



# Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool

23838 Kittridge Street, West Hills, California 91307

Phone (818) 347-6784 | [www.sovls.org](http://www.sovls.org)

**LIC# 197414470**

## **Parent/Student Handbook 2025 – 2026**

"Teach a child to choose the right path, and when they are older, he will remain upon it."

Proverbs 22:6

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Welcome from Preschool Administrators</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Welcome from the Pastor</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About the Church</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Vision Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Welcoming Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Educational Mission of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>About the Preschool</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Mission Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool (SOV Preschool)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Philosophy of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Program</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Hours</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Clothing</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Pacifiers and Bottles</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>COVID-19</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Holiday Celebrations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Snacks and Lunch</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapel Service</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Administrative Policy</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Enrollment and Admission</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Finances</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Code of Conduct for Parents</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Licensing Requirements General Information</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Inspection Authority of the Department</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Child Abuse Reporting Obligations Policy</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Federal Asbestos Management Compliance</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Additional Information and Guidelines</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Student Accident Insurance</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian Responsibilities</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian Participation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Pictures</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Show and Tell</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Lost and Found</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>No Smoking / Vaping on Campus</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Attendance &amp; Arrival/Dismissal</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Arrival/Dismissal</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Morning Drop-off Procedure</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Afternoon Pick-up Procedure</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Doctor Appointments</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Emergency Cards</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Food Allergies</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Lice</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Medication Policy</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Incidental Medical Services (IMS)</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>First Aid Procedure</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Earthquake and Emergency Procedures</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Biting Policy</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Website Privacy Policy</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Closing Statement</b>	<b>20</b>

## Welcome from Preschool Administrators

Welcome to Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool, a ministry of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church. We provide an environment in which children are given the opportunity to grow and develop while using their God-given gifts and talents to the best of their ability and potential.

This handbook, together with the Enrollment Contract, serves as the contract between Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool and its students and their parents/guardians. It outlines our policies and procedures, so that families are aware of their responsibilities and of the preschool's expectations. Attendance at this school is viewed as agreement with the terms and conditions stated in this handbook.

We are excited and honored to serve on the Preschool Administration team. We have an open-door policy. If you have concerns about enrollment, class placement or finances, please contact Ms. Wendy. If you have any questions about our ECE (Early Childhood Education) license, please contact Ms. Season. As always, your child's teacher should be your first line of contact regarding your child's progress and development. Additionally, we are fortunate to have Ms. Laura on our team as our Child Development Specialist as a resource.

We look forward to working closely with parents, guardians and teachers to make this another great year at SOV Preschool.

Sincerely,

Wendy Torres  
Preschool Administrator

Season Eng  
Preschool Director

Laura Morser  
Child Development Specialist

## Welcome from the Pastor

Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool—a place where faith, learning, family, and friendship come together in joyful harmony!

We are so excited to have your child join our preschool family. Whether this is your first step into early learning or you're returning for another year, please know how deeply valued and warmly welcomed you are. This is more than a school—it's a caring community of faith where your child is seen, loved, and encouraged to grow into the unique person they were created to be.

Our program is built on four core values that shape everything we do—from the classroom lessons to playground friendships, special celebrations, and shared moments in chapel:

### Connection – Growing Closer to God and Each Other

We believe that learning happens best when rooted in love and trust. Each day is an opportunity for your child to build friendships, explore faith, and grow in a joyful relationship with God. Through songs, stories, and hands-on experiences, we foster a deep sense of community—where each child feels safe, known, and connected.

### Compassion – Caring for Our Community

Kindness is at the heart of everything we teach. Your child will learn the joy of helping others, how to speak words of love, and how small acts of care make a big difference. We nurture gentle hearts that reflect love—at school, at home, and beyond.

### Growth – Valuing Education as a Foundation for Life

We are passionate about learning! Through exuberant play, creative expression, and guided discovery, we guide children along a rich path of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. Every child is encouraged to ask questions, make connections, and celebrate the wonder of nature.

### Welcome – Showing God's Love to All

At Shepherd of the Valley, everyone is welcome. Our doors and our hearts are open wide to children and families of every walk of life. We believe God's love has no limits—and we celebrate the differences and diversity that make our community stronger and more beautiful.

We consider it a great honor to be a part of your child's early years. Thank you for entrusting us with this sacred season of growth and exploration. We can't wait to walk alongside you in faith, sharing laughter, learning, and lots of unforgettable moments.

Here's to a year full of wonder, friendship, faith, and joy!

