

Holt Lutheran School Aftercare Program

Parent-Student Handbook



**Holt Lutheran School is a ministry of St. Matthew
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod**

Mission Statement:

Holt Lutheran School provide a quality, Christ-centered
academic environment where students are equipped for a
Christian life of witness, leadership, and service.

Luke 2:52

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- An Incident or Accident Report Form will be completed when an injury or accident occurs. A copy of the completed form will be given to the parent/guardian.
- The administrator and each employee are required to immediately notify the local public children services agency when they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. The center policies are created to prevent and protect children from abuse or neglect while the child is in the center's care

Vacation Camp

A special camp, open to the public is held during Christmas and Spring breaks. This service is an additional fee and requires pre-registration. Parents may register their children for as few or as many days as needed. These programs run only if a minimum number of students have signed up. These special sessions reflect activities similar to those offered in the School Age Child Care Programs as well as field trips.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned periodically through the Vacation Camps. Field trips are an important part of the curriculum as they offer additional hands-on experiences that can provide children with information and a level of understanding that adds elements to their play, enriches vocabulary, and enhances their overall learning. HLS will transport children via school bus. Parent participation is welcomed and encouraged. No alternative care is available during field trips.

Purpose of the Handbook

Welcome to Holt Lutheran School Aftercare Program. The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint parents and students with the procedures and policies of the Aftercare Program. This handbook will enable you to be more informed as we partner together in the education and spiritual growth of your child.

Doctrinal Statement

Holt Lutheran Schools is a Christian body, functioning as a ministry of St. Matthew Lutheran Church (**SML**), which is a member of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. At the heart of Lutheran teaching are the following core beliefs:

- **The Trinity**: God the Father (Creator of all), Jesus Christ (Son of God and Savior of all mankind), and the Holy Spirit (Creating faith in our hearts through Word and Sacraments).
- **Grace Alone**: All mankind has sinned and has need for a Savior. It is only through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we have assurance of eternal life. He paid for our sins wholly and completely. There is nothing we can do to add to this gift of salvation, given to us.
- **Faith Alone**: Only through faith in Jesus Christ can we be saved from our sins. We have no decision, no role in our salvation. Through the cross of Christ, we are cleansed of all our sins and made whole before God. We receive this gift of faith through the work of the Holy Spirit, in Word and in Sacraments.
- **Scripture Alone**: We believe and teach that the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God. It reveals to us the **Law**, which shows us our sin and our need for a savior, and the **Gospel**, the gift of salvation given to us freely in Jesus Christ.

For more information on the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, go to www.lcms.org.

Program Philosophy

Holt Lutheran School Aftercare programs exist to meet the needs of families to have a safe, consistent, Christian environment for their children after school. The program is designed to complement, not imitate, school and home. It serves as an important component in the continuum of services provided for school-age children.

Program Goals

Through the Aftercare program, Holt Lutheran School seeks to help children:

- Grow Spiritually
- Develop conflict resolution skills
- Appreciate diversity
- Become future leaders
- Have fun

Non-Discrimination Policy

Holt Lutheran Schools do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, and color, national or ethnic origin, in any of our programs for students or among those who are employed to administer our educational policies, programs, activities and employment practices.

Student Admissions

The primary purpose and focus of Holt Lutheran School Aftercare Program is to provide a Christian education, based on Lutheran doctrine. We do not intend to take the place of the parent but rather to assist and work with the parents in the Christian training of the children.

Licensing

The program is licensed by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). The rules of the license are available for review in the Child Care office. The program's licensing records are available upon request from LARA.

This program is operated on a not-for-profit basis as a service to the families of Holt and the surrounding area. Our license states the number allowed in the Child Care Department. Michigan Licensing rules enforce a strict School Age ratio of 1 teacher to 18 children.

The School Age Programs are mandated by the Child Protection Law and will report to the Child Protective Services any suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, child sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. If you have any questions or a concern regarding the Child Protection Law and the Program's reporting guidelines, please speak to the director.

- When a child's persistent or dangerous behavior takes too much energy and attention away from the needs, safety, and wellbeing of other children, or causes disruption of the program objective, the possibility of suspending and/or expelling the child from the program must be considered. The decision to send a child home is a difficult one to make and will be carefully considered before action is taken.

