

# Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare

## Parent Handbook



595 Belvidere St., El Paso, TX 79912

<https://www.peacelutheranpreschoolelp.org>

Phone: (915) 581-5525 Fax: (915) 587-6046

Main School Email: [peaceofficeelp@gmail.com](mailto:peaceofficeelp@gmail.com)

Education Director Email: [peacedirectorelp@gmail.com](mailto:peacedirectorelp@gmail.com)

Contact the School Board: [bit.ly/PLPDboard](http://bit.ly/PLPDboard)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Description of Peace Lutheran Preschool &amp; Daycare (PLPD)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mission</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Vision Statement</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PLPD Staff</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Unique Needs</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Special Programs</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Pastoral Support</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Hours of Operation and Holidays</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Tuition Policies</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Waiting List</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Children's Attendance</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Lunch Program</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Snacks</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Birthday Celebrations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Illness and Exclusion</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Medication</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Allergies</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Immunizations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Vision and Hearing Screenings</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Emergency Preparedness Plan</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>School Oversight and the School Board</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Parent and Volunteer Involvement</b>	<b>11</b>

<b>Injury Reports</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Discipline and Guidance Policy</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Addressing Inappropriate Behaviors</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Child Abuse and Neglect Policy</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Special Needs</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Infant and Early Toddler (children under 18 months) Personal Belongings</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Clothing</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Naptime</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Water Bottles</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Toys and Games</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Toilet Training</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Lost and Found Items</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Pets</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Pest Control Notification</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Gang Free Zone</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Cell Phone Policy</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Grievance Procedures</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Parent Acknowledgment</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires that all parents receive a copy of our handbook and discipline policy.</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Emergency Procedures and Preparedness Plans</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Fire</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Lock Down/ Intruder</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Severe Weather (Tornado/Flood/Natural Disasters)</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Off-Site Evacuation</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Other Situations</b>	<b>21</b>

<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chemical Spills</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Bomb Threat/ Suspicious Package</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Child Abuse</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Accidents &amp; Incidents</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Covid-19 Practices</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Covid Policy (Adopted by the board 3/24/2022)</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Covid Tuition Policies</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Response to Symptoms/Exposure</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Classrooms</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Procedures for positive COVID-19 cases</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>CDC Isolation Guidelines</b>	<b>26</b>

## Description of Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare (PLPD)

Peace Lutheran Preschool and Daycare is a ministry of Peace Lutheran Church and is governed by a school board consisting of members from the church and community. PLPD is located at 595 Belvidere St. in El Paso, TX. PLPD serves children from six weeks to twelve years. The hours of operations and calendar are determined by the school board. Applications for enrollment of children will be considered without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or national origin.

## Mission

Peace Lutheran Preschool and Daycare (PLPD) is committed to providing a safe, loving, and Christian environment filled with developmentally appropriate learning experiences for every child. Through a cooperative partnership between parents, staff, and Peace Lutheran Church, the mission is to nurture children, to develop positive strengths, ethics, and skills necessary to fulfill God's purpose for their lives and to meet the challenges of our world.

## Vision Statement

Understanding that every child can learn and has individual needs and skills, PLPD provides a wide range of positive learning opportunities to foster the healthy development of the whole child - social, intellectual, physical, emotional, moral, and spiritual. Our Active Learning curriculum is based on child-centered teaching practices that encourage cooperative and play-based learning experiences that are designed toward academic readiness. The multi-cultural enrollment enables children to learn, accept and appreciate the differences among people. PLPD recognizes that parents are an integral part of every child's development. Parental involvement is actively sought, encouraged, and welcomed to enhance each child's positive self-image and love of learning. The program will daily incorporate and exemplify Christian perspectives. Since children learn as much by observing others as they do by direct instruction, staff members recognize the importance of appropriate role modeling.

Beliefs within our vision for a developmentally appropriate child-centered curriculum include:

1. The classroom environment is designed to encourage autonomous, child-directed, process-based learning with opportunities for guided practice from the teacher and/or through social interactions with peers. Learning is what children do; it is not something that is done to them.
2. Child development is an individual process encompassing unique and individual rates of growth often unrelated to a child's age. Classroom activities are differentiated based on the individual developmental levels and individual learner interests.
3. Children learn diversity through inclusive instruction in the classroom that recognizes unique differences.
4. Children's experiences shape their individual motivation and approaches to learning.
5. Each child has an opportunity to work in a variety of high-interest centers using an assortment of materials.

## Curriculum

Peace follows the fundamental principles of Active Learning. Active Learning is an approach to instruction that involves actively engaging students with the course material through discussions, problem-solving, role-playing, and other methods.

## PLPD Staff

All staff are required to attain a minimum of 24 clock hours of training each year. They must also maintain current CPR and First Aid Certification. Most lead teachers have a trained teaching assistant. Some assistants may also be working towards their Child Development Association (CDA) credentials. Please visit our webpage, <https://www.peacelutheranpreschoolelp.org/>, for more information about each of our wonderful teachers.

## Enrollment

Upon confirmation of enrollment, parents must complete an enrollment packet before children are accepted for their first day of school. Please take the time to read and accurately complete this packet. These forms are required by the state and children may not attend until we have certain forms.