With warmth and gratitude,  
Pastor Rod

"Teach a child to choose the right path, and when they are older, he will remain upon it." Proverbs 22:6

## **About the Church**

### **Vision Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church**

Lutherans are Christians. We believe in the Good News of Jesus Christ. We believe that through the life, death on the cross, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has offered love and forgiveness to all people.

We believe that God's love is for all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, ancestry, national origin, cultural background, economic status, disability, or political affiliations.

The love of God in Jesus cannot be earned and is not a reward for who we are or what we do. The Good News is that God loves us because we belong to God, we are part of God's creation, and we are created in the image of God. Nothing we do, nothing we don't do and nothing that is done to us can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.

### **Welcoming Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church**

We welcome everyone.

We welcome you because you are a child of God. Whether you are a believer, a doubter or seeker; no matter what you are, where you're from or what you've done, God's love shines on all of us, without exception.

We invite you to a community that welcomes anyone and everyone. You are welcome regardless of race, color, ethnicity or cultural background, ancestry, national origin, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, relationship status, education, economic circumstances, legal status, or political perspectives.

In keeping with this commitment, we are a congregation dedicated to equity, anti-racism and the just and inclusive reign of God.

Our doors are open to you.

### **Educational Mission of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church**

In keeping with the longstanding educational tradition of the Lutheran faith, as well as the established practice at Shepherd of the Valley over many decades, it is the intent of the Congregation, in meeting its responsibilities and opportunities of mission and ministry, to provide Christian education to the wider community.

The Congregation is pleased to continue this educational tradition through Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool.

## **About the Preschool**

### **Mission Statement of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool (SOV Preschool)**

The mission of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool is to provide a developmentally appropriate Christian learning environment, recognizing that each child is unique. SOV Preschool will nurture each student's intellectual, spiritual, and creative potential to prepare them to be respectful, independent thinkers and life-long learners.

### **Philosophy of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool**

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool is a community that respects the individual qualities of each child. Each student is viewed as a child of God with uniquely individual developmental needs and abilities. Each child is nurtured to grow in their sense of self-worth and appreciation of others.

The growth and development of each child is supported and encouraged by highly trained, nurturing teachers, with the collaboration of each child's family. SOV Preschool will provide an atmosphere where children will be nurtured in their physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth. Our teachers provide reinforcement and a well-rounded play-based program that includes age-appropriate academics. Our program is rich in materials and equipment, and we provide each child with a variety of experiences that are direct and concrete.

The staff is highly trained in early childhood development and is conscious of each child's needs. The goal of SOV Preschool is to provide a developmentally age-appropriate program which encourages children to learn at their own pace in a safe and healthy environment. Children will be given opportunities to explore their own world, to relate to others socially, and to be part of a community. The staff is committed to helping both family and child grow in a warm and caring Christian atmosphere.

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool is a non-profit, church-related school and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, nationality, religion, or ethnicity. It is open to children from 18 months to five years of age.

## Program

### Curriculum

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool offers a Toddlers to TK preschool program that stresses social relationships and spiritual, physical, emotional, and cognitive development. The curriculum focuses on Christ-inspired education developed for the whole child. Each classroom has planned activities geared to the interest level of that age group. Some of the activities and areas of focus include:

Art	Manipulative Play
Chapel (worship)	Music
Creative Play	Nutrition
Fine & Large Motor Skills	Pre-Math Skills
Language Arts	Science

In addition to the above, the curriculum includes the celebration of special days.

### Hours

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool offers multiple scheduling options with priority enrollment for students in our 5-day, full-time program.

For the 2025-2026 school year, preschool hours are 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. and office hours are 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Early Care and Extended Daycare are available for an extra charge as outlined in the contract.

- Morning care is available from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- If your child is signed up for Extended Day, it runs from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The preschool closes at 5 p.m. sharp.

There is a \$1.00 per minute charge for any student remaining after 5:00 p.m. If a parent/guardian is unavoidably delayed, they should send a message via the Remind App to the Preschool Director before 5:00 p.m.

### Clothing

Children should arrive at school wearing comfortable, washable, ready-to-get-messy clothes, labeled with the child's name. Each student is required to have one (1) complete change of clothes at school.

- Toddler / Two-Year-Old Program students should have two complete changes of clothes, including socks.
- Children **who are still potty training** should have four pairs of underwear and bottoms, three tops, three pairs of socks and a back-up pair of shoes at school.

Parents/Guardians are expected to check daily for soiled clothing and are expected to replace any items of clothing needed the next day. Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather.

All students should wear closed-toe sneakers/tennis shoes for the school day. We do not allow Crocs, flip flops, slippers, open-toed sandals, etc. This is for safety while playing on the equipment and outside.

### Pacifiers and Bottles

All children aged 3 and up need to leave pacifiers and bottles at home.

## **COVID-19**

Regarding COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses, masking is always encouraged and recommended. Any staff member who wants to wear a mask, or parent who wants their child to wear a mask will be allowed and supported. **SOV will follow all prevailing public health guidance for Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings.**

## **Holiday Celebrations**

Classroom parties will celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter. Additional celebrations may be planned at the discretion of the teachers.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are special times for children. Parents/Guardians who wish to provide a small pre-packaged/store-bought treat (healthy treats are always encouraged) should make arrangements with the child's teacher in advance. Items containing peanuts are not allowed. Or you may provide a gift for the classroom in honor of their child. For children whose birthdays fall in the summer months, an "un-birthday" treat or gift can be pre-arranged with the teacher.

## **Snacks and Lunch**

Parents/Guardians will provide all snacks and lunches for their child. Students will have a morning snack and an afternoon snack after naptime. A simple prayer will be sung or said prior to the children eating their snack. It is important to notify the school and your child's classroom teacher immediately about any food allergies.

Meals and snacks will be eaten together as a group. Students must bring all lunch and snacks from home. Additionally, students must bring a refillable drink container from home, which the staff will refill with water from our filtered pitchers. Water will always be made available inside and outside the classroom.

## **Chapel Service**

Chapel will be offered weekly, usually led by Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church's pastor. This time gives children an opportunity to celebrate and learn about God's love for everyone.

# **Administrative Policy**

## **Enrollment and Admission**

For new students, priority enrollment is awarded as follows:

- Children of parents, grandparents or guardians who have been active/contributing members of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church for at least one year receive first preference for admission.
  - SOV congregation members received by Letter of Transfer may be exempt from the one-year waiting requirement.
- Siblings of current students
  - Siblings of present students are defined as siblings of a student who has been enrolled in the school for one year or more.
  - Siblings of former students who were enrolled for one year or more
- Students who are seeking full-time enrollment
- Children of non-Church member parents or guardians who have satisfactorily met the requirements of the school will be enrolled as space permits.

To be eligible to attend SOV Preschool, the child must be at least 18 months old. The Preschool Director or teacher will have an interview with all prospective parents/guardians and children prior to admission and parents will need to return a developmental questionnaire about their child. The Preschool Administrators reserves the right to place the child in the class where their needs will be best met.

Children who are 18-months to 3-1/2 years of age do not need to be potty trained to enroll. If a child is not self-sufficient in toilet use (able to manage all aspects of bathroom use regularly and not wear pull-ups or diapers), changing is available for a fee. (In order for this fee to be removed from your account, the student must be accident-free for two weeks.) All children who are not potty-trained should have two spare sets of clothing on campus in the event of an accident. Questions about the potty-training policy should be directed to the Preschool Director.

Completion of an Enrollment Contract, payment in full of all fees owed to that date, and attendance on opening day are expected as confirmation of enrollment for all new and returning students.

All students must be immunized, and all mandatory health forms must be completed before a child may attend SOV Preschool. Every new student entering Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool must have a physical examination before being admitted, as well as other tests and/or immunizations as required by California state health laws. Verification is required by completing the mandatory form entitled "Physician's Report—Child Care Centers" and having a physician sign this form.

## Finances

- The registration fee for each child is determined annually by the Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran School Board and is non-refundable. This fee must accompany the Enrollment Contract.
- Tuition is an annual fee that is due, payable in 10 equal installments. Parents/Guardians who are financially responsible are obligated to pay the full annual charges.
- Voided check / bank account information must be on file before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of enrollment.
- Credit cards / debit cards are not accepted.
- The due date for the first tuition payment will be July 10, prior to the start of the preschool year. The remaining nine payments are due on the first day of the month beginning in September, through May and must be paid via checking or savings account through automatic withdrawal. If the automatic withdrawal does not successfully process, a \$30 return fee will be automatically deducted from this account.
- Tuition is considered late after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, with a \$30 late fee added for each month the payment is late. This late fee will be automatically deducted from the same account that tuition is paid.
- The failure to pay tuition on time will result in the student not being allowed to attend school and all school programs and events until all past-due tuition and fees have been paid in full. The SOV School Board will be notified of the failure to pay tuition on time.
- The SOV School Board maintains the right to review each past due payment situation on an individual basis and to determine individual repayment plans.
- If enrollment is canceled by June 1 by notification to the office in writing that the child will not be attending Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool in the fall, any tuition payments that have already been made for the upcoming school year will be refunded. The non-refundable deposit will not be refunded, as specified in the Enrollment Contract.
- If enrollment is canceled after June 1 parents/guardians financially responsible for the student are obligated to pay the full annual charges, as specified in the Enrollment Contract.
- Early care and after care is billed at the end of each month, and withdrawn from your bank account on the 10<sup>th</sup> of following month. If the automatic withdrawal does not successfully process, a \$30 fee will be applied, and early care/after care privileges may be suspended.