Supervision and Safety Polices

- No child is to be left alone or unsupervised. A minimum of 2 staff shall always be in the building when there are children present.
- After school, each child checks in with the staff member taking attendance at the start of the program. This is done to assure that the staff member knows that each child that is scheduled to attend the program has arrived safely to the program. Children must be signed out of the program each afternoon by their parent/guardian or an authorized adult.
- If the child did attend school and is not scheduled to be in the program, the childcare staff member will call the parent to see if there has been an error in communication. Parents are reminded to please call the program when your child is not going to attend as the above action is time-consuming.
- In accordance with Michigan State Law, the School Age Programs hold seasonal scheduled fire drills. It is crucial to the safety of the children that they learn proper emergency evacuation procedures. In our effort to simulate emergency conditions, during fire drills, children are required to exit the building, dressed as they are, for a few minutes. The fire emergency evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. In the unlikely event that Holt Lutheran School is ever severely damaged or declared unsafe, the staff will evacuate all children to a designated emergency shelter to await the arrival of a parent or guardian.
- AfterCare operates in a school building approved by the Michigan Department of Education and will be using a playground that has not been inspected by a certified playground safety inspector. (R 400.8170 Outdoor play area. Rule 170. Sub rule 19)

- The child will respect the private property of others and will understand that stealing or vandalizing the property of others will not be tolerated.

Behavior Management Practices

When a child engages in inappropriate behavior that threatens the health or safety of her/him or others, our staff will do the following:

1. Take immediate action to stop the behavior.
2. Inform the child and/or parents of the disciplinary action that will be taken.
3. If the severity of the inappropriate behavior warrants, or the child cannot be controlled on the spot, it may be necessary to temporarily remove him/her from the situation.
4. Additionally, staff will attempt to learn the causes of the behavior and will try to help the child understand and overcome these.

In all other situations where other children are not directly jeopardized, our staff will discuss the behavioral problem with the child but will take no disciplinary action unless the child repeats the behavior.

- This process assists the child in learning to take responsibility for his/her own behavior. In cases of repeated inappropriate behavior, one of the following disciplinary procedures may be used:
- Hold a discussion with the child about the inappropriate behavior and its future consequences.
- Inform the child of any disciplinary action to be taken, if the behavior is repeated.
- Redirect/provide time away from the activity, with the child returning to the activity contingent on a willingness to behave appropriately. Explain further disciplinary action to be taken if behavior continues.
- Redirecting/time away from activity, and notifying parents of child's behavior. If behavior continues, conduct a parent/guardian conference to discuss and provide support in managing child's behavior.

Registration

The Aftercare Program is open to children Kindergarten through 6th grade. This is an after school program. Children are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Others are placed on a waiting list and accommodated as space becomes available.

School Age Child Care registration packets are available through the School Office. The proper registration forms must be completed and the non-refundable registration fee and deposit must be paid prior to the first day your child is to attend.

To complete enrollment of your child, you will need to fill out and return the following information:

- Application
- Child Information Card
- Health Waiver
- Parent Notification of Licensing Notebook
- Permission to Administer Form
- Photo Release Form

Illness

Please call whenever your child will not be in as planned. It is Aftercare policy to not care for sick children who may be contagious or who have physical symptoms that require one on one care.

Michigan law requires childcare centers to report the possible occurrence of communicable disease to the local health department on a weekly basis or more frequently if a serious communicable disease or outbreak is suspected. To assist in this reporting and to prevent the spread of illness, please be specific when reporting your child's absence. When calling in your child's absence, please include the following information, Your child's name, a description of your child's symptoms (such as vomiting, fever, rash, diarrhea), the type of illness is known and who has identified the illness, Your name and Phone number.

Please refer to our complete Health Care Plan.

Finances and Fees

All of our finances and Fees are collected through TADS. You will sign up for the payment plan of your choosing. You may have the money taken from your account or you can bring in a payment to the school office. If there is no one in the office please leave your payment in the white box outside of the office. Please do not pay the workers.

