

Parent Handbook

2023

**Trinity
Learning
Center**

2024



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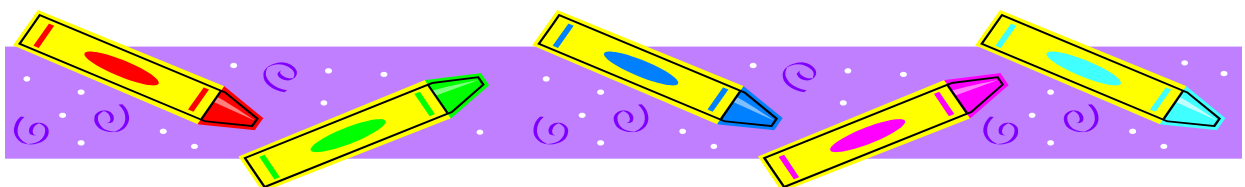


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Introduction

Trinity Learning Center is a Christian Preschool and Before and After School Program, which is a part of the outreach ministry of Trinity United Methodist Church.

Trinity United Methodist Church has been serving in the greater Clayton area since 1984. We offer a progressive biblical ministry which seeks to nurture, strengthen and equip persons of all ages in their journey of faith and service both within and beyond the walls of the church. Trinity Learning Center is an integral part of TUMC's outreach to both the community and to the children.

Our learning center began as a one room nursery school in 1988. Each year the center has grown in size and effectiveness. The center has added new classes, recruited quality staff, and has intentionally kept the student/staff ratio low. At Trinity Learning Center we strive to make a difference for Christ by emphasizing Christian education, Christian character, and a Christian community. Today the center serves parents and children by being open weekdays from 6:30am to 6pm. The Preschool Program serves children ages 18 months through 5 years old. The Before and After Program provides a safe, fun, and caring environment for students in K through 6th grade.

Additionally, the center operates an exciting Summer Camp program from mid June through the end of August. Special trips, swimming, crafts and games all help to make Summer Camp a place where children want to be!

Philosophy of Education

At Trinity Learning Center we believe if you "start children off on the way they should go, even when they are old they will not turn from it" Proverbs 22:6 (NIV). We desire as a school to train the next generation to serve their Savior, homes, churches, and communities. We consider academic growth and spiritual growth to be integral parts of the maturation process. We believe learning should be a positive experience. In addition to making learning interesting, challenging and fun, we also believe it is important to guide children toward a positive view of God, others, and themselves. We believe that children thrive in a context where they are loved and respected as persons, yet at the same time are held to a positive standard of respect and obedience.

At Trinity Learning Center, we believe that God made male and female (Genesis 5:2) and our gender is identified and ordained at the moment of conception (Psalms 139:13-16). We believe in affirming and aiding to grow children to be the young boys and young girls that God created them to be. To create a healthy, affirming Christian atmosphere that encourages children to accept who God made them to be.

Philosophy of Education Con't

Our goals at Trinity Learning Center are in line with the four facets of child development: spiritual, cognitive, physical, and social. Luke 2:52 is a model for us: "And Jesus grew in wisdom {Cognitive} and stature {Physical}, and in favor with God {Spiritual} and men {Social}."

- **Spiritual:** to lead by example and make an internal, external, and eternal impact on the children, the families and each other as a staff.
- **Cognitive:** to stimulate the desire to learn in order to acquire the wisdom necessary for a biblical worldview.
- **Physical:** to develop gross and fine motor skills, the use of the hands, and the use of the body to serve God and help others.
- **Social:** to teach and model positive social interaction that leads to a healthy self-identity by fostering the love of God and the putting of others first, along with self-control and respect for authority within an environment of acceptance and trust.

Statement of Sanctity of Human Life

Trinity Learning Center believes that ALL human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all it's dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Our Commitment to Parents

We strive to assist parents and guardians in their task of raising their children by maintaining open communication between staff, parents and children. The Director and Assistant Director are always available to answer any questions you may have. In addition, Trinity United Methodist Church offers a weekly inter-generational Sunday School program called "L-I-F-T" (Living In Faith Together) from 8:45-9:45am. This program covers various topics and is intended to be a help to you and your family. All are welcome to attend!

Periodically we will send home articles with information we hope will be helpful to you on this exciting journey called parenthood! If you are on Facebook, be sure to "like" our Facebook page as we post important information and announcements regularly.

Services offered

Trinity Learning Center offers full day, partial day and before/after school programs. Care is promptly provided at 6:30am until 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. The center will not be open on the holidays listed in this booklet, or on Snow Days/Emergency closings as they occur. We ask that you pick up and drop off your child/children as indicated on your enrollment application. If pick up/drop off times or schedule needs to change, you must contact the office for permission in advance. If the Director or Assistant Director has not given permission for the change, the teachers can not allow the change in schedule and your child will be turned away if no scheduled to attend. In addition, there is a late pick up fee if you do not pick up your child by the time they are registered for. For example, full day children must be picked up by 6pm. AM partial care must be picked up by 12:30pm. A \$1 per minute late fee will apply for late pick-ups. Thank you for your understanding to this.



Tuition and Fees

	18 month PART Day	18 month FULL Day	Preschool PART Day	Preschool FULL Day	Before/ After	Before Only	After Only
5 days	\$205	\$288	\$192	\$272	\$140	\$90	\$120
4 days	\$180	\$255	\$165	\$240	\$140	\$90	\$120
3 days	\$153	\$221	\$138	\$205	\$140	\$90	\$120
2 days	\$130	\$170	\$114	\$154	—	—	—

Sibling Discount is 20% off lowest tuition for each additional child.

*8am-12:30pm (part day enrollment for 2 1/2-5 year old rooms)

*7:30am-12:00pm (part day enrollment for 18 mos-2 1/2 year old room)

*Full day is considered anything more than 4 1/2 hours.

Tuition Payment Policy



- Each parent will be given a Financial Agreement that they must sign before their child attends TLC. Parents will receive a copy of the agreement and will be expected to abide by TLC's financial policies.
- **Tuition must be paid the Friday before or Monday of services rendered. (Means of payment are cash, credit or checks, however checks will only be accepted if paying for services not yet rendered.) There is a \$35 return check fee for all returned checks.**
- No credit will be given for absences (including sickness), and (one) week notice must be given for vacation time if you wish to be credited. Vacation Request Forms can be found in the tuition boxes which are located outside of the school office.
- No switching of days will be allowed. True emergency situations will be given consideration, but approval from Director or Assistant Director must be given in advance. Teachers are unable to give permission for changes in schedule. This means you must personally speak to, write a note or email the Director or Assistant Director for approval and receive a response back. If you don't receive a response back within 2 (two) business days, please call the office to follow up
- Preschool children will be charged a \$180 yearly activity fee which can be paid all at once, or in four payments of \$45 in September, October, November and December. Activity fees will be prorated for children who enroll during the school year.

Rutgers Care Assistance

Parents who receive Rutgers care are responsible to swipe attendance every day . This responsibility lies on the parent and not TLC. Failure to maintain swipes on a regular basis will result in the parent being reported to Rutgers and will be dismissed from TLC. **Rutgers Care Assistance does not cover the complete cost of our tuition, therefore you will be held responsible to cover the remaining cost.** Again this responsibility lies on the parent to communicate with both Rutgers Care and TLC in the event you are having troubles with the swipes or you lost/misplaced your card. More information is given in the Rutgers Care Agreement and every parent using Rutgers Care must sign a copy before their child can attend TLC.

Expectations of Parents

We expect your timely financial payments in order for our programs to run smoothly and to meet our financial obligations. Payments are due the **FRIDAY BEFORE OR MONDAY OF SERVICES RENDERED.** Also, please attend all scheduled parent teacher meetings as necessary. These scheduled meetings are very beneficial for the communication between you and the teacher and your child.

Requirements to begin attending

- Fully completed registration form and registration fee
- Parental Receipt of Information
- Parental Authorization for Emergency Treatment
- Media Consent Form
- Tuition Agreement
- Medical form by parents (K— 6th grade)
or Universal Health Record (preschool)
- Immunization card filled out by physician (preschool)
- A set of extra clothes including socks and underwear (ALL AGES)
- Nap items for children in preschool (no sleeping bags per state mandate)



Requirements to begin attending Con't

*Please note if your child has an accident and does not have an extra set of clothes or if you forget to bring sheets for nap time, we will provide a change of clothes or sheets that will be sent home with you to wash and return. If you fail to return the items within one week you will be charged \$3 for clothes and \$10 for sheets/blankets. These items are costly and when not returned we have to replace them so we ask that you please provide extra clothes and sheets/blankets.