## Code of Conduct for Parents

Shepherd of the Valley Preschool is committed to providing a safe, supportive and loving environment which promotes growth and a love of learning for our students. We believe that children benefit the most from a collaboration between parents and the teachers that support their learning.

We strive to create an environment with open communication and respectful sharing of concerns to resolve any issues that may need to be addressed. We ask that our parents show respectful behavior at all times. This includes emails, text messages and social media posts.

It includes but is not limited to:

- Unprofessional behavior
- Use of inappropriate language toward or in front of staff, families, or children.
- Yelling in a loud voice
- Intimidating behavior or physical harm
- Harassment, including face to face, social media, phone calls, text messages or email
- Speech that harms the school reputation
- Bullying another person or child

Our door is always open and there are many ways to reach us if you have a concern or comment. We will always discuss any issue and want the best for you and your child.

## Licensing Requirements General Information

### Inspection Authority of the Department

SOV Preschool is licensed by the Inspection Authority of the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division, and subject to the Child Care Center Regulations General Licensing Requirements. There are many regulations under general licensing.

Please take note of Section 101200 "Inspection Authority of the Department" which states the following:

**(a) The Department has the inspection authority specified in Health and Safety Code Sections 1596.852, 1596.853 and 1596.8535.**

The Department has the authority to interview children or staff without prior consent.

(1) The licensee shall ensure that provisions are made for private interviews with any children or staff members.

The Department has the authority to inspect, audit, and copy child or childcare center records upon demand during normal business hours. Records may be removed if necessary for copying. Removal of records shall be subject to the requirements in Sections 101217(c) and 101221(d).

(1) The licensee shall ensure that provisions are made for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the childcare center.

The Department has the authority to observe the physical condition of the children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

**NOTE: Authority cited: Section 1596.81, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 1596.72, 1596.73, 1596.852, 1596.853, and 1596.8535, Health and Safety Code.**

## **Child Abuse Reporting Obligations Policy**

In accordance with California law, all preschool staff are obligated under penalty of fine and jail term to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, emotional abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, or sexual abuse and exploitation. In this profoundly serious and legally narrow area, SOV Preschool will not contact parents/guardians in advance of making a report to legal authorities (which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters). The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to mandate that a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse be made. SOV Preschool staff will make such reports in the best interests of the affected child and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review.

## **Federal Asbestos Management Compliance**

Asbestos regulations for schools found in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act and as promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency are followed at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool and monitored by Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church. The Shepherd of the Valley management plan is complete according to AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act) and the report indicates that our facilities are free of asbestos.

## **Additional Information and Guidelines**

### **Student Accident Insurance**

As a part of the Registration Fee, students are extended accident insurance coverage. Most benefits are based upon partial coverage for medical and surgical services. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to request an Insurance Claim Accident Form from the office and submit it to the appropriate claims office. This insurance is intended to be supplemental (secondary to personal insurance coverage). The school is not responsible for expenses that are not covered under personal or preschool insurance.

### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

- SOV Preschool abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1975) with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. The preschool will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and to other school-related information regarding the child as long as there is no court order to the contrary. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the preschool with an official copy of the court order.
- Schools have a duty to comply with civil and criminal orders of protection. Parents/Guardians are responsible for notifying the school of any court-ordered protective orders for the safety of all students and staff who could be harmed. A copy must be presented to the Preschool Director for the protective order to be enforced by the school and law enforcement.
- No appeal, solicitations, or representations of any nature, requesting the support of students or their families, teachers, and/or the Preschool Director, are permitted without the express permission of the Preschool Director and/or School Board. The preschool directory is not to be used for any type of solicitation.
- Any complaint from a parent should first be directed to the appropriate staff member. In most cases, this will be the classroom teacher. Concerns regarding finances or billing should be directed to the office manager. If any situation is not resolved, the parent may contact the Preschool Director or the Pastor. If further attention is needed, the parent may contact the Chairperson of the School Board.
- All written communications should be directed to the teacher first.