Late Fees

Late Pick Up – Parents will be charged a late fee of \$10 for any portion of time up to 6:10 p.m. After that, an additional \$1 per minute will be charged until the child is picked up by a parent or guardian. If a parent has not arrived by 6:15 p.m., and has not contacted the Child Care staff, staff will call the adults listed as Emergency Contacts on the Child Information Card to pick up the child.

Late Payments – Payments are considered late on the 26th of the month and you will be assessed a \$25 late fee (per family). After the second late payment families would be required to move to either form of automatic payment to continue in the program.

Withdrawal

Written notice of intent to withdraw your child from the Aftercare Program must be submitted in writing 30 days prior to your last day.

Tax Information

The tax identification number for Holt Lutheran School is 38-6176431.

Termination of Childcare Services

Holt Lutheran School reserves the right to discontinue child care services under any of the following conditions:

- Failure to abide by any of the registration agreement conditions as itemized in the Parent Statement of Understanding, or failure to fulfill any of the responsibilities or conditions included in the Parent Handbook.
- Severe behavior by the child which disrupts the group, including repeated instances of failing to listen to his/her teacher; refusal to follow program rules; excessive use of physical force, including hitting, pushing, kicking or biting; or excessive threats to use physical or verbal abuse.

If your child requires an accommodation, please discuss it with the Aftercare Director. It is recommended that a family member (or caregiver) tour the facility with the appropriate staff along with the child with the special need, before the first day of child care services. This provides the family with an opportunity to observe the program, facility, and staff. This also allows the staff to learn what can be done to enhance the person's involvement in the program.

Behavior Management Policy

We think of a policy of center discipline as a guidance policy. We steer children toward self-direction and conflict resolution. Considering each child's age, developmental stage, and personality, we establish fair and reasonable expectations of behavior. When a child needs guidance, the staff begins by redirecting the child into more constructive activities. In addition, appropriate behavior is encouraged by staff who model courtesy and respectfulness. With help from adults and peers, children learn and practice nonviolent forms of conflict resolution. Our policy goal is to help each child develop positive feelings of self-esteem while fostering growth toward self-direction. We provide a safe environment for children to develop spirit, mind, and body. The overriding principle of this discipline policy is to help children become individuals who make their own choices and who take responsibility for their actions. The primary basis of this policy is that discipline is a function of engaging children in meaningful and stimulating activities, focusing on positive role models, and promoting core values.

Guidelines

Limits are set positively and are developmentally appropriate. Specific policies are listed below.

- The child will respect the rights and feelings of others and will avoid disruptive behaviors that would interfere with program activities. Aggressive behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, tripping, verbal "put-downs", spitting and other similar inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated.
- The child will follow all directions given by the staff regarding safety procedures and will stay with the group for all scheduled activities.
- The center strictly prohibits the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, except prescribed medications or over the counter medication with proper written consent.

Policies and Procedures

The policies of the Aftercare Programs are as follows:

- Families should not be denied childcare services because of their inability to pay. However, an application for Child Care Subsidies through the Department of Human Services, scholarship assistance or regular payments must be submitted. Scholarship Assistance is available to families with financial need.
- No person or family shall be denied services offered, nor denied employment, upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- Children, parents, and staff will regularly evaluate program effectiveness.
- Special needs children will be accommodated whenever possible in the child care program.
- Parents are welcome to schedule a conference with Aftercare staff to discuss any issue relevant to the program and/or their child.
- Personal belongings are the responsibility of both the child and the parent. We will provide a designated place for a child's belongings during the program. Children have more fun and participate more fully in activities when they are not concerned about having personal belongings lost or destroyed. With this idea in mind, please do not bring valuable items to the programs. Holt Lutheran School is not responsible for lost/stolen items.