Forms that must be completed **BEFORE** the child's first day include:

1. **Registration Form** must be filled out with sessions and days needed during the school year (updates/changes to plans or sessions may be submitted with a 30 day notice, plans may only be changed once during the school year).
2. **Emergency Information/Admission Form**
3. If there is a life-threatening emergency, we will call 911 first and then call the parents.
4. If there is a non-life-threatening emergency, we will call the parents first. If we cannot get ahold of the parents, we will proceed to take the child to the doctor.
5. **Allergy Information** and the **FARE Emergency Care Plan Form** (if your child's allergy requires an Epi-Pen). Both forms require a picture of your child; you can email the picture to [peaceofficeelp@gmail.com](mailto:peaceofficeelp@gmail.com) or bring a copy with you to the front office.
6. **Pick-up Authorization Form** – It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school in the event that any one of the persons listed on this sheet will be picking up their child. Everyone on the pick-up list must be at least 16 years old. The name on the list must match government-issued picture identification. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep this form up to date, adding and removing persons as necessary. Parents understand that any changes to this form must be made in person at the school office- NO EXCEPTIONS. A new form will be required when removing people from the list. If a person is not on this list, their child will not be released to them, with the only exception being parents who are listed on the certified copy of the birth certificate.
7. A **copy of your child's immunization records** – Children must be up-to-date with immunizations in order to attend PLPD.
8. **Official Copy of Birth Certificate** – If any parent is not to pick up or have contact with a child, you must provide a copy of the court order if the parent's name does appear on the birth certificate. If no copy of the court order is on file, we will release children to either parent on the birth certificate at any time- even if they are not on the Authorized Pick-up Form.
9. **Discipline and Guidance Policy Acknowledgment**
10. **Permission Slip Form**
11. **COVID-19 Waiver**
12. Once the above forms have been submitted, your child may attend school; however, you will also need to submit the following forms within 30 days of your child's first day of attendance:
13. **Acknowledgment Receipt of Parent Handbook**
14. **Medical Statement/Physical** (with Vision & Hearing portion completed if your child is 4 years old or older)
15. **No Nut Policy** -We are a peanut and nut-free school.

### Unique Needs

The goal of PLPD is to meet all needs of children accepted into our care. It is of vital importance that **upon enrollment** any unique needs (communication, behavior, personal care, etc.) of the child be shared by the parent with the preschool. Every effort will be made to meet these unique needs, and the best way to meet them is to prepare and plan for them. Please share these challenges with us along with strategies or solutions that work well in the home environment. Although every strategy that works at home may not work in a school environment, we will attempt to implement approaches to make the child successful from the first day of enrollment. Despite everyone's best efforts, there may be circumstances in which PLPD will be unable to meet the educational and developmental needs of a child. In this circumstance, PLPD will provide the parent with a 30-day notice of termination of services.

### Withdrawal Policy

If at any time you want to withdraw your student from Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare a 30-day written notice of withdrawal is required. Any tuition due during that 30-day period is required.

### Special Programs

Children generally participate in two programs during the school year. The first program is held during the Christmas season and the second program is held at the end of the year. Friends and family are encouraged to attend all programs.

Children have Chapel every Wednesday during the school year. During this time, children learn about God's love, forgiveness, and other core Christian beliefs through Bible stories and songs. We also celebrate religious holidays throughout the year.

### Pastoral Support

PLPD is a vital part of the Peace Lutheran Church. Interim Pastor Mike Degner is available to our families for support or counseling. Please call the church at (915) 584-1383 to set up an appointment.

### Hours of Operation and Holidays

Regular hours of operation

- Monday through Friday, 6:30 AM - 6:30 PM.
- Please follow the times for the sessions you have signed up for in order to avoid any extra fees.

PLPD is open year-round, with the exception of certain holidays. We will also generally be closed on national holidays. Please see the PLPD school calendar for those dates.

Peace Plus Days, care offered but with a less formal curriculum

- Peace Plus Days are held on days such as EPISD school holidays, as well as other days throughout the year.
- Depending on your contract agreement, Peace Plus Days may be an option but could carry an extra fee.
- See your rate contract for more information on fees.

## Admissions

Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare is open to students ages 6 weeks through 12 years. Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare is open to all children regardless of race, nationality, or creed who may benefit from our program. To maintain the quality of our program, however, we reserve the right to withdraw any child.

PLPD aims to not only meet but exceed state requirements. PLPD aims to follow best practices in early childhood development.

PLPD staff will place children in the most appropriate classroom for their age and developmental level. PLPD will generally implement EPISD age cut-offs beginning in the preschool classrooms in order to ensure a smooth transition out of PLPD when children age out of the center. We are not able to accommodate teacher requests.

Children's files are kept confidential and are only reviewed by administrators, office personnel, the child's teacher, and the state.

## Tuition Policies

- Please refer to the registration forms for details on tuition.
- Parents will be notified in advance when there are associated fees for any upcoming events.
- Parents agree to the terms and conditions they signed on the registration paperwork.