Parent Emergency Awareness

Per state requirement, we are required to practice lockdown drills and fire drills. In the case of a drill or a real emergency, the Director will contact you via TEXT. This will be used for snow closings, delayed openings, emergency evacuations and lockdowns, and any other friendly reminders. **PLEASE MAKE SURE TO HAVE UPDATED CELL PHONE INFORMATION.**

Policy on the Release of Children

We are committed to your child's safety therefore we have some procedures in place to ensure their safety. All parents are required to sign their children in and out everyday (this is a state mandate). If you know that you are going to be detained, please notify the center immediately so that we can reassure your child. The center has no provision for care after 6:00pm. If you are late, you will be given a Late Form to sign and your account will be charged \$1/per minute. Consistent lateness will be cause for dismissal.

No child will be released to a person not officially authorized by a parent. We must have written (preferred) or verbal authorization for your child to be released to someone not listed on their application. Please make sure that the person who is picking up for the first time has a photo ID with them or your child/children will not be released.

Keeping the child's safety in mind, we will not release any child to anyone that appears to be under the influence of a foreign substance. The Clayton Police will be notified of this situation.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access to the child by court order, the center must have a copy of the court order on file in order to deny pick-up.

If the parent or person authorized by the parent fails to pick up a child by 6:00pm or the end of their partial day session, the center will ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent or person authorized by the parent

At 7:00pm, if the center has tried all of the contacts the parent has provided and the staff member is unable to stay with the child, the staff will then call the Child Abuse Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child until someone is able to pick them up.



Visitors

All visitors to Trinity Learning Center must check in at the office before proceeding to the preschool or am/pm areas.

Preschool Program

TLC offers a preschool partial day program as well as our full day program. The partial day program is from 8am-12:30pm for 2 1/2 –5 year olds and 7:30am-12:00pm for 18 mos-2 1/2 year old room. The full day program is for children that will attend TLC all day and include those that come and return from the Simmons Elementary preschool. Some highlights of TLC's preschool program are:

1. We use the Creative Curriculum for 18 month-3 years and the Abeka Curriculum for the Preschool 4
2. We keep teacher/child ratio's lower than state requirements
3. Classes follow daily lesson plans, which are posted outside each classroom
4. Group Teachers have either a Bachelor's Degree, Associates Degree, or CDA (Child Development Associate Certification)
5. All teacher's aides take a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education classes each school year and administration and group teachers take 20 hours per year

A few things to note about the preschool program:

*Special events are planned throughout the year and parents are encouraged to attend. It means a lot to your little one!

*Late arrivals disrupt the class schedule, so we ask that you please arrive no later than 9am for morning preschool. If children arrive after 9am, they must be brought to the office and a staff member will bring your child to the classroom.

*Morning partial day program ends at 12:30pm for 2 1/2– 5 year olds and 12:00pm for the 18 mos-2 1/2 year olds. Please be on time to pick up your child so we can prepare our full day students for nap.

Before and After School Program

Hours of Operation

The Before and After School program is located upstairs in Taylor Hall and is for children in K-6th grade. Our hours for Before/After School are **6:30am-bus pick-up, and 3:00-6:00pm**. Please note that children **MUST** be signed in and out everyday (per state mandate) by an adult. Special permission for siblings to sign child in and out will be handled on a case by case basis under the advisory of the TLC board. Children will not be allowed in the building prior to 6:30am.

*If students from the Middle School attend we will open earlier in the PM for their arrival from school.



Before and After School Program Con't

Transportation

Delsea Transportation will provide transportation to and from Herma Simmons Elementary School as well as Clayton Middle School. Students will be picked up and dropped off at the same location everyday regardless of the number of days they are enrolled at TLC. Please be on time to pick them up from the parking lot once they are off of the bus. In the event you do not arrive in time, your child will be signed in to TLC and you will be charged for that day.

Daily Activities

An afternoon snack is provided when the students arrive. Students are involved in a number of activities including homework, playing board games, outside play, making crafts, and much more!

All these activities are led by our trained staff in a loving, Christian environment.

PLEASE NOTE that handheld games, Ipods, cellphones, video games etc. are **NOT PERMITTED** to be used while at TLC.

Shortened Days Additional Fee

In the event of a delayed opening, early dismissal, or when school is closed all day (and TLC is open), you will be charged an additional fee. A special sign up sheet will be located by the daily sign in/sign out sheet approximately 3 weeks prior to an early dismissal or school closing. It is the parents responsibility to sign their child/children up for these day. Failure to do so will result in paying for the extra day(s) as we have to staff accordingly.



Policy on Discipline

Trinity Learning Center considers disciplinary action part of a child's instruction and necessary when the actions of a child may be harmful to one's self or others. Discipline improves a child's reasoning ability and strengthens one's moral character. Therefore our discipline is positive, consistent with age and developmental needs, and leads to the child's ability to develop and maintain self control.

The Disciplinary Steps for our preschool program are as follows:

1. Attempt to redirect and if successful, once redirected, try to discuss ways to improve behavior in the future. If behavior continues or redirection is not successful;

Policy on Discipline Cont'd

2. Give a verbal reprimand telling the child what the correct behavior should be and if they continue they will sit in time out for 2, 3, 4, 5 min. (go according to age). If behavior continues, follow through with:
3. Time out chair/spot. Needs to be the same place (even outside) every time where the child is removed from the problem, but not isolated from direct supervision. Tell the child why they are going to time out. When their time is up (based on age) go to them, get to eye level and tell them why they had to sit in time out, what your expectations are or what you need to see them improve and if appropriate to apologize to those offended. If these steps have been followed and the behavior does not improve;
4. Bring child to the Director's office and a written report will be sent for parents to sign in order to work on finding a solution for what may work at home and to gain parental support in helping to avoid continued behavior issues.

Students in the Before and After School program:

A discipline policy was implemented at TLC in March of 2013 for school aged children. This policy must be reviewed with the children by the parent and both the parent and child/children must sign acknowledging they have reviewed and gone over the policy. This must be signed before your child can attend the before/after school program.

Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately, there are reasons we have to expel a child from our program. **The standards of the school does not tolerate profanity, obscenity in word or in action, dishonor to the Holy Trinity and the Word of God, disrespect to the personnel of the school, or continued disobedience to the established policies of the school.** We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with you and your child in order to prevent this policy from being enforced!

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion

- Failure to pay and/or habitual lateness in payments
- Failure to complete required forms *including* the child's updated immunization records, and the Universal Child Health Record within two weeks of updated visit
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child
- Physical and/or verbal abuse to staff, including profanity & obscene gestures.

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time. This will vary for each child based on how many days a week a child attends, if the childcare environment is new to a child and if the child attends full time vs. part time, etc.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical and/or verbal abuse to staff or other children, including profanity, obscene gestures, & perverse talk.
- Excessive biting
- Posing a safety risk to self and/or other students and staff

Expulsion Policy Con't

Schedule of Expulsion

After remedial actions have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/ guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center

- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding length of expulsion period
- The parent/ guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the center
- The parent/ guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows adequate time to seek alternate child care (for tuition reasons, suspension will be effective immediately for a late payment)

Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan will result in permanent expulsion from the center.

Calendar

T.L.C. Will be **Closed** for the following holidays and in-service Days

Labor Day	September 4th
Columbus Day	October 9th (In service)
Thanksgiving Holiday	November 23rd and 24th
Christmas Week	December 23rd-January 1st (return on the 2nd)
Martin Luther King	January 15th
Presidents Day	February 19th
Good Friday	March 29th
Easter Monday	April 1st
Memorial Day	May 27th
TLC Closed	June 17th
Independence Day	July 4th and 5th



Our Summer Camp Program will begin on Tuesday, June 18th (this date may change due to snow days)

Snow Days and Early Dismissals

During inclement weather, Trinity Learning Center will be closed if Clayton Public Schools are closed. You can find school closings on KYW.com (Clayton's school # is 809), via Director's text, TLC's Facebook page, or TLC's Web Site. **In the event of a delayed opening, TLC will be on the following schedule: 1 hour delay > TLC open at 7:30am. 2 hour delay > TLC open at 8:30am.** If Simmons closes early, the center will still be open, however we ask you to pick your child up ASAP in order for our staff to get home safely. During the winter months when the snow is piled up, please DO NOT leave your car in the street when dropping off or picking up your child. Please use the roundabout or park in the parking lot. Buses and other vehicles are unable to pass if you park in the street.