Children with Special Needs

It is the intent of Holt Lutheran Schools to include persons in current programs and activities to the greatest extent possible. Recognizing limitations due to an individual's special need is important and, with this in mind, Holt Lutheran School will make every attempt to adapt program activities, staffing, and facilities through reasonable accommodation, unless the accommodation imposes hardship on the program

- Failure of parents/guardians to treat staff or other parents or children respectfully. Disrespect includes inappropriate or abusive language, behavior or threats.
- The Aftercare program follows a zero-tolerance policy in regards to weapons. Any participant, parent/guardian or family-authorized adult that uses or possesses or threatens to use or possess a weapon at any time may be permanently expelled from the School Age program.
- Lack of regular attendance in excess of 2 weeks.
- Balance due of 2 weeks or more of childcare fees

School Age Curriculum Components

Age-appropriate/developmentally-appropriate activities will be available daily with the children's interests providing the direction for the program. Our classroom is designed with appropriately sized furnishings, equipment and bathroom features designed to help your child develop self-reliance skills. A quiet work area will be designated at all times for children who wish to work on homework. Curriculum components include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Literacy
- Crafts
- Music
- Games
- Service Learning
- Social Competence and Conflict Resolution
- Homework and Academic Support
- Science and Discovery
- Character Development
- Learning Centers
- Health, Wellness, and Fitness

Program Schedule

The Aftercare Program runs from 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. All Vacation Camps require pre-registration. All Vacation Camp days operate 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Aftercare is available for Snow Days. We are not open on the following holidays; Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Memorial Day. Christmas Eve and New Years Eve will be half days and students should be picked up at noon.

Daily Release of Students

The parent/guardian must check the child in and out each day by signing the dated attendance form available in the program. The parent may designate another responsible adult to pick up or drop off the child on their Child Information Record Card. VALID PHOTO IDENTIFICATION must be presented before releasing the child to anyone.

Custody Issues

Families must provide copies of original court documentation to the Aftercare Program Director. The papers will be filed and followed. Program staff cannot implement any changes to the court documents. If custody changes occur, new court documentation must be submitted to the program. Aftercare staff will follow the content of the court documentation ONLY! Please note that staff cannot withhold children from a parent without legal documentation stating such restrictions.

Transportation of Students

Whenever there is a medical or dental emergency and a child needs to be transported, the emergency squad is called to transport the child to the hospital if parental permission is granted or the parent is unavailable. If parental permission is not granted for the program to call the emergency squad for transportation, then the parent/guardian is called to transport the child. If a child is transported to an emergency facility, parents/guardians are notified immediately. The Child Information Record, which includes the emergency transportation information and the child's health condition information, accompanies the child to the emergency facility along with an employee if the parent is unavailable.

Snacks

A nutritious snack will be served each afternoon in the programs. Snacks such as fresh fruits, raw vegetables, whole grain crackers, and other nutritious foods will be served. Please note that these snacks are not a replacement for meals. A snack menu is posted in the classroom.

If your child has special dietary needs due to medical reasons or you prefer that your child eat something other than what is planned for snack-time, you are welcome to send food with your child. If you choose to send food with your child, please send utensils and other necessary items, as the childcare program will not have access to these items. There is no reimbursement of tuition if food is sent from home. Please note any food allergies on the Child Information Record, and advise School Age staff.

During Vacation Programs, children will need to bring a sack lunch. The sack lunch should include all four food groups and two foods from the fruit/vegetable group. If a child is sent to the program without a lunch, the staff will call the parent and ask the parent to bring the child a lunch. Refrigeration for lunches and snacks is not available in the Aftercare Program. Storage for lunches and snacks is available in your child's cubby.

Clothing

We ask that kindergartners have one change of clothing, including underwear. Please be certain all clothing items are clearly labeled and kept in your child's cubby.

Children will play outside unless there is inclement weather. Parents should make sure their children are dressed properly for weather, including boots, hats, and mittens when required.

Important Phone Numbers

Program Director: Chelsea Speers (517) 388-3769

To Report an Absence: School Office (517) 694-3182

Aftercare Staff

Aftercare Staff share a love of Christ and are committed to providing all children with quality care and developmentally appropriate opportunities. All staff members have completed a State Police Criminal History Search and a Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry Clearance. Staff members, regardless of position and education, are required to obtain 12 hours of annual professional development training, of which 3 of the hours focuses specifically on cultural competence and inclusive practices.

Volunteer Service

Ample opportunity is provided to volunteer your services. There is a task for almost anyone. We ask our volunteers to remember they are here to assist in carrying out the programs that have been established and to work closely with the staff person responsible for the task being done. Volunteers who work directly with students will be required to be fingerprinted for a criminal record check.