



Parent Handbook & Operational Policies

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General Information



*Changes made to the ELCMDO Policy Handbook can be made at any time at the discretion of ELCMDO. Changes affecting the current school year will be shared with parents via email. Annually, parents are required to sign an acknowledgment of the current Policy Handbook when registering.

Hours of Operation

Monday: CLOSED	Sunday: 8:30 Traditional Worship
Tuesday: 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	9:45 Adult Bible Class & Sunday School
Wednesday: 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	10:45 Contemporary Worship
Thursday: 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	
Friday: 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	
Saturday: CLOSED	

Academic Calendar

ELCMDO school year begins at the end of August/beginning of September and ends in May. The ELCMDO School Calendar is LOOSELY based on the Pearland Independent School District's calendar. The 4-day program consists of at least 125 school days and the 2-day programs each consist of a minimum of 64 school days.

About Our Program

Our Mother's Day Out Program at Epiphany Lutheran Church (ELCMDO) serves families with children ages 8 months - 5 years old.

We offer two separate programs, held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Wednesdays and Fridays, some parents chose to do both programs. Those kids would attend Tuesday through Friday.

ELCMDO is licensed by the state and was established to help meet the needs of young families in the Pearland community. It is our calling and privilege to provide a program where children are cared for in a loving and secure environment, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ through everyday activities. Children attend chapel in the sanctuary on a weekly basis where they experience a children's message from the Bible and learn to sing songs.

The programs are an extension of the Epiphany Lutheran Church's Children's Ministry.

ELCMDO does not discriminate enrollment based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Purpose

The mission statement of Epiphany Lutheran Church is to help people grow into a living relationship with Jesus and His Church, through worship and fellowship; understand God's purpose for their life, through Bible study and prayer; and to go forth as Jesus' Ambassadors, to care for and share His Good News with all people. Our program is developed around the enrichment of Christian values and love. Biblical teachings are non-denominational in nature, incorporated throughout the day, and topics are related to our curriculum themes.

Goals

We are committed to the belief that "children learn by doing". In partnership with parents, we provide well balanced, age-appropriate activities, including the introduction of colors, numbers, shapes and the alphabet. Social skills are a very important part of being a preschool child. Classroom activities focus on the importance of sharing, listening and cooperative play.

Our Pre-K 4 classes focus on preparing the children for kindergarten in a variety of fun ways. Using PISD Pre-K curriculum as a guide, we encourage independence, expanding fine and gross motor skills, reading readiness, and math/science concepts. Circle time is used to introduce new concepts, including the calendar, show and tell, student of the week, etc. Creativity and social skills are promoted using centers, art and music.

Staff

In addition to having experience working with young children, teachers employed by the ELCMDO are required to participate in annual training that is specifically designed for early childhood educators. All staff members are required to maintain pediatric CPR and First Aid Certification and follow all State Minimum Standards for Child Care Licensing set forth by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

ELCMDO conducts a complete criminal background check, including FBI fingerprinting on all staff members. Per Church policy, all ELC employees are also required to complete Protect My Ministry training.



Enrollment Information

Registration

Current ELCMDO students, their siblings and Epiphany Lutheran Church members have the first opportunity to register for class placement. Enrollment will then be opened to the community.

Class placement is based on your child's age as of September 1st of the school year. Per State School District Guidelines, children enrolled in the PK-4/Kinder program must be four/five years old by September 1st. Students advance classrooms at the beginning of each school year similar to the yearly progression in elementary school.

ProCare Desktop vs. App

DESKTOP - www.myprocure.com - is where you register and make payments. This will show you your amount due.

APP - ProCare App -The app is where you can communicate with teachers and staff, upload documents, sign documents, and see pictures of your child. Teachers take pictures throughout the day periodically, and will post them on the app. Sometimes the pictures don't get posted every day or they may upload later when the teachers have availability. You can also reach the app on a web browser at www.procareconnect.com. It is IMPERATIVE that parents download and have access to the app as this is the main communication tool we use. Additionally, the app is used for signing your child in and out each day.

Required Registration Steps

A completed Online Registration Process through MyProcure is required to secure a spot during registration. The following steps must be completed:

- Registration Form Digitally Signed (Confirming that you have read and agree to the following documents).
 - Parent Handbook & Operational Policies
 - Additional Consent Information
 - Payment of Non-Refundable Registration Fees - paid online at the end of the registration process.

- You will be invited to the ProCare app by June. The following forms are required to be uploaded to your child's account on the app no later than August 1st.

- Vaccination Records*

- Physician's Health Statement*

(*Please rename the documents you upload with your child's initials, document name and school year. IE: SVShotrecords2425 or SVPhysicianStatement2425.)

****Children may not attend ELCMDO until all documents have been uploaded to their account.****

Maintaining School Records

Your child's medical report and information may need to be updated during the school year. Please keep the school office informed of new immunization or current health information changes. It is necessary that you immediately report any changes in telephone number (cell/home/work), address, email, additional authorized pick ups, or any other important data which affects your child. This information is vital in case of an emergency.

Immunizations

All children enrolled in ELCMDO must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A current immunization record is required by the start of the new year (August 1st). Information about current immunization requirements, exceptions, and exemptions can be found online at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization/texas-minimum-state-vaccine>. If you have exempted your child from vaccines because reasons of conscience, you must request from the State of Texas an affidavit stating as such. You may upload a copy to your child's account on the app., however WE MUST HAVE THE ORIGINAL ON FILE. If you have exempted because your doctor recommended it, we must have the original doctor's note stating as such on file.

Employees are not required to show proof of immunizations.

Withdrawing Enrollment

In the event you decide to terminate enrollment early, a paid two-week notice is required.

Tuition & Fees



Annual Fees Due at Enrollment

REGISTRATION FEE: \$100 per child for 2 days a week
\$200 per child for 4 days a week

*This fee is required to secure your child's spot and is non-refundable. *

Tuition

Monthly tuition for the 2024/2025 school year is as follows:

1 child 2 days \$210	2 children 2 days \$370	3 children 2 days \$580
1 child 4 days \$420	2 children 4 days \$790	3 children 4 days \$1210

*There is a \$50 family discount for multiple children.

Tuition is based on the number of days the school is open, taking into consideration holidays and/or PISD closures. MDO is intended to be a year-long commitment and for your convenience in budgeting, tuition is divided into 9 equal monthly payments with one being split between August and May. For example, if you owe \$420 per month you will pay \$210 in August and \$210 in May.

Payment Procedures

- Checks - made payable to ELCMDO with child's name in memo.
- Cash - Please put in an envelope with child's name on outside.
- Bill Pay from your bank - You must call your bank and set this up. Please have them begin in September and stop after April's payment as August and May are half payments. Please give the P.O.Box address to the bank for safety. Mail to: ELCMDO, P.O. Box 2461, Pearland, TX 77588.
- Credit cards - May be used through www.MyProcure.com (NOT THE APP) a credit card fee is charged.

Late Fees

Tuition is due the first week of each month, no later than the second week. Arrangements can be made for you to split your payment by paying on the first and third weeks if needed. Credit is not given for a child's absence, including vacations, illness, teacher workshops, nor is credit given if the school must be closed due to weather events, national emergencies, or any other events beyond the school's control. Teachers have been employed on a nine-month contract; thus, our income must have continuity. Payments made later than the 2nd week of the month will incur a late fee.



Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival Procedures

The directors will be outside for you to check your child in electronically at 9am. Please form a line between the two buildings when waiting to check in. Once checked in your child's teacher will take them into the building.

For rainy day drop off, please remain in your car until the doors to the gym are opened at 9am.

An individual PIN is set for each person authorized (Up to six). Please add all persons authorized for pick up to your Procare account. A current picture needs to be on file for each person as well. Please email the pictures to mdu@epiphanypearland.org and we will add them to your account.

Parking for parents and visitors is available in the church parking lot. Parents are responsible to keep children in hand, remembering that the parking lot is very busy during drop-off and pick-up times.

Dismissal Procedures

You must sign out your child with the directors before entering the building to pick up your child from the classroom. Up to six people can be given an individual PIN from ProCare to be used to check in/out your child. It is best to not give your PIN to someone else who is picking up your child so that we know who actually picked up your child on a particular day. Please add the adults through an email to the directors and use the PIN assigned to them. No child will be allowed to leave with a person without authorization. If a new person needs to be added during the day, a phone call to the director will be necessary. Identification may be required any time by a director. This is for your child's protection.

Parents need to remain in the doorway when picking up their child. Please do not enter the classroom. This is a safety issue.

Do not pick up your child while on a phone call. Please be courteous to the teachers who may have information to share at the end of the day.

Late Pick Up Fees

A late charge will be assessed to all parents picking up children after 2:00 p.m. The fee is \$1.00 per minute per child.

Program Guidelines



What to Bring *

- Lunch
- Backpack
- Non-spill Water Cup/bottle filled with water for snack & playground times
- Extra change of clothes (including socks) Must be replaced when used
- Diapers/Pull ups as needed for the day
- Jacket/Sweater for outdoor play in cool weather
- All classes except PreK 4 need a nap mat and small light blanket. *Lovey/Comfort items are allowed for rest time (please label, ELCMDO is not responsible for loss.)

****PLEASE MARK EVERYTHING** clearly with your child's name. (lunch kits, mats, "blankies", pacifiers, diaper bags, bottles, cups, coats, sweaters, etc.)

Meals/Food

SNACKS - Morning snack (depending on schedule) of either pretzels, goldfish or animal crackers may be provided by ELCMDO.

LUNCH: Children will begin lunch with a prayer. Each child must bring a nutritious lunch with a clear or light-colored drink in a spill proof cup. Some suggestions for lunch are cheese, crackers, lunchmeat, sandwiches, raisins, cut up fruit, celery, or carrot sticks. Please do not send soft drinks, red jello, or an abundance of sugared treats. Food cannot be warmed up.

PEANUT FREE ROOMS - Peanut and Tree Nut products are typically allowed on campus; however, when necessary, ELCMDO reserves the right to designate your child's class as a peanut and/or tree nut free room. This means that no nut products would be allowed to enter a specific classroom. Parents will be notified if a classroom is designated peanut and/or tree nut-free.

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS - We will be happy to help celebrate your child's birthday with the parent providing cookies, muffins, or donut holes. **NO CAKE, CUPCAKES or ICING** please! You are welcome to provide plates and napkins for your child's special day! Please let your child's teachers know the week before you plan to bring the snack, if possible.

Other special occasions and holidays are celebrated in the classrooms thought the year. Please check with your child's teacher about any allergies in the classroom before bringing any snacks/treats.

Backpacks & Nap Mats

Standard Size backpack required. No wheels/ metal frames. No toddler size (Folder must be able to fit inside). Be sure to have your child's name on the backpack.

Children in the toddler class through three-year-old classes must bring a mat for rest period. Because of space restrictions, the thin folding mat is preferred. These mats can be purchased at WalMart, Target or a teacher supply and can be covered with a king-size pillowcase. Other types of mats are acceptable as long as they fit in the storage space provided. All children will lie down (not necessarily sleep) during rest time. However, they will need to remain quiet so other children can sleep.

Physical Activities

PLAYTIME - A child's participation in physical activity is critical to their overall health, development of motor skills, social skills, and maintenance of a healthy weight. Daily physical activity promotes young children's gross motor development and provides numerous health benefits, including improved fitness and cardiovascular health, healthy bone development, improved sleep, and improved mood and sense of well-being. ELCMDO will provide opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, for vigorous physical activity which engages every child during each school day through a variety of structured and unstructured activities. Weather permitting, all students will have a minimum of 35 minutes daily for outdoor play in the designated playground/recess/PE area on campus. In the event of inclement or extreme weather, we will utilize our gym.

Sunscreen and insect repellent should be applied by parents before school.

ENRICHMENT - We have a teacher who comes on Tuesdays and Fridays and does large motor skill with each class. She works with the children using music, obstacle courses, bean bags, musical instruments and more to help children with these skills.

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for developmentally appropriate physical activity each day as outlined in our school dress code below.

Dress Code

We ask that you dress your children in clothing that can be easily removed for diaper changes or potty time. Please no overalls or jumpers where the whole garment needs to be removed. Elastic waist pants work best so that the children can learn to take care of themselves at potty time. Dress children comfortable for active play! Girls wearing dresses should wear shorts underneath. Babies who are crawling should not be in dresses.

Because the safety zone in our playground consists of pea gravel, and because we do have climbing equipment, we ask that for your child's safety and comfort, please send him/her in rubber soled shoes. Velcro shoes work best so that the children can remove pebbles from their shoes during playground time. (No sandals, crocs, boots or flip-flops please). ALL CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE AN EXTRA SET OF CLOTHES IN THEIR BAG AT ALL TIMES.

Potty Training

All children turning 3 ½ years old must be completely potty trained. Children turning 3 years old must be in the process of active potty training. Children must stay in a pull up or diaper until COMPLETELY potty trained. Accidents happen and are understandable; however, children should be able to verbalize that they need to use the restroom and be aware and capable of using the toilet by this age. Repetitive accidents often affect self-esteem in children and as childcare professionals, we are concerned for your child's social and emotional well-being. We will definitely work with parents as issues arise related to potty training.

Field Trips

ELCMDO does not provide this service.

Transportation

ELCMDO does not provide this service.

Water Activities

ELCMDO does not have large bodies of water or water tables available for play. In May we DO have a Bubble/Splash day where small inflatable splash pads, small inflatable pools and a water slide is available for age appropriate water fun.

Animals

ELCMDO does provide two days of a petting zoo experience for the children. Parents will be notified before the petting zoo day giving them the opportunity to NOT have their child participate.



Discipline & Guidance

Discipline

ELCMDO is a Christ-centered atmosphere of love and acceptance of individual personalities. To provide a safely structured environment, general rules are established and are reviewed frequently so that children will learn expected behaviors. Inappropriate behavior is treated as an opportunity for teaching. Teachers will first re-direct children, then anticipate and eliminate potential problems, providing positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. Warnings and time outs are used when necessary. As a last effort, children may be brought to the office for a time out if they are disturbing the class.

If the child requires one on one attention, to the extent that it takes a teacher away from the other kids in the class on a consistent basis, we will have to discuss possible withdrawal from the program.

ELCMDO will alert parents of the behavior and when necessary the parents of the child will be contacted to set up a meeting with teachers/parents/director(s) to plan how to best meet the needs of the child in the school environment. If a problem persists, termination of enrollment may be necessary after all other efforts have been exhausted. ELCMDO reserves the right to terminate enrollment for any reason.

Biting & Aggressive Behavior

Biting and aggressive/harmful behavior will not be tolerated. The parents will be notified, and we will discuss strategies to prevent the situation. On the third offense, we will have to withdraw the child from the program.

Adjustment /Adaption Period

It is reasonable and expected that children may have difficulty adjusting to a new environment at the beginning of the school year, thus displaying increased negative behavior. However, students will be expected to acclimate and comply with age-appropriate ELCMDO guidelines as established in classroom policies.

Students with notable needs and/or additional behavioral concerns will be evaluated on a case by case basis. While our staff are trained in child development and how to educate each child in a successful and professional manner, certain needs require more stringent care and expertise than our resources allow. These needs can be better addressed by private or public school personnel who are experts in their field.

Parent Involvement



Open House

An Open House will be held before the start of school. This will provide an opportunity for you and your child to meet your child's teachers and to become acquainted with your child's classroom. It is a come-and-go style open house.

ELCMDO Parent Volunteers

ELCMDO does not allow parents to volunteer in the classroom or for special events. If parents are ever interested in seeing what's happening at the school they are always welcome to drop in and a director will be happy to show them around. However, all non employees must always be accompanied by a director while on the church grounds.

Parent Notifications

A monthly calendar is emailed out before each month. In addition, the calendar is posted on the website along with our school year calendar for special dates.

Parent Conferences

Parents may request a conference by contacting the teacher or the directors. We will then schedule a mutually convenient time to address your concerns. Please DO NOT try to conference with the teacher at the classroom door. This does not provide us with the time to give your concerns the proper attention as we are greeting each child and parent as they arrive and ensuring the safety of the children as we dismiss classes.

Parent Observations

ELCMDO has an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit the school at any time without prior approval; however parents MUST check-in with the office before entering the classrooms/ building for the purpose of observing their child in the classroom. All visitors must be accompanied by a director. This is for the safety of the children and staff.



Medical & Health Policies

Illness & Exclusion Criteria

Please keep your child home:

- If he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hour period
- If he/she has been on an antibiotic for less than 24 hours
- If he/she has a consistent green/yellow nasal discharge
- If he/she has a constant cough
- If he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally not himself/herself
- If he/she has symptoms of a possible communicable disease
- If he/she has diarrhea or vomiting

Your child must have had no fever and experienced no diarrhea or vomiting, all without the aid of medication, for 24 hours before they may return to school.

You will be contacted immediately should your child become ill/injured. If we are unable to contact you, we will contact someone on your Emergency and Medical Form. Your child will be asked to go home if sick. Examples of sickness include:

- A Fever of 100 or higher
- Continuous runny green or yellow nasal discharge
- 2 diarrhea incidents
- 1 vomiting incident

If your child was sent home from school with a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or any contagious disease, they may not return to school the following day. Parents should notify the school when children have a contagious disease so that other parents may be notified. This includes but is not limited to head lice, chicken pox, staph infections, ringworm, flu, strep infections, and pinkeye.

Children are required to wash their hands after toileting, before eating, and after outside play. Please follow through with these health habits at home.

Parents should notify the school if your child is experiencing a traumatic emotional experience, or any changes in your family that may have an effect on your child's behavior or emotions so that we can be supportive of their situation.

Medications

The school will administer medication only if the following procedures are followed:

- The parent must complete the medication form provided by the school office. This form must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian.
- Both prescription and non-prescription medication must be in its original container. Medication is administered as stated on the label directions.
- The administration of medication will be documented and filed with the student's school records.
- Do not leave medication in the lunch box, backpack, or diaper bag. Medication must be taken to the school office where it will be stored in a safe place. Teachers have access to emergency medications at all times.

Vision & Hearing Screenings

All children 4 years old by September 1st of the current school year are required by the State Minimum Standards to have Vision and Hearing Screening. We ask that you have the screening done at your pediatrician's office. Please upload the results to your child's profile in the app. Please name the file with your child's initials, the title of the document along with the school year.

(ie:SVVisionandhearing2425). If you have any questions about the screening, please ask in the ELCMDO office.

Breastfeeding

Mothers wishing to breastfeed their children during school hours will be provided a seat in a comfortable place to breastfeed and may also provide breast milk for their child while in our care.

Medical Emergencies/Accident/Injury

All accidents & injuries are reported to the Director. Parents are notified and an incident report is completed. If there is an injury that requires a doctor's attention, the parent is called immediately. If a child requires urgent medical attention, ELCMDO staff will call 911 immediately and then call the parent. If the parent has not arrived at the school, a staff person will accompany the child to the hospital designated by EMS. We will take all reasonable precautions to maintain the safety and well-being of our students.

Emergency Preparedness



Emergency Preparedness Plan

Please remember that during an emergency, emotions run high. Try to remain as calm as possible and listen to emergency response officials very carefully. ELCMDO practices monthly Fire Drills and quarterly Severe Weather Drill and Lock-Down drills to ensure the safety of the children during these types of emergencies.

Fire

1. The sound of the fire alarm or smoke alarm is the signal to evacuate the building.
2. Teachers shall line children up and evacuate the building using the proper escape route. Children under 24 months who have limited mobility should be put in the rolling cribs to evacuate. Evacuate to the back parking lot behind the AFLC. Escape routes are posted by the light switch in each classroom.
3. A verbal roll call to each classroom verifies all children are accounted for and are out of the building.
4. After the fire department gives an ALL CLEAR signal, the staff and children will return to the building.
5. If damage occurs to the main building, the children will be relocated to the AFLC building. The opposite is true if the AFLC is damaged, the children will be relocated to the main sanctuary building. In the event that neither building is safe, children will be transported to Debbie's Home Grown Kids. 281-485-7210. 2801 Harkey Road, Pearland, TX 77584. Teachers will count and verify all children arrive at this location.
6. All child information, emergency contact and authorization for emergency care for each child is located in our ProCare app, and parents or emergency contacts will be called.
7. The directors will contact local and state authorities, and will oversee the contact of parents.

Hurricane

The center is closed if a hurricane is approaching. No emergency procedures required.

Tornadoes

1. During threatening weather conditions, the directors will monitor weather reports.
2. The children and staff will return to the building and remain inside.
3. For tornado warning: staff and children will move to hallway away from doors and windows.
4. The director will monitor the weather until threatening conditions pass.

Missing Child

1. Call child's name and look diligently for them.
2. Call 911

Unidentified Person on Premises

1. Doors are to be kept locked from the hours of 9:30am to 1:30pm.
2. If a stranger comes to the door, DO NOT OPEN DOOR, communicate through the window they must go to the church office and check in.
3. Should a problem arise, all classrooms are locked down and 911 called immediately.
4. After the police give the ALL CLEAR, police will go and open each door, then children will be dismissed to parents

Medical Emergencies

1. In the event of a medical emergency, first aid/CPR will be administered if needed.
2. 911 will be called immediately
3. Children will be removed from the area if possible

Bad Weather Closing

ELCMDO will close for bad weather when Pearland ISD closes for bad weather. Please consult local radio/ television stations for official word. You can also check the Pearland ISD website www.pearlandisd.org. ELCMDO reserves the right to make an independent decision to close if it is warranted.



Important Information

Licensing information & Minimum Standards

ELCMDO is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS). We adhere to strict guidelines to provