occurred, an Information Sheet will be posted in the classroom and entry way. As required by the state, occurrences of certain reportable communicable diseases will be shared center-wide. Occurrences of these diseases will also be communicated to parents through parent engage. Below is a list of some of the common communicable diseases.

**Head lice** Transmitted by direct contact with infected person or items. Nits are oval and white in color and attach to the hair shaft close to the scalp. Head lice causes itching. Child may return after ONE FULL TREATMENT with lice shampoo and nit/lice free. All bedding and clothing must be taken home and washed in hot, soapy water and dried in a hot dryer. Parents need to follow all the required procedures when treating their homes for lice.

**Scabies** Transmitted through skin-to-skin contact with an infected person. Scabies display as reddish, hard-to-see tracks on skin which causes intense itching. Scabies is caused by parasite mites that get under skin, leaving eggs and feces. A doctor's visit and note are required before the child can return after the last course of treatment. All bedding and clothing must be taken home and washed in hot, soapy water and dried in a hot dryer. Parents need to follow all required procedures when treating their homes for scabies.

**Fifth Disease** Transmitted through infectious respiratory secretions. Mild virus causing a rash on cheeks that appears like a slapped face, often a lace-like rash on legs/arms/trunk. Rash may fade and re-appear for three or more weeks. When the rash appears, the child has already passed the most contagious period, but we need a doctor's note to verify if the child has had it. Fifth Disease can cause miscarriage in early pregnancy, so we need to put up a note to alert pregnant mothers.

**Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease** Transmitted by direct contact with nose and throat secretions or feces. Lesions/open sores on cheeks, mouth, gums, tongue, palms, fingers and/or soles of feet. Children with hand, foot and mouth disease should be excluded from childcare facilities until their blisters have dried-up, and any rash (if present) has gone and any fever has settled.

**Influenza** Transmitted by contact with discharge from nose or throat. Chills, fever, cough, and headache are symptoms. Child can return after symptoms are resolved, 24 hours after last symptom without the aid of medication.

**Ringworm** Transmitted by contact with lesions of infected persons or animals. Circular lesions of skin, scalp, and/or nails. Slightly raised and red at the edge with a whitish center. Spreads outward on skin and causes scaly itch. Contagious while lesions are visible. Child can return after a doctor's visit and under treatment. Physician's note is required.

**Chickenpox** Contagious for 14-21 days, until last lesions have crusted. Transmitted by contact with discharge from skin, nose, or throat of infected person. Small dark red pimples appear and then turn into blisters within hours. Blisters look like drops of water on skin, which then scab. New batches of pimples appear for 3-4 days. May or may not cause a fever. Children who have had the vaccination may still contract chickenpox. Do not use aspirin products. Child may return after no new lesions have appeared and all old lesions have crusted.

**Impetigo** Contagious for 4-10 days. Transmitted by direct contact with moist discharge from skin lesions. Small red pimples which develop into blisters, then become encrusted –usually appearing on the face, hands, neck, and extremities, but will spread through scratching. Contagious while lesions are draining. Topical application of antibacterial ointment, frequent hand washing with soap and water, and thorough drying is the treatment plan. Child may return after a doctor's visit and with a note.

## Parent's Responsibilities for Safety

- Keep the emergency information up-to-date, including home, work, and cell phone numbers and email address.
- Keep the authorized pick-up people current. We encourage families to have at least two authorized people listed on their child's records. Parents should make every effort to introduce the authorized pick-up persons to the staff and Director. If we do not know or recognize an authorized person, we will ask for photo identification.
- Always tell the Early Childhood Educators who care for your children when someone other than a parent will be picking up your child.
- Keep your child's immunizations and well-baby/child check-ups current.
- Keep ill children home until 48 hours after the disappearance of all symptoms, including fever.
- Inform a staff member if your child has a communicable disease.
- Fill out the proper forms to allow staff to administer medications. Take medications home when we no longer need to administer them.
- Let a staff member know of a planned absence.
- Contact a staff member if your child is going to be late or is leaving early.
- Teach your child good health practices such as proper hand washing, wiping noses, wiping after using the toilet, flushing the toilet, etc.
- Teach your child to pick up items after themselves. Teach your child to clean up after accidents (spilled milk or food, etc.)
- Teach your child self-help skills such as putting on their coat, shoes, pulling up their pants, etc.
- Bring your child to childcare in the appropriate car safety restraints. If we observe that your child is not properly restrained, do not be offended if we say something. Keeping children safe is our goal.
- Never leave any child alone in the car.
- Teach your child to walk inside the building and to stay with you during drop-off and pick-up times. We want to ensure their safety so do not let your child run ahead of you or lag behind. Do not let children run anywhere in the building.
- Have children hold your hand or carry them when in the parking lot. Do not let children walk unattended or run in the parking lot.
- Do not let children linger in the classroom or hallways unattended. Once a staff member sees you, we transfer responsibility for keeping your child supervised back to you as their parent.
- Take time to ensure that during drop-off/pick-up times, a staff member knows the transition is occurring. Never leave or take your child without your child's Early Childhood Educator's knowledge.
- Keep your child's Early Childhood Educator up to date on your child's health, mood, eating habits, sleep patterns, family situations, or anything else that might affect your child's behavior while in our care. Remember, we have formed a partnership to

providing the best possible care for your child, so this information is extremely important.

- Teach your child in age-appropriate ways about safety practices: feet on the floor, not climbing furniture, wiping up spills, not running away from care providers, fire and tornado drills, etc. Teaching consistent practices at home and child care is beneficial to young children.
- Keep your child's supplies stocked.

## **Staff**

Our Early Childhood Educators come to Lord's Lambs with experience teaching young children in group care, education in early childhood education, or both. We are proud of the team that we have assembled to provide care to your precious children. New staff members will shadow a seasoned member of our team to gain hands on experience in our setting.

With Jesus Christ as our team leader we have formed a child care team that strive to provide quality, Christ-like care to the children and families enrolled in our program. It is our goal to offer you and your family a professional quality child care experience.

Criminal background checks will be done on each new employee. This check will be done on any person who is to have contact with children. This policy includes administration, full/part time staff, and any other person who may be employed by the center. The criminal background check will consist of contacting the Health and Human Services Central Registry.

## **Volunteers**

Lord's Lambs may use volunteers from various families or church members in a variety of ways to enhance our program. If you have a skill, talent, or simply giving heart and want to assist in any way, let the director know.

## **Cleanliness**

Cleanliness is next to Godliness ☺ therefore keeping our center clean, sanitized, and orderly is a priority. Children entering the building should wash their hands upon arrival. Parents need to assist their child with proper hand washing methods. Toddlers and preschoolers will be taught proper hand washing procedures throughout the day. Early Childhood Educators will wash or assist with hand washing after diapering/restroom, before and after meals, and upon returning from outside play.

Sanitation procedures are followed routinely. Tables are cleaned and sanitized before and after meals. Floors will be vacuumed/mopped as needed and always at the end of the day. Bathrooms, drinking fountains, and sinks are sanitized throughout the day and always at the



end of the day. Lord's Lambs works in partnership with Lord of Life Lutheran Church's Board of Properties to keep the building in good repair.

## **Communication**

Our Early Childhood Educators are interested in knowing about the children in care. They want to help with any family concerns or difficulties as it relates to the children. They want to know if something exciting is happening to your family or if there is something they can pray and/or assist with. To help them care for your child, ECE need to know if a child slept well or is overly excited about something. Frequent communication between parents and staff members helps enrich the child care experience for the children, parents, and Early Childhood Educators. A wonderful team is formed with open communication and the child benefits the most from these exchanges. If your family is going through something difficult, please let us know and we will be glad to offer prayers and comfort when we can. Drop off and pick up times can be busy and we want to respect your time and give our attention to the group, so these communication times may need to be brief. If you need to speak to your child's teacher, you can call during nap time, or later afternoon times usually allow for a teacher to be able to step out of the classroom to talk for a little while. Other ways to communicate are through a written note, e-mail or scheduling a conference.

Please make every attempt to contact your child's teacher during their work hours unless it is an emergency situation. Please avoid contacting them on holidays and weekends. ProCare Engage will be used for means of communication. Please ask the director for information, if needed.

Early Childhood Educators who teach in our infant and toddler rooms will provide parents with information via Pro Care Engage.

Lord's Lambs Administration Office will communicate in the following ways:

- In person
- Phone calls
- Text messages
- Emails
- Lord's Lambs website
- Parent conferences
- Notes in children's backpacks/diaper bags
- Reminders posted in the child care center

## **Curriculum**

*The Lord Almighty is a wonderful teacher. Isaiah 28:29*

It is fascinating how much children learn from the time of their birth through five years! Every day is a new opportunity to explore, investigate, examine, and play. During these times, children are learning and growing in all developmental areas. Our Early Childhood Educators help facilitate learning by setting up the environment in developmentally appropriate ways, planning interesting and age appropriate lessons, supporting and encouraging children throughout their day, and giving time for children to become engaged in their activities.

Lord's Lambs incorporates two curriculums into our program: Creative Curriculum and Pinnacle Curriculum. Creative Curriculum is a play-based state-approved curriculum, and Pinnacle is a faith-based curriculum. Both are quality curriculums that promote developmentally-appropriate activities for children of all ages. If you have any questions regarding curriculum, please talk to the director.

## **Infants**

All of us at Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC feel honored that you have entrusted us with the wonderful opportunity to partner with you during your infant's young and formative years. We want to assure you that we take this responsibility seriously and we will work diligently to provide the best care that we can for your infant.

In an effort to provide the kind of care all infants deserve, we have established strict standards regarding cleanliness and safety. Proper diapering and hand washing techniques will be practiced at all times. Mouthed toys will be sanitized daily. Bedding will be washed weekly or when soiled with bodily fluid. Infants have their own assigned cribs, and infants will not share personal items.

Anyone entering the infant rooms will be required to remove their shoes or put shoe covers over their shoes. We want to keep the infant room to stay as clean as possible.

Diapers, wipes, formula, breast milk, bottles, and all other items will be labeled with the child's name. All of these items are provided by the parents. Parents are responsible for informing infant staff with a specific feeding schedule. The schedule needs to be kept current, so updates will be necessary. Administration encourages open communication between infant staff and parents in order to provide the best possible care to their infant.

**Breast-fed Infants** If your child is breast fed, parents need to bring pre-made, thawed breast milk bottles each day. Any container with breast milk must be clearly labeled with today's date, expressed date, date frozen, and the child's name.

**Formula-fed Infants** A container of formula containing at least two full days of formula needs to be kept in the infant's room at all times. The container will be labeled with the infant's name.

**Infant Safe Sleep** Following Safe Sleep Practices, infants will be laid on their backs when placed in their cribs, and nothing else will be in the crib. Blankets will not be used in cribs. Parents should bring at least one sleep sack for their child to wear during nap times. Infants will sleep only in cribs. Sleeping infants will be observed by sight and sound, and checked on frequently by their providers.

Infants will be offered several opportunities during the day for "tummy time". Infant providers will supervise tummy time and use this time to talk to, play with, and encourage infants during this developmentally important activity.

## **Potty Training**

Around the time a child turns two years old, parents and Early Childhood Educators begin to talk about potty training. Every toddler is unique and develops at their own pace, therefore; staff will only begin to start the potty training process when signs of readiness are evident.

Below is a list of readiness signs:

- Child waking up dry from naps.
- Diapers remain dry for longer periods of times during the day.
- Child shows willingness to sit on the potty and/or asks to sit on the potty.
- Child has or is developing the verbal skills to let providers know his/her restroom needs.

Potty training is a learning process just like walking, talking, and self-feeding. It takes repetition, support, and time. Early Childhood Educators will have patience during this process of development. The toddler's attempts and success during potty training will be celebrated while potty accidents will be handled with discretion and words of encouragement.

During the potty training process, toddlers will remain in diapers until Early Childhood Educators have documented an extended period of time free of accidents. Once a period of accident-free time has been established, toddlers can advance to pull-ups. Toddlers will be encouraged to pull up their own pull up and pants to gain independence and self-help skills. After another accident-free period has been achieved, toddlers can begin to wear training pants. Remembering that each child is unique, the length of time this takes will be different for each child. ECEs understand that occasional accidents will occur, so their goal is to move through this process at a pace that creates the most success for the toddler.

## **Clothing and Supplies**

Play is essential for any quality early childhood program, so please dress your children in clothes that they are comfortable in and can become messy. Children should come in their "play clothes". Each child should have an adequate supply of spare clothes. The number of spare clothes varies depending on the development and stage your child is in at the time. Keep in mind that occasional spills and toileting accidents happen to children of all ages.

## **Outside Play**

Children will follow their classroom's play schedule, which provides outside time in the morning and afternoon. Parents should dress their child appropriately for the weather. Children will play outside whenever the temperature is appropriate. Precipitation and wind chill factors are taken into consideration when deciding if children should go outside. All children will go outside with their class. Lord's Lambs does not have enough staff to accommodate special requests to have a child stay inside. If a parent feels that their child should not go outside, then other child care arrangements should be made for the day.

## **Chapel / Jesus Time**

Daily Jesus time, prayer, and weekly chapel are used to encourage and support Christian growth in the young children in our program. Early Childhood Educators will offer a daily Jesus time using our approved faith-based curriculum. Prayer will be a daily activity during meal times. Spontaneous prayer will occur when appropriate. For example, if a child is not feeling well or fell down and got hurt, staff and children will pray for their classmates. One of Lord of Life's pastors or Director of Music will lead Chapel once a week. It is our mission to minister to the children in our care, promote their relationship with our Savior Jesus Christ, and model Christ-like behaviors.

## **Nature Walks**

Walks around the center can provide learning opportunities for toddlers and preschoolers. These walks provide an opportunity for children to explore their surroundings and community. Nature walks will be handled by Early Childhood Educators as an extension to learning and therefore will be filled with questions and answers facilitating conversations between children and ECC.

## **Water Activities**

During the summer months, all children 18 months and older will participate in water activities. Each classroom will have assigned days/times for water play. Some of the activities children will participate in include sprinklers and water tables. Children should bring a swim suit, little swimmer diaper (if not completely potty trained), towel, and water appropriate shoes. Please make sure children's items are labeled. All supplies will be send home at the end of the day to be laundered.

## **Rest Time / Naps**

A rest period is scheduled into toddlers' and preschoolers' days. Our daily schedule has opportunities for children to be active, and to balance the day a scheduled rest time is required. Nap time is an important time of the day because it allows children the time to re-energize for the remainder of their day. Children rest in their classrooms on their own cot. Nap cots are arranged so all children have at least three feet of distance from each other face-to-face. All children are required to lie down and rest. Children who are not sleeping will be respectful of their sleeping friends. ECC will assist with nap time by creating a restful room atmosphere through lights turned down, blinds closed, soft music playing, and rubbing children's backs. Pre-Kindergarten children who will be going to school in the fall are still required to rest. Please provide a labeled child-size blanket and pillow for your child to use at rest time. If your child brings a stuffed animal to use at nap time, that needs to be labeled and will be reserved for nap time only.

## **Food Allergy Policy**

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the director if your child has a food allergy. Written documentation of the food allergy from the child's health care provider, with instructions on precautions that need to be taken to avoid the allergic food, and the health care provider's order for any needed medication is required. Lord's Lambs Child Care will take the necessary precautions to keep the allergic foods away from the child and train staff on the proper management of the specific food allergy, including emergency procedures, and how to administer medication.

## **Nut-Free Center**

Lord's Lambs Child Care is a nut-free center. Please remember this policy when considering bringing special treats for your child's birthday celebrations.

## **Celebrations**

Parents can bring a special healthy birthday treat for the children in their child's class. If you are unsure of the correct number of children, please ask their teacher. If you choose to invite children to a birthday party, all children have to be invited in order to avoid hurt feelings and to demonstrate kindness and inclusion.

## **Food and Nutrition**

Lord's Lambs provides nutritional meals to all the children in our program. Due to Covid, Children three years and older will be served by their teacher. Children will be encouraged to take a small serving (bite sized) of each food group. They will be encouraged to try new foods. Early Childhood Educators will sit at the table with the children and model appropriate table behavior. ECE will promote manners, self-discipline, and independence. Grace will be spoken before every meal. Menus will be posted weekly. Food cannot be brought in from outside the building, unless a child has an allergy or medical intolerance to certain foods. In that case, a doctor's note is required. Parents/guardians can supply an alternative food choice. This food choice needs to be able to be in the classroom, not refrigerated or needing to be microwaved. Lord's Lambs will not substitute items on our menu due to food intolerance or allergies. Without a doctor's written documentation, we will serve all food and milk to every child.

Breakfast will be served between 8:00 and 8:30 am. Lunch and snack schedules are posted in the toddler and preschool classrooms. Infants eat on demand. Reminder: food cannot be brought into the center. If your child is eating breakfast in the car, he/she needs to finish before entering the building. Gum and candy are not allowed in the center at any time.

## **Discipline and Guidance**

Lord's Lambs Child Care strives to provide a safe, nurturing, and Christian environment for the children in our care. We believe that children deserve to be in a positive learning environment so they can learn, play, and grow into the wonderfully unique individuals that God designed them to be. Our goal is to model, teach, and encourage critical thinking skills to all the children in age-appropriate ways. Critical thinking skills are also problem-solving skills; therefore children will be given opportunities to problem solve so they become confident in their own thinking abilities. We will assist children in developing flexibility in thinking and to begin to recognize and reflect on consequences and the relationships of cause and effect. Problem-solving activities support children in the area of social development. Playing together, young children learn to negotiate, use their verbal skills, take turns, practice patience, and make decisions.

Early Childhood Educators will work closely with children, helping them solve problems and allowing them to explore, investigate, and take risks. ECE and parents need to provide time, space, and structure so children can practice their problem-solving skills. ECE will show respect and validate their thinking process by listening and asking open-ended questions to expand their thoughts. In addition, ECE will encourage children to grow in their thinking and problem-solving skills by having a well-prepared environment, a variety of experiences and activities that allow for cooperative play, as well as individual activities.

### **Guidance Techniques Used at Lord's Lambs Child Care:**

**Modeling** All staff members will model the behaviors we want to teach to the children in our program.

**Prevention** Having an appropriately arranged learning environment which allows for group and solitary play helps to reduce misbehaviors. Having a selection of materials and activities that children can decide to play with is another way to reduce misbehaviors.

**Choices** Allowing the children in our program to make suitable choices for themselves will help children gain self-esteem and decision-making abilities.

**Redirection** ECE will practice redirecting a child or group of children away from a problem, helping them to become engaged in an appropriate activity or solution to the conflict.

**Problem Solving** ECE will work with children to solve their own problems and disputes. ECE will assist children to set their own boundaries and communicate their thoughts using appropriate words.

**Responsibility** Children will be responsible for their own choices, behaviors and actions. ECE will help children accept responsibility and to problem solve arriving at a solution.

**Safety** All children and staff shall be safe from violence, physical, and verbal abuse.

**Consequences** Appropriate consequences are necessary to help guide a child's behavior. Lord's Lambs Child Care does not endorse or use forms of negative discipline. Corporal punishment is not tolerated at the center.

Our goal with discipline and guidance is to TEACH.

Repeated concerns regarding behaviors will be discussed with parents in every effort to find a plan to curb the undesired behavior.

### **Behavior Management Policy**

If a child is not following the rules, these steps will be taken:

1. Redirection by a staff member will be the first option. If this doesn't work the child may be separated from the group. This time will be used to remind them of appropriate behaviors and choices. ECE will support the child by offering positive choices to the child. When the child is ready, they will rejoin the group.
2. Incident reports regarding misbehaviors will be written to guide parents, Director, and Early Childhood Educators in arriving at solutions to reduce/stop misbehaviors. If the misbehavior is presenting a danger to themselves or others, an incident report will be written and the center director will talk to the child in an effort to find out why the behavior is occurring and how staff can guide the child to a more appropriate choice.
3. A conference will be scheduled if misbehavior continues to occur. Parents, primary Early Childhood Educator, and the director will be present for the conference. The goal for the conference is to develop methods to reduce/stop the misbehavior. It is important that all involved collaborate and work as a team to help the child.
4. As a last result, alternative child care may need to be arranged. If a child puts staff or other children in danger, Lord's Lambs Child Care LLC reserves the right to terminate services at any time. Inappropriate language and aggressive behavior will not be tolerated and could lead to a conference, suspension, or termination of services.

Incident reports will be reviewed and signed by the center director and classroom staff member. The report will include information pertaining to what happened before the incident, the actual behavior observed by a staff member, actions taken to redirect the child, and the outcome of the incident. The parent will be asked to do the following: provide comments regarding a solution for the observed behavior and sign the form. All incident reports will remain in the child's file to ensure confidentiality. Parents may request a copy of the report.

### **Discipline / Guidance for Toddlers**

Toddlers will be encouraged to explore and express their curiosity while they are in our care. Our environment is set up for them to be successful in their play and development. With an understanding that toddlers can become overwhelmed, frustrated, uncooperative, and even defiant, our toddler early childhood educators will gently enforce reasonable limits while understanding and verbalizing the difficulty the toddler is having at the time.

Toddler Early Childhood Educators will show encouragement and appreciation for the effort of our toddlers in all that they do. ECE will promote toddler's language by modeling appropriate words, requesting help, and identifying emotions. Discipline and guidance during the toddler years requires consistency, limit setting, age-appropriate expectations, redirection, and logical consequences. All discipline and guidance will be done modeling Christ's love, understanding, and forgiveness.

The following types of discipline are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threat of it.
- Punishment associated with food, rest times, or toilet training.
- Shaking, pinching, or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or any object.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive.

## **Biting**

Biting is a common developmental behavior for infants and toddlers. Occasionally biting will occur in a group setting. There are a variety of reasons that children may bite, including teething, lack of verbal skills, frustration, hunger, exploration, and attention seeking.

In order to reduce biting in our program we will do the following:

1. Each classroom has a daily schedule with planned activities to keep young children engaged.
2. Early Childhood Educators will properly monitor and supervise children, being proactive in order to prevent or reduce biting from happening.
3. Young children will have age-appropriate toys and materials available to them to stimulate curiosity and reduce boredom.
4. Early Childhood Educators will teach children to use their words when they want/need something and to use words to stand up for themselves to help prevent them from being bitten.
5. Early Childhood Educators offer positive reinforcement for acceptable behaviors.

When biting occurs:

1. Attention will first be given to the child that was bitten. The bite is cleaned. Ice will be placed on it if necessary. Child will be comforted by a staff member and helped to continue the activity they were doing before the bite occurred.



2. The child who bit will be addressed next by the same staff member if possible. The staff member will calmly remind the child that biting hurts. When possible, a book reminding young children that teeth are not for biting others will be read.
3. When necessary or appropriate, a teething toy or washcloth will be given to the child who bit.
4. The child who bit will be assisted by a classroom teacher to become engaged in an activity.
5. Close attention will be given to both children to make sure they are comfortable, safe, and engaged in an activity.
6. Both sets of parents will be informed by a staff member and given documentation regarding the incident and how it was handled, and what steps we are taking to prevent reoccurrence.
7. When necessary, teachers will “shadow” the child who is biting to determine if there is a pattern to his/her behavior. Teachers will pay close attention to the location and time of day the biting is occurring in order to understand the reasons behind the biting. Once the reasons are determined, an action plan for prevention will be written and implemented for all classroom staff to follow.

It is never acceptable for a member of Lord’s Lambs staff to do the following:

- Bite the child.
- Encourage retaliation by having the child bite back.
- Call any child derogatory names or labels such as “a bad kid, or naughty boy.”
- Tell the bitten child’s parents which child it was that bit their child.

## **Bullying Policy**

Lord’s Lambs strives to be an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Therefore threats, harassment, or any type of bullying behavior will not be tolerated.

The definition of bullying is “any written or verbal expression, or physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students.”

### **Bullying in a Preschool Environment:**

Bullying is not limited to physical aggression. Two forms of bullying are social rejection and verbal assaults. A group of preschoolers not allowing another child to play with them repeatedly can be a form of bullying. A preschooler repeatedly making fun of another child’s clothes can be a form of bullying. When a preschooler excludes, teases, taunts, gossips, hits, kick, makes fun of, or puts down another child with the intent to hurt another they are engaging in bullying behavior, and it will not be tolerated in our program. When a child enjoys seeing others hurt or when they are trying to inflict pain, they are engaging in bullying.

Preschoolers will be taught Godly principles of kindness, acceptance, love, and inclusion. These principles will be demonstrated by our Early Childhood Educators and taught through

lessons, planned activities, and daily routines. We promote and practice positive behavior strategies and positive reinforcement in our classrooms.

We understand that some degree of misbehaviors “being mean” during the early childhood years is normal, but these occasions will be handled with the intentions of correcting and teaching appropriate ways to interact with everyone in our program. We acknowledge and understand that during this stage of development, children are learning to express themselves and communicate through words and gestures.

In order to empower children, Early Childhood Educators will encourage them to use their words to stand up for themselves, seeking a teacher’s assistance if needed. Staff members will monitor situations closely making sure that there is clear evidence of bullying. If bullying does occur, parents of the child doing the bullying behavior may be notified and a conference might be planned to discuss how to help the preschooler understand his/her behavior, and plan for ways to prevent reoccurrence.

Bullying will not be seen by any staff member or administration as “kids being kids” or something that children need to learn to handle themselves. Parents and staff members will be supportive of all children having a safe and secure learning environment.

## **Child Abuse**

Any suspicion of child abuse or neglect will be reported by Lord’s Lambs staff in accordance with federal, state and local laws. Nebraska law requires us to report the information to law enforcement or to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. Staff members who report suspicions are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action unless it is proven that the report is malicious. Should a staff member be accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program, their rights as well as the rights of the child and family shall be protected by keeping all information confidential except for the relevant parties: staff person, director, family, law enforcement, and legal counsel.

## **Discharge Policy**

The following behaviors may result in immediate suspension or termination of services:

- Child physically or verbally injures or bullies another child or staff member.
- Child bites, spits, urinates or defecates on, scratches or strikes another child or staff member.
- Child has frequent and uncontrollable tantrums.
- Child demonstrates aggressiveness towards another child or staff member.
- Child causes intentional damage to Lord’s Lambs property or to another child’s belongings.

- Parent or guardian is verbally abusive or continually expressing their dissatisfaction with the center, the rules, or staff members. If you have a complaint or concern, please talk to the center director.
- Childcare fees are not paid in a timely manner.
- Drop off and/or pick up times are routinely abused.

## **De-Enrollment**

After following all established procedures, de-enrollment may be made for the following reasons:

- Failure of the child to adjust to the center's daily schedule and procedures, which causes an abnormal amount of stress, hardship, or anxiety on staff members and other children in the program.
- Failure of the family to meet the financial obligations for enrollment of their child.
- Failure by the parents to follow the policies and procedures of Lord's Lambs Child Care.

## **Termination Notice to Center**

Lord's Lambs Child Care requires that all families give a **two week written notice** before terminating child care services.

If a two weeks' notice is not given, the parents/guardians will be expected to pay the regular charges for two weeks upon termination of services. If services are terminated, the account is due in full on the last day of childcare for your child.

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## **Handbook Additions and Revisions**

If, during the year, the need arises to add to or alter part of our policies and procedures in this handbook, parents will be provided an electronic copy of the new updated handbook. Parents will be required to sign a form that they have received and will abide by the changes in the Parent Handbook. The signature will indicate the receipt of, and understanding of the indicated changes or additions. This form will be kept in your youngest child's file.

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