## Waiting List

Children will be placed on a waiting list once classes are full, on a first-come, first-served basis. Completion of a registration form and payment of the registration fee is required to reserve a spot on the waiting list. The registration fee is non-refundable unless PLPD is unable to place your child within three months. Registration fee refunds must be requested in writing.

## Children's Attendance

Regular attendance is key for children's success in school. Establishing a routine and regular attendance helps a child adjust smoothly to their school environment. If your child will not attend school or will be later than usual, please call and inform the office. The office staff will then inform the teacher of the change in schedule for your child for that day.

## Lunch Program

We are a nut-safe school. Due to the high number of life-threatening nut allergies, we do not allow nuts on-premise.

Lunchtime is from 11:30-12:00. Families may provide a lunch for their child or purchase a lunch from the school. If you bring food from home for your child, we ask that you follow our nut-safe policy. PLPD does have microwaves in each classroom to warm up lunches for students.

Families may preorder lunch through our hot lunch program. Monthly menus will be available by the third week of the month prior. Families must order lunch for the upcoming month by 5 days prior to the beginning of the new month. Families will circle the days on the menu that they wish to order and also select a drink. The lunches are \$5.00 each or \$6.00 if not pre-ordered. Families can pay for the lunches or add them to their monthly bills.



## Snacks

Beginning in the Toddler room, children will be served snacks up to three times a day, once in the morning by the classroom snack leader, once in the afternoon provided by the school, and once in the evening provided by the school. Families bringing snacks from home are asked to provide pre-packaged, store-bought, nut-free, healthy snacks.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very special to children. Teachers and staff will do their best to honor and celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom. Parents may bring store-bought pre-packaged, nut-free, treats to share with their child's class. No balloons, please.

## Illness and Exclusion

PLPD follows the Illness and Exclusion Policies set by the Health Services Department of EPISD. This is not an exhaustive list of when to keep your child home. You know your child best, so please keep your child home if they appear too sick to participate or if they could pose a health risk to other students. If your child exhibits symptoms of an illness, such as those below, you must notify the school immediately.

Please keep your children home when they have:

- Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Unexplained rash
- Sore throat
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- Lice and/or nits
- Yellow or green discharge from nose, ears, or sores
- Pink eye, Conjunctivitis, eye discharge: mucus/pus in or draining from the eye
- Any other communicable illness and/or disease
- Any illness that prevents your child from participating in their school routine- including outside time

If you bring your child to school or at any point during the day your child becomes ill with the above symptoms, you will be called to pick him/her up within an hour of receiving a phone call from the school.

If we are unable to reach you, we will start calling your emergency contacts and ask them to come to pick up your child.

Your child must be free of vomiting, diarrhea, or fever without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours to return to school. If you bring your child in before the 24 hours, we will ask you to take them home. If your child is ill at school, they will wait at the front office until they are picked up.

If your child is sent home with lice, they will not be able to return to class until they have been treated at home, checked, and cleared of lice and nits by the office staff.

Covid-19 information is located in Appendix B.

## Medication

All medication, including over-the-counter medication, such as sunblock and diaper cream, must be brought to the front office. Parents must fill out the Medication Authorization Form in order for the school to administer medication.

The medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name.

When you drop off your child, you must also inform the staff person receiving your child that your child has medication in the office that they need to take.

## Allergies

PLPD will not accept any child with allergies without the proper paperwork. We must have a note from the doctor stating your child's allergy. For life-threatening allergies, we must also have the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (F.A.R.E.) completed by parents before the first day of school.

Once we have the allergy information, an allergy alert sheet will be posted in your child's classroom so that all staff members are aware of the allergy and know how to react in case your child is exposed to the allergen. The allergy sheet will include all allergy information along with a picture of your child. Please provide the school with your child's picture to post on these forms. If your child has medication such as Epi-pens or Benadryl that must be administered, you must also provide those to the school.

## Immunizations

You must provide PLPD with up-to-date immunization records before your child can attend. You must also provide the school with updated immunization records as your child continues to receive immunizations.

## Vision and Hearing Screenings

Once your child turns four, they must receive a hearing and vision screening, per state requirements. Please make sure your child receives their first vision and hearing screening by the age of four. Your child will not be able to attend if we have not received paperwork on the screenings by the 30<sup>th</sup> day after their fourth birthday.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan

While we hope that we never have to react to an emergency on our property or in our city, we do have a formal Emergency Preparedness Plan that will be followed in such an event.

We are required to have monthly fire drills. Teachers will talk to students about the importance of fire drills in order to better prepare them for upcoming drills and to reassure them that they are safe after the drills.

We are also required by the state to practice severe weather and lockdown drills once every three months. In case of a real emergency where we must evacuate our property and relocate, we will go to the Good Samaritan Society located at 7304 Good Samaritan Court. Please do not attempt to pick up your child during a lock-down or emergency unless you are contacted by PLPD to do so. In any emergency situation, we must follow recommendations from local authorities.

An Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in every classroom and at the front office for further review. Refer to Appendix A.

## Communication

We believe that parents are the most important adults in a child's life. We strive to create mutual respect and cooperation between parents and the school and create a partnership for the benefit of each child.