- Parents may not discipline or question a child who is not their own. Please contact the teacher or administration with any concern.
- Parents must check in and check out their child each day on campus via the SmartCare app.
- Parents must tell the office directly of any schedule change and complete a “change of schedule” form.
- **Tuition and all other fees are to be paid on time.**

## **Parent/Guardian Participation**

Parents/Guardians are invited to support SOV Preschool in many ways. Opportunities will be announced at the beginning of the school year and in the preschool electronic newsletter, including:

- Classroom donations
- Online fundraisers
- Shop with Scrip program
- Events/meetings for parents/guardians
- Room parents will be assigned at the beginning of the school year. The job of each room parent will be explained at a Room Parent Meeting to be held in August.

## **Conferences**

Parent/guardian-teacher conferences will be held once a year. Each spring, we designate a specific date for these conferences when our school is closed. If you are unable to attend on the scheduled date, please coordinate with your teacher to reschedule this valuable time. Additionally, parents/guardians may request a conference at any time.

The teacher will notify parents/guardians of behavioral problems. Details of such notification are the responsibility of the teacher and the Preschool Director.

## **Pictures**

Class and individual pictures are taken in the fall and occasionally in the spring. Purchasing these photos is optional. Note: If your child does not take individual photos, they may be omitted from the glass group photo. There is no charge up front to take photos.

## **Show and Tell**

Show-and-tell is at the teacher’s discretion. Teachers will notify parents/students what can be shared and what day to share. We are not responsible for lost or misplaced items. Please keep your child’s personal toys at home unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

## **Lost and Found**

SOV Preschool is not responsible for lost or unclaimed items. Items left after an extended period will be donated to a charitable organization. Students/parents should first check with their teacher regarding lost items. All personal items should be labeled with the student’s name to decrease the chance of getting lost or misplaced on campus.

## No Smoking / Vaping on Campus

For the health and safety of our children, smoking and vaping are not permitted on campus or on the campus perimeter.

## Attendance & Arrival/Dismissal

### Attendance

Each child is an important member of their class. If a child is going to be absent, please telephone the office so that the teacher may be informed. Advance notice is appreciated if the absence will be one week or longer. Monthly tuition is due as scheduled and there are no refunds or make-up days for missed days. Your child must be dropped off by 10:00 am to attend school for the day. Please send a message on Remind or call the office if your child will be late.

In the event your child has a doctor appointment, they may be dropped off as late as 11:45 a.m. with 24-hour prior notice to the teacher. Any child that is picked up after 3:00 p.m. for a doctor appointment may not return to school for the day.

### Arrival/Dismissal

Always have the safety of your child and other students in the forefront of your mind when dropping off and picking up your child. The safety of each child should be in everyone's mind when dropping off and picking up a child.

Parents must sign in and sign out their child each day via the SmartCare app.

School begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 12:45 p.m., 2:45 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. for preschool and TK, depending on the schedule for which the child is enrolled. Toddler program dismissal is 12:30 p.m. **Please be on time.** Children will benefit from starting the day with friends and knowing about the activities being offered that day.

Children must be accompanied to and from preschool by a parent/guardian or responsible adult at least 18 years of age. No underage sibling or family member can sign-in or out a child, per State law. Children may be dropped off beginning at 8:45 a.m.

Departure time is important. No child should feel forgotten when all the other children are leaving. If a parent/guardian is unavoidably delayed, please call the office. Pick-up must be within 5 minutes of scheduled pickup, otherwise you will be charged for an extended day fee. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for pick up after 5:00 p.m. unless extended care arrangements have been made.

**If a child is to be picked up by someone other than their parent or guardian, please notify the teacher in advance, in writing.** Any adults not known to staff must present ID to pick up the child. The adult picking up the child at the end of the school day must sign the child out using full names. This is a childcare licensing requirement, and the preschool may receive fines and a violation for missing check-in/check-out information.

Parents/Guardians may be charged a \$25 fee for each missing SmartCare sign-in or sign-out.

Please talk to a teacher or the office if you have questions about the arrival/dismissal procedures. These procedures may be modified at any time. Any changes will be communicated via the preschool's electronic newsletter or Remind text messaging system.

### **Morning Drop-off Procedure**

Parents/Guardians may park on Kittridge and enter through the main office for morning drop-off. The Large parking lot will also be open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. for parking during drop-off.

### **Afternoon Pick-up Procedure**

Parents/Guardians should park on Kittridge and enter through the main office for afternoon pick up. Teachers will release students ONLY to their parents or individuals previously designated by the parents/guardians in writing. If an individual other than the parents or designee will be picking up a child from preschool, the parent/guardian must call the office to make arrangements, including sending in a written, dated, authorization via fax or scan/email. The individual picking up the student must present ID to the staff before the child will be released.

Please refrain from cell phone use at drop-off and pick-up, to provide proper supervision. Children who are signed out may no longer stay and play on or in any outdoor centers or play structures.

### **Doctor Appointments**

Please notify the office at least one day before the appointment so the teacher can prepare for a later drop-off.

## **Health and Safety**

If a child becomes ill at preschool, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the preschool office and is required to pick him or her up immediately. The ill student will be supervised by a staff member until a parent or guardian can take them home. An illness slip recording the child's symptoms will be sent home with the ill student.

Parents are required to notify the office immediately if your child has an infectious or communicable disease. The following communicable diseases may require a doctor's release for readmission:

- Positive Test for Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Pink eye/conjunctivitis
- Impetigo
- Chickenpox
- Ringworm
- Scabies
- Hand, Foot & Mouth
- Pinworms
- Strep throat

Please do not send your child to school if they have taken cold/fever medicine within the prior 12 hours. Children are required to be free of the following symptoms for 24 hours without medication before they can return to school: Fever, diarrhea, and vomiting.

The following procedures are designed to protect students.

- The completion of a Child’s Preadmission Health History—Parent’s Report form is required for each child upon registration. It is a California State law that all children have DPT, polio, hepatitis B, and measles inoculations (or have had measles) to enter school. Every child must have a physical examination before being admitted, as well as a current Mantoux TB test as required by California State health laws.
  - **COVID-19 vaccination and boosting is strongly recommended for all children who are eligible.**
- Verification is required by a “Physician’s Report—Child Care Centers” form signed by a physician. Any special health consideration for any child must be in writing from the child’s physician and must be presented to the Preschool Director and to the child’s teacher.
- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health acts in a consulting capacity to our school.

## **Emergency Cards**

Emergency/Disaster Cards will be on file for each student. Parents/Guardians are required to complete them prior to the first day of school. It is the parents’/guardians’ responsibility to keep information current. Card information includes:

- How to contact parents or guardians
- Any adults who would assume temporary care if parents or guardians cannot be reached. The names on the emergency cards are for emergency pickup (illness, etc.) only. It is not an authorization for regular pickup unless a dated, written note is received by the office.

## **Food Allergies**

SOV Preschool’s policy is to provide a safe environment for students with food allergies and to promote an understanding of their needs to the greater school community. Please notify the school if your child has any known allergies. Teachers and staff are trained to respond and provide treatment in the event of an adverse reaction. A copy of the complete policy is available in the preschool office.

## **Lice**

Head lice checks are conducted if deemed necessary. A copy of the complete policy is available in the preschool office.

## **Medication Policy**

All medication for students must be kept in the office, per California licensing requirements. Do not send medication in the child’s backpack or lunchbox. Please contact the director via the office to make arrangements if your child needs medication during the school day.

Before any medication can be administered by staff, the parent/guardian must complete a “Parent’s Medicine Consent Form”. The Preschool Director shall designate which staff will give medication to a student. Parents/Guardians must sign the “Parent’s Medicine Consent Form” and submit it, along with the medication in its original container. If it is a prescription, it must have the pharmaceutical label specifying the child’s name and dosage prescribed by a physician. All medications will be stored in a childproof tight closing container in the preschool office. The Preschool Director or trained staff member will document and accept medications and follow the “Caregiver Medicine Check” form. Medication will only be accepted if “yes” can be answered to all questions on the Caregiver Medicine Check Form.

For information on inhalers and EpiPens, see “Incidental Medical Services” section.

The Preschool Director and trained staff will follow physician’s instructions and accommodations will be based on individualized assessments of the child’s needs and the preschool’s ability to make the necessary modifications.

## Incidental Medical Services (IMS)

Any child requiring Incidental Medical Services will be evaluated prior to acceptance to determine whether such needed services can be provided. Children will be accepted with the following IMS needs:

- Inhaled Medications—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, SOV Preschool will administer inhaled medication to a child if all of the following requirements are met:
  - SOV Preschool has been provided with written authorization from the minor’s parent or legal guardian to administer inhaled medication and authorization to contact the child’s health care provider. The authorization shall include the telephone number and address of the minor’s parent or legal guardian.
  - SOV Preschool will comply with specific written instructions from the child’s physician to which the following shall apply:
    - The instructions shall contain the following information:
      - Specific indications for administering the medication pursuant to the physician’s prescription.
      - Potential side effects and expected response.
      - Dose-form and amount to be administered pursuant to the physician’s prescription.
      - Actions to be taken in the event of side effects or incomplete treatment response pursuant to the physician’s prescription.
      - Instructions for proper storage of the medication.
      - The telephone number and address of the child’s physician.
      - The instructions shall be updated annually
  - The staff person that administers the inhaled medication to the child shall record each instance and provide a record to the child’s parent or legal guardian on a daily basis.
  - Staff will complete formal training designed to provide instruction in administering inhaled medication to children with respiratory needs. This training shall include, but not be limited to, training in the general use of nebulizer equipment and inhalers, how to clean the equipment, proper storage of inhaled medication, how a child should respond to inhaled medication, what to do in cases of emergency, how to identify side effects of the medication, and when to notify a parent or legal guardian or physician. This training shall be a component in the pediatric first aid certificate requirement as provided in Section 1596.8661.
  - For a specified child, the licensee or staff person who administers inhaled medication has been instructed to administer inhaled medication by the child’s parent or guardian. Training materials pertaining to nebulizer care that licensees or staff receive in the process of obtaining or renewing a pediatric first aid certificate will be kept on file. The materials shall be made available to a licensee or staff person who administers inhaled medication. This requirement shall only apply to the extent that training materials are made available to licensees or staff who obtain or renew a pediatric first aid certificate.
  - For purposes of this section, inhaled medication shall refer to medication prescribed for the child to control lung-related illness, including, but not limited to, local held nebulizers.
- EpiPen Jr. and EpiPen
  - SOV Preschool will handle and administer both of these devices as specified in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101226(e). However, whenever these devices are used, emergency medical treatment will still be obtained for the child as specified in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101226.
  - The use of these devices is for emergency supportive therapy only and is not a replacement or substitute for immediate medical or hospital care. In addition to the requirements in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101226(e), the following applies to the use of the EpiPen Jr. or the EpiPen:
    - Use in accordance with the directions and as prescribed by a physician.

- Keep ready for use at all times.
- Protect from exposure to light and extreme heat.
- Note the expiration date on the unit and replace the unit prior to that date.
- Replace any auto-injector if the solution is discolored or contains a precipitate. (Both the EpiPen Jr. and the EpiPen have a see-through window to allow periodic examination of its contents. The physician may recommend emergency use of an auto-injector with discolored contents rather than postponing treatment.)
- Call 911 and the child's parent/authorized representative immediately after administering the EpiPen Jr. or the EpiPen.

## **First Aid Procedure**

All students receive prompt and proper first aid attention as follows:

- For simple scratches/scrapes, the wound is washed with soap and water and following the first aid standard of care, a bandage may be applied if necessary. Parent/Guardian is notified when the child is picked up.
- For a bump or bruise (other than a head injury), an ice pack is given. Parent/Guardian is notified when the child is picked up.
- In the case of a head injury, serious accident or illness, parents/guardians are always notified, and every effort is made to speak with the parent/guardian. As authorized on the "Emergency Information" card, if the preschool is unable to reach the parent/guardian, the preschool staff is authorized to call the physician indicated on the card and to follow their instructions. If it is impossible to contact the physician, the preschool may make whatever arrangements seem necessary for the safety and well-being of the child.
- If a student complains of feeling ill, a staff member will take the child's temperature and talk to the child to further determine the nature of the problem. If there is a temperature and/or the child does not seem able to stay in school, the parent/guardian is called.
- Staff members are Red Cross certified in First Aid/CPR. This is renewed as required.

## **Earthquake and Emergency Procedures**

Children are instructed in emergency procedures, including shelter-in-place (lock-down), earthquake and fire safety, according to California State regulations. SOV Preschool has regular fire, shelter-in-place (lock-down), and earthquake drills.

In the event of a major disaster or emergency, SmartCare reports will be used to determine if everyone has been evacuated. SOV Preschool is prepared to take care of students for several days if necessary. The staff is committed to stay until all children are reunited with their parents/guardians or a person designated on their emergency cards. All teaching staff are certified in CPR and First Aid.

The school will coordinate its program of civilian defense and first aid procedures with that of the City of Los Angeles. In case of evacuation from campus, every attempt will be made to communicate with the parent, guardian, or authorized person.

Parents/Guardians will be asked to provide an earthquake packet for each student before the first day of school. SOV Preschool is well equipped with necessary safety equipment and supplies. Drills are conducted regularly with an assigned duty for each staff member.

In the event of a major earthquake, emergency or disaster while the children are at school, please be familiar with the following procedures:

- REMEMBER: While children are at preschool, the preschool, by law, acts in LOCO PARENTIS, meaning it serves in the capacity of parent in the absence of the legal guardian or parent. No student can be released in this situation to a brother, sister, friend, or relative without WRITTEN permission from the parent/guardian.
- In the case of any earthquake or disaster which dictates that the children must leave the classroom area, all students will be moved to the parking lot or grassy area closest to Haynes Street side of the campus.
- All parents/guardians who wish to take their child from the school grounds MUST follow these guidelines:
  - Check in at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). It will be located at the northwest area of the parking lot entrance on Kittridge Street. All of the gates into the school will be locked. Tell the person in charge the name of your child and their room and teacher.
  - The person in charge of the EOC will send a runner to get your child and bring him or her to the EOC. Parents/Guardians must remain outside of school gates.
  - Parent/Guardian will sign out their child and leave campus with their child.
  - Please do not send anyone (including an older sibling) who does not have proper WRITTEN authority for pickup.
  - It is important that as adults, proper procedure is followed so that the children will feel as comfortable and calm as possible. It is imperative that chaos be avoided. Patience will be the most important ingredient in this process so that families can be united as soon as possible. Please contact the school office if you have questions.

## **Discipline**

At SOV Preschool, disciplinary problems will be prevented by:

- Providing positive reinforcement for good behavior.
- Setting realistic expectations for what the child can do.
- Looking for and taking care of possible problems before they occur and redirecting the child.

If a rule is broken, the teacher will talk to the child about the rule and what they could have done differently. If corrections are not made, the consequences for unacceptable behavior may include:

- Redirection – the child is asked to play in another area or alone for a time.
- Loss of privileges.

If necessary, the teacher or Preschool Director will notify the parent/guardian (by phone, note, or special conference). Corporal punishment is never used, and the personal rights of the child will not be violated.

Throwing rocks, dirt, sand, or other objects that might injure others is prohibited. Spitting is prohibited. In the event this behavior occurs, the teacher and/or Preschool Director will notify the parents and complete an incident report detailing the occurrence.

## **Biting Policy**

At SOV Preschool, the safety of each child is of utmost concern. Fighting or inflicting bodily injury (such as biting, hitting, and kicking) on preschool grounds is prohibited. This program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative play, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between children. Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and are still developing language skills. It is usually a temporary behavior that is most common in children under the age of three.

For health and safety reasons, biting is taken seriously. When it happens, it can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents/guardians, and teachers. Children bite for a variety of reasons: sensory exploration, panic,

crowding, seeking attention or an intense desire for a toy. SOV Preschool teachers plan activities and supervise children carefully in order for biting not to happen. There are times, however, when a teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

The policy for handling a biting incident is as follows:

- The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm NO and is talked to on a level that they can understand, then redirected.
- The bitten child is consoled, and the bitten area is washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising.
- Parents/Guardians of all children involved are notified by the director. The name of a biting child is not released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult.
- If a child bites another student twice in one day, they will be sent home for the rest of the school day.
- After two bites by a student, the Director will meet with the family to work on a behavior plan.
- Teachers will look at the context of each biting incident for patterns, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- Teachers will work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- Teachers will make every effort to stop a student's biting behavior quickly and to balance commitment to the family of the biting child and to other families.

If a child's behavior is such that the safety of the other children is jeopardized, the child may be asked not to return to the preschool.

## **Website Privacy Policy**

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool has established a privacy policy on the website to let parents/guardians know how information is collected, used, shared, and protected. The information may be about you and gathered from websites, collected from, and/or passed through to third party tools used in Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool website.

Please visit [www.sovls.org/privacy](http://www.sovls.org/privacy) to view the privacy policies.

At the beginning of the school year, parents sign a release for their child's picture to be used in print and digital media (including social media), school publications (newsletter, yearbook, website), and marketing materials.

If a parent/guardian does not wish their child's image to be used in any media, the parent/guardian must submit a written statement to the office asking that their child be placed on a "No Photograph List".

## **Closing Statement**

Congratulations! You did it! Thank you for taking the time to read through this important information. Please feel free to contact the office with any questions. Thank you for being a part of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool!

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool  
23838 Kittridge Street, West Hills, California 91307  
Phone (818) 347-6784 | Email [office@sovls.org](mailto:office@sovls.org) | Website [www.sovls.org](http://www.sovls.org)