Medical Information

Policy on the Management of Communicable Diseases

Our policy on illness and communicable diseases is a strict one— sick or contagious children are not permitted to attend school. Should children show evidence of the following symptoms, please keep them home!

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated temperature
- Sore throat or severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Stiff neck
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult or rapid breathing

Should your child show any of the symptoms listed above while at home please do not send them into school until all symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours. If any of these symptoms are found in a child while at the center, parents will be notified to pick up the child immediately. If you are unable to pick up your child, it is your responsibility to make alternate arrangements for pick up. **Sick children may not remain at the center** as a health precaution for all our other students and staff members and will not be allowed to return until symptoms are gone for at least 24 hours.

Table of Excludable Communicable Diseases

Chicken Pox	Campylobacter	Impetigo
German Measles	Escherichia Coli	Lice
Influenza	Hepatitis A	Scabies
Measles	Salmonella	Shingles
Strep Throat	Mumps	Whooping Cough

Should your child be diagnosed or suspected of any of the communicable diseases listed above, he/she will not be permitted to return to the center without an appropriate health care provider note, allowing child to return to school.

Medication

The Director and Assistant Director may administer prescription medication with a signed permission form or script from the doctor. Over the counter medication may be administered with written permission signed by a doctor or a parent. In order for any medication to be dispensed while at school:

- 1) It must be in its original container
- 2) It must be clearly marked with the child's name
- 3) It must be clearly marked with the name of the medicine
- 4) It must be clearly marked with the dosage amount to be given
- 5) It must be clearly marked with the time medicine should be given
- 6) It must not be expired (please check the expiration date)

Medication Con't

The permission form must be COMPLETELY filled out or the doctor's script must clearly state the child's name, medication to be used, the dosage amount and time medication is to be given. All medication must be handed directly to a staff member along with the signed permission slip or doctor's script. **Do not send medication in lunch boxes or school bags!** Cough drops are considered medication. It is very important that we have your full cooperation in this matter.

Nutrition

Students who arrive prior to 8:30am will be served breakfast upon arrival. Breakfast will not be served after 8:30am. We serve a morning & afternoon snack as well as lunch everyday. Calendars are posted throughout the center listing our daily meals. You will also receive a calendar each month. In addition, the calendar will also be posted on our website: www.trinitylearningcenter.net each month. If your child does not like a lunch being served, please pack an alternative lunch for them, however do not send any soda, candy, juice that is not 100% juice, energy drinks or glass bottles. In the case of an allergy, an alternative will be provided by TLC.

The State of New Jersey, Office of Licensing, has issued new requirements to child care centers regarding nutrition and meals/snacks that are served at a center. Due to these requirements and severe food allergies, we try to serve healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Birthday snacks (cupcakes, munchkins, etc.) are permitted provided a parent consults with the teacher before doing so. We do not want to endanger any student that might have food allergies. You may check with the office if you have any further questions.

CPR Certification

Please be aware that all of our staff are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid as per State Requirement.

To address any concerns

If you have a concern or question about our program, please feel free to contact the Director or Assistant Director. Trinity Learning Center is a church based program. Trinity United Methodist Church provides support and guidance through an Advisory Board, which meets on a regular basis. Any concerns needing to go to the Advisory Board, please write a letter and hand it to the Director/ Assistant Director and it will be addressed at the next meeting.



2023-2024

Parental Agreement Form

All parents must sign and return this page before their child/children can start attending TLC.

Parents Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

I have read and agree to abide by all the procedures set forth in this handbook.

Parent Signature _____

Thank you!

*Looking forward to a great year
with you and your children!*

-from the Director -

Jennifer Loomis

on behalf of the T.L.C. Advisory Board





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