Parents will receive regular emails and other printed/electronic forms of communication from the PLPD management team. Please make sure to read the emails. Important information is conveyed through emails.

Teachers will be using the ClassDojo app to communicate directly to parents and guardians. Parents will be provided with instructions on how to sign up for ClassDojo at the time their child is enrolled in a new classroom. All parents are required to join the teacher's Dojo account.

Teachers will hold two parent-teacher conferences a year to keep you updated on your child's progress. However, if you have questions or concerns, you do not need to wait until a parent-teacher conference. Talk to your teacher to schedule a good time to meet when the children are not present. Regular communication between parents and staff is encouraged.

Infants, Toddlers, and Twos will receive daily paperwork on your child's care.

## School Oversight and the School Board

Oversight of Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare is the responsibility of the Peace Lutheran School Board. The school board serves as the governing body for the school, accountable for the day-to-day management of the school, including policies, procedures, budget, and overall operations and staff. The school board meets monthly regarding the school operations and the members also serve as volunteers with various school activities and functions. Feedback about the school - positive and constructive - along with any questions or concerns can be directed to the Directors and the school board. The members of the school board can be contacted directly via a Google Form, at the following address: [bit.ly/PLDPboard](https://bit.ly/PLDPboard)

## Parent and Volunteer Involvement

Parental involvement is key to your child's school success and is encouraged at PLPD. You can volunteer through Parents for Peace (PFP). PFP is a parent group composed of families advocating for PLPD. This group works towards encouraging parent involvement in supporting school activities. This group of parents helps raise funds for the school and volunteers time during school activities.

Parents and other volunteers are invited to participate and contribute their talents to help the school and the children of PLPD. We encourage anyone interested in spending time at the school and helping out to speak to the directors about the possible options and schedules.

To comply with state regulations, volunteers coming routinely or who plan to come more than twice a month must fill out a volunteer application and submit it to a background check.

## Injury Reports

If your child is injured on-site, a staff member will inform the parents via a report at pick-up. The management team will decide if a phone call is necessary to inform parents of injuries beyond the typical scrape, bump, or bruise.

## Discipline and Guidance Policy

Teachers will help children develop the skills necessary to solve problems and interact successfully in a group setting. As children grow, they go through stages that sometimes can be uncomfortable for adults. Teachers are equipped to help children through difficult stages in their development. They will help children identify their feelings, label them, find their triggers, find a solution to the problem at hand, and will teach them appropriate replacement behaviors and coping mechanisms.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Directed towards teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A teacher may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction; which include the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of only focusing on the unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishments associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- 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, bathroom, or closet with the door closed.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately prolonged periods of time for the child's age.

## Addressing Inappropriate Behaviors

If a child demonstrates inappropriate behavior, regardless of the reason, the teachers will be the first to address the behavior. Teachers will redirect behavior and teach the child the necessary skills needed to find a replacement behavior or a coping mechanism.

When a child displays inappropriate behavior for their age, parents will receive a behavior report. The Behavior Report will inform parents of the behavior and the actions the teachers took to help resolve the issue. Three Behavior Reports for the same inappropriate behavior will result in a parent/teacher/director meeting to create a Behavior Plan in order to help the child through this phase.

In this plan, the parents and school staff will document ways in which they will support the student. There will be goals and consequences included in the plan, up to and including unenrollment. The Education Director will follow up with staff to ensure that the plan is being followed. Parents will also be expected to support the plan at home, providing support to their child with clear, consistent consequences for the challenging behavior and any other suggestions documented in the Behavior Plan.

While implementing the Behavior Plan, teachers will document the behavior and inform the parents. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the Education Director, teachers, and parents will meet again to revise the Behavior Plan. PLPD has the right to suspend care until a meeting can be held. A child can be unenrolled immediately if the child becomes a danger to themselves or others.

The Education Director will monitor and decide if the revised plan is effective or if the student can benefit from an external referral. If the child has consistent unsafe or inappropriate behavior, parents refuse to seek the assistance of outside service providers, and the school has attempted to help the student with no results, the child will be suspended and may be unenrolled.

PLPD requires parents' full participation and cooperation while working through behavior issues. We need to make sure behaviors do not escalate to where any child becomes a danger to themselves or others.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy**

Following state regulations, all staff members and volunteers of PLPD are required by law to report any possible incident of child abuse or neglect.

All staff members will receive at least one hour of training upon hire, and annually thereafter, on child abuse and neglect topics. The US Department of Health and Human Services has posted a link on their website as a tool for parents and educators.

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

<https://www.hhs.gov/answers/programs-for-families-and-children/what-is-child-abuse/index.html> You may also visit [Childwelfare.gov](http://Childwelfare.gov) for further resources.

If you have any concerns about a child being abused or neglected or about a staff member's conduct, you may reach out to the Education Director for help and support. You may also report your concern to the Department of Family Protective Services- Reporting abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

### **Special Needs**

Every effort will be made to accommodate children at PLPD with special needs and staff will work closely with parents and support staff towards this goal. However, there may also be circumstances in which PLPD will be unable to meet the educational or developmental needs of a child.

### **Field Trips**

If a teacher wants to take a field trip related to their study, they are welcome to do so. They must notify the Education Director in writing of their plan a month prior to the planned trip. The director will meet with the teacher to confirm the details.

- Each parent will be asked to sign a permission slip with the details of the trip.
- Parents are encouraged to volunteer on field trip days. During trips, the adult: child ratio is lowered. If there are not enough parent volunteers or staff members available, the trip will be canceled.
- Off-site field trips are reserved for children 5 years and older by the day of the trip.
- Staff will carry all emergency information necessary on the trip.
- Should an accident occur during a trip, staff members will call for emergency medical services and then notify the center.
- Parents will then be notified.

If parents decide that they do not wish for their child to participate in the field trip, the care of the child is the parent's responsibility for the duration of the trip. PLPD will attempt to accommodate children in a classroom staying on-site but cannot guarantee care for that day.

### Transportation

PLPD provides transportation for children to and from local elementary schools. Van drivers receive special training on safely transporting passengers in a 15-passenger van. All children are required to wear seatbelts and use "indoor voices" while in the vans. PLPD maintains the right to refuse service for children not able to follow these safety rules.

### Infant and Early Toddler (children under 18 months) Personal Belongings

Please bring several changes of clothes for your infant and toddler.

Parents will provide diapers, wipes, and any other personal items necessary for their child. Parents must fill out an Authorization for Dispensing Medication Form in order for staff to apply diaper cream and any other over-the-counter creams to children.

Parents will supply all bottles. Breast milk can be stored at school- frozen or thawed. For infants, make sure to bring all the food your child might need. Items such as frozen breast milk, formula, snacks, extra clothing, diapers/wipes, and bottles can be stored at school as needed for a given week. For Toddlers, you may order lunch or bring lunch for your child. Toddlers will follow the snack schedules.

Make sure everything you bring to the center is labeled with your child's first and last name. The following items are not allowed: pillows, toys, jewelry, hair accessories, and baby equipment. Other items may also be prohibited by center staff.

### Clothing

Dress your children comfortably with clothes for indoor and outdoor play. Please remember that children run and play and engage in other activities that can be messy at times. Please make sure your child wears clothing and footwear appropriate for these types of activities.

Please bring a large, Ziplock bag to school that will stay at school with an extra change of clothing for your child, including extra underwear, a shirt, shorts/pants, and shoes. Please make sure the clothing is weather appropriate and change out as seasons change.

Label all personal belongings with your child's first and last name.

### Naptime

If your child is in the Early Toddler group, you must provide a crib-size sheet and light blanket for them to use at naptime. In the Older Toddler, PreK 2, and PreK 3 programs, please bring a napping mat, which will stay at the school, and bedding, which will be sent home each weekend for cleaning and return the next week.

Pre-K 4 students will have a quiet time to rest but no nap time unless needed.

### Water Bottles

Please bring a water bottle labeled with your child's name to school every day, so that your child may fill it as needed to stay hydrated.

### Toys and Games

Toys, games, trading cards, and electronics from home are not allowed at school. This is to prevent damage to toys and hurt feelings. Children need to learn to share and take turns, but they can practice those skills with the toys at school instead of a personal item from home.

We do not allow any item that promotes violence. Toy weapons are strictly prohibited.

### Toilet Training

PLPD will work with parents to develop a "Potty Plan" when your child is ready to start the transition to underwear. In order to develop a "Potty Plan," your child must:

1. Stay dry for several hours
2. Be able to communicate the need to use the toilet
3. Be aware of wet and soiled diapers and begin to communicate that to adults
4. Be interested in the toilet by either wanting to use it or just being curious about it
5. Be in a cooperative mood

If your child meets the above criteria, the teachers will meet with you to write a "Potty Plan." Make sure that you dress your child in clothes that they can take off and put on by themselves to encourage increased independence during this time. The process at home must reflect the process at school to eliminate confusion. Please remember that potty training is a process and we don't want to stress, pressure or confuse children because they might be resistant or regress. We want to support and encourage independence. During the potty-training process, please ensure to have many changes of clothes at school because accidents will happen.

All children enrolled in the Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4 classes must be potty trained. Each child should be able to take care of their potty needs with minimal assistance from their teacher. However, if your child is unable to care properly for his/her potty needs, they will not be able to attend Pre-K 3 or 4 classes until they can do so. Returning to the PLPD Pre-K 3/4 program during that same year will depend on the space available unless tuition is continued to hold the child's position in the class.

### Lost and Found Items

Lost and found items will be placed at the front of the school for parents to claim. If there are names on the items, staff will return items to the children; however, if items are not labeled, they will be held on our lost and found table for two weeks. After two weeks, lost and found items will be donated.

### Pets

State law regulates which type of pets may be on-premise and under what conditions. Therefore, as a general rule, pets will not be allowed on the premises, except for classroom pets.

### Pest Control Notification

We utilize indoor and outdoor pest control services quarterly, on weekends. Information about the types of applications is available upon request.

### Gang Free Zone

Effective March 1, 2010, we are required by Texas Law to inform all parents that the area within 100 feet of a childcare center is designated as a “Gang Free Zone.” Any gang activity taking place within this zone has increased consequences per Texas Penal Code.

### Cell Phone Policy

Please do not use your cell phone while driving on school property or when picking your child from school. Your child is excited to see you at the end of the day and is looking forward to greeting you. Please make sure you are ready to engage your child from the moment you arrive.

Please do not send your child to school with any cell phones or electronics. If a child does have a cell phone or electronic device at school, management will hold the phone at the front office until you pick it up.

### Grievance Procedures

In any grievance situation, proper procedures and protocol must be followed. In keeping with our purpose and mission, open and honest communication is encouraged. This is key to how we run as an organization. There may be times when parents will have a grievance. PLPD encourages parents to use the following procedure to address any issues that may occur.

- Teacher (or Assistant) with Parent: Every attempt will be made by teaching staff to correct any issues between teacher/assistant and parents. If no resolution is found, a grievance must be forwarded in writing to the Education Director. The teacher/aide and parent must then initiate a discussion with the Education Director.
- Parent with Director: Face-to-face communication is the first step to resolving any issues. If a grievance between a parent and the Director persists, the parent is encouraged to put the grievance in writing to the Director so they can evaluate every aspect of the grievance that might not be conveyed in person. All relevant records regarding a grievance will be kept in a file by the Director, and if escalated, to the Preschool Board, by the board secretary.
- Concerns can also be raised to school board members. When possible, the concern should be raised first with the applicable staff members, per the above process. The school board can be contacted directly at this Google Form: [bit.ly/PLPDboard](http://bit.ly/PLPDboard)

Please let the Education Director ([peacedirectorelp@gmail.com](mailto:peacedirectorelp@gmail.com)) or School Board ([bit.ly/PLPDboard](http://bit.ly/PLPDboard)) know if you have any questions or concerns.



## Parent / Guardian Acknowledgment

**The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires that all parents receive a copy of our handbook and discipline policy.**

YES, I have received, read, and will adhere to the policies in the parent handbook.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND PREPAREDNESS PLANS

#### Introduction

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires that all child care centers have documented procedures for handling different types of emergencies. We are also required to practice the most common types of emergencies regularly. Fire drills are required once a month while lockdown and severe weather are only required 4 times a year.

These drills serve to teach children how to react in emergencies and also allow teachers to practice what they need to do in case there is ever an emergency. Staff is trained on how to handle various types of emergencies. What follows in this document is a summary of our drill procedures, so families are aware of what is practiced, as well as what will happen in the event of a true emergency.

In the event of an emergency, the primary focus of the teachers and staff is the safety of the students in our care. In some cases, cell phones and the school's landlines are needed to communicate with first responders. In other cases, utilizing a cell phone can increase the level of danger in a situation. Please note that we will communicate with parents as soon as it is safe to do so. If you are reaching out to the school or a staff member during an emergency, please note you may not receive a response right away.

\*\*\*\* \*\*

If an emergency occurs while the director is not present, there is a person in charge assigned who will assume the role of the director and be the point of contact.

Emergencies are unexpected, unpredictable, and take many forms. No one can be fully prepared for everything that may happen but some simple measures are helpful in any emergency.

1. Think of everyone's safety first.
2. Use common sense and training.
3. Act quickly and calmly.
4. Be factual with staff and the community.

For most major kinds of emergencies, some preparations can be made. Knowing whom to call can save time, property, and lives. This booklet is intended as a practical outline of what to do in a variety of emergencies but it also requires a consistent commitment to ongoing training in responding, intervening, and implementing the Prevention Plan.

1. Read this booklet.
2. Rehearse the Emergency Procedures.
3. Always practice prevention.

## Fire

School fires are often more dangerous than they appear. The staff knows the building evacuation plan routes, location, and operations of fire extinguishers and fire alarm pull stations.

Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure that staff and students know how to respond in case of an emergency.

1. Pull the closest fire alarm pull-down station to alert everyone else of the threat.
2. Call 911 and give as much information on the fire as possible.
3. Evacuate the classroom/ building/playground areas by either primary or secondary evacuation route, depending on the location of the fire.
4. Teachers, assistants, and other staff members must take their emergency backpacks and fire tablets.
5. Gather in the evacuation area. The director will decide if the area is safe or if off-site evacuation is necessary.
6. The director will then designate staff members to begin contacting parents through Class Dojo to come to pick up their children.
7. The director must also notify the Peace Lutheran Church that the school has been evacuated.

## Lock Down/ Intruder

A Lock Down protects staff, children, and volunteers from a threat inside the building when it may be more dangerous to leave the building by direct evacuation.

A Lock Down is used when:

1. It is safer to stay in an area that can be secured, rather than to move through the building where the potential threat may be encountered.
2. There is no possibility of uncontrolled fire or explosion.

Teacher/Staff members will do the following in the event of a Lock Down.

1. Lock classroom doors, windows, and close any blinds or curtains immediately. 2. Call the front office, then call 911.
  - a. **The front office will activate the panic alarm.**
2. Keep children away from doors and windows and in a secured area. Have children lay flat near a wall facing the wall and remain that way until given other instructions.
3. Maintain a calm environment and reassure the children that everything will be fine.
4. Remain in a secured classroom until an all-clear is given, or until emergency personnel provides other instructions.
5. The Director or point of contact will designate somebody to inform parents/legal guardians of the incident and to pick up their children.

## Severe Weather (Tornado/Flood/Natural Disasters)

### **After being alerted by the weather alert radio system or cell phone- DO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. A director will call 911 for advice to remain in place or evacuate.
2. Prepare for emergency action in conjunction with the local police department, fire department, and local officials.
3. Initiate retention or evacuation plan, depending on the emergency. The director will notify staff members of what needs to happen.
4. Teachers, assistants, and other staff members must take their emergency backpacks and sign in to their designated shelter area (the hallway if a tornado occurs.) Staff members must take attendance and account for all their children before leaving their current location.
5. Once in the hallway, everyone should sit facing the interior with knees and heads down, hands covering face and head. Infants and Early Toddlers will be evacuated in emergency evacuation cribs.
6. The group should remain calm, stay together, and listen for instructions.
7. Stay in the hallway until instructed to move by a director.
8. Personnel designated by the Directors should check restrooms and vacant classrooms.
9. The director will keep staff informed of any changes.
10. Directors will assign staff members to answer phone inquiries.

### **OFF-SITE EVACUATION**

Off-Site Evacuation is implemented when it is unsafe to remain on the school property and evacuation to an off-site assembly area is required. This action provides for the orderly movement of students and staff along prescribed routes from inside the school building to the designated area of safety.

When relocating off-site, Peace Lutheran Preschool & Daycare goes to The Good Samaritan White Acres. Their address is 7304 Good Samaritan Ct El Paso, TX 79912.

Off-site evacuation is considered appropriate for but not limited to the following types of emergencies:

1. Fire
2. Bomb threat
3. Chemical Accident
4. Explosion or threat of explosion
5. Gas leak

Evacuate according to the evacuation plan.

1. Infants and Early Toddlers will be evacuated using the rolling cribs.
2. Staff must take their emergency backpacks and their sign-in sheets with them.
3. Once everyone is evacuated, if the directors are not on-site, the designated point of contact will notify the directors.
4. Do not go back to the school or re-enter the building until you receive the all-clear signal from a director.

5. If it is unsafe to return to school, the director will then designate staff members to begin contacting parents to come pick up their children.
6. The director must also notify the Pastor of Peace Lutheran Church that the school has been evacuated.

### ***OTHER SITUATIONS***

#### Hazardous Materials

Hazardous material release, toxic substance, or gas leak:

1. Notify the director or designated director point of contact.
2. Director or point of contact will call 911.
  - a. Give location and remain on the line with 911 until the information is complete.
  - b. Ask for advice on evacuation or shelter in place.
3. Administer first aid by a trained staff member- if necessary.
4. Clear the immediate area or evacuate the building- if necessary.
5. Director or point of contact will designate somebody to inform parents/legal guardians of the incident by phone call or letter.

#### Chemical Spills

1. The director or point of contact will call 911 if life-threatening.
  - a. Give location and chemical information to the operator
  - b. stay on the line and ask for advice on evacuating if necessary.
2. If asked to evacuate, the director or point of contact will pull the fire alarm station to notify everyone that they must evacuate the building. All evacuation procedures will be followed.
3. Move/keep students away from the affected area.
4. The director will close up and secure the affected area, shutting down electricity and gas, if directed to do so by emergency services.
5. Director or point of contact will designate somebody to inform parents/legal guardians of the incident by phone call or letter.
  - a. If directed by emergency services to evacuate, then the designee will notify parents to begin picking up their children.

#### Bomb Threat/ Suspicious Package

When a threatening call is received:

1. The staff member answering the phone will remain calm and obtain as much information about the threat as possible.
2. If there is a suspicious package, the person who identifies a suspicious package will need to remain with the director at all times.
3. Someone other than the staff member on the phone with the caller, or the staff member who identified the package will call 911 from a landline and begin the evacuation procedures for the school
  - a. Do not trigger the fire alarm as part of the evacuation.

- b. Staff members will keep children away from the area in question during the evacuation.
  - c. Teachers must take their emergency backpacks and sign-in sheets with them.
  - d. Cell phones and radios will not be utilized during the evacuation process, due to the increased risk of detonation.
4. Staff members will cooperate with emergency services and follow all instructions provided.
  5. Do not re-enter the building unless given the all-clear from the director and emergency personnel.

### Child Abuse

Following state regulations, PLPD is required by law to report any possible incident of child abuse or neglect.

1. A report must be made to the Child Abuse Hotline within 24 hours by calling **1-800-252- 5400**.
2. Children may be interviewed by authorized and properly identified officials as part of the investigation. Investigators will provide a letter for parents if their children were interviewed.
3. All staff members will receive at least one hour of training upon hire, and annually thereafter, on child abuse and neglect topics. The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) has posted “It’s up to you: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect” on their website as a tool for parents and educators. If you have any concerns about a child being abused or neglected or about a staff member’s conduct please reach out to the Education Director. You may also report your concern to 1-800-252-5400.

### Accidents & Incidents

1. A trained staff member should administer first aid.
2. Follow emergency procedures as indicated by the nature of the accident.
3. If it is a life-threatening emergency 911 will be called first, then the parents will immediately be notified.
  - a. At times in El Paso, emergency services will respond with a fire truck. If there is no ambulance available to transport the child, then the director or director designee will transport the child to the nearest emergency facility, unless the parents have already arrived and will do so themselves.
4. If non-life threatening but urgent in nature, the director or point of contact will inform the parents/legal guardians after first aid has been administered.
5. The staff member witness will complete an Incident Report.

## Major Disaster Emergency Numbers

Emergency EMT.....	911
Police.....	915-832-4400
Fire Department.....	915-832-4432
Poison Control.....	1-800-222-1222
DFPS Licensing Office.....	915-834-5739
Child Abuse Hotline.....	1-800-252-5400
Gas Company.....	1-800-959-5325
El Paso Electric.....	915-877-3400
Good Samaritan.....	915-581-4683
Peace Lutheran Church.....	915-584-1383
Peace Lutheran Preschool.....	915-581-5525

## Appendix B

### Covid-19 Practices

Peace Lutheran Preschool and Daycare (PLPD) will take every precaution to keep our staff and your child and family safe. We have developed the following procedures in accordance with local regulations, state law, and federal guidelines.

#### Covid Policy (Adopted by the board on 3/24/2022)

- PLPD will follow CDC guidelines that utilize COVID-19 community levels.
  - Find our community level: [COVID-19 by County | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>
  - [Families and COVID -19 | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/groups/families-covid-19.html):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/groups/families-covid-19.html>

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you are <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a>, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions</li><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wear a <a href="#">mask</a> indoors in public</li><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li><li>• Additional precautions may be needed for people <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a></li></ul>

If a child or staff member is feeling unwell, they should stay home and call the office to inform the school of their symptoms. If any staff member, student, or parent is exposed to COVID-19, said person(s) must immediately report exposure to the Education Director, their supervisor, and/or the School Board.

#### Covid Tuition Policies

- In the event of a government-mandated shelter-in-place or a 14-day shutdown due to a positive COVID-19 case in a staff or student (one class or entire school), we will offer an optional 50% credit to future tuition charges. For any closure of fewer than 14 days, no credit will be given. During closures, our teachers will provide video lessons, weekly class Zoom calls, and links to age-appropriate at-home activities.



- If an individual child is required to quarantine due to a child/family/household member exhibiting symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19, full tuition will be collected. Additionally, if an individual child is required to quarantine due to family travel, full tuition will be collected.
- To serve our families, we will consider financial hardships due to COVID-19 on a case-by-case basis.

Anyone with the following symptoms or circumstances may not enter the building:

- Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Sore throat
- **New** uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19

## Response to Symptoms/Exposure

### Classrooms

- There will be routine cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day.
- For those required to wear masks and children whose parents choose for them to wear masks, masks may be removed while eating or drinking as well as on the playground unless otherwise directed by a parent.
- Consistent hand washing and cleaning of the school will take place throughout the day.

### Procedures for positive COVID-19 cases

If Peace Lutheran Preschool and Daycare has a student or staff member with a case of COVID-19, Peace Lutheran staff will:

- Determine who had close contact with the child/staff member at the school during those days.
- Notify families and staff of any direct exposure by phone and any cases in the school by email.
- Report the confirmed case to the local and state health department and follow their specific guidelines.
- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 until they have been cleaned and disinfected.
- Follow [CDC Isolation Guidelines](#) (on next page) updated May 20, 2022.

Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/sick-at-child-care-flowchart.html>

# QUICK GUIDE: ISOLATION | COVID-19 |

What to do when a child in your early care and education (ECE) program might have COVID-19

DAY 0

Child is sick or has a positive COVID-19 test

## Isolation

DAY 1-5

Child stays home and **isolates** away from other people to the extent possible.

DAY 6

Is the child **fever-free** for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication?  
**AND**  
is the child **free of symptoms** or **symptoms improved**?  
**AND**  
is the child 2 years of age or older and **able to consistently wear a mask** in the ECE program?

✓ YES



✗ NO



DAY 6-10

It is **safest** to continue isolation until the end of day 10<sup>1</sup>.

For children who have symptoms, continue isolation until the child is **fever-free** for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved.

For children who were severely ill, or whose fever persists past day 10, consult a healthcare professional before returning to the ECE program.

✓ YES

(After day 10)



## Return to the ECE program

Whenever possible, keep children who are returning from isolation or quarantine before day 11 away from people who are at high risk, and 6 feet apart when masks are not worn.

**\*For program administrators:** When you determine isolation policies, you should consider multiple factors: The impact of the loss of access to education and care on the well-being of children and families, the level of community transmission of COVID-19, presence of other people who are at high risk for severe illness, and the ability to use additional prevention strategies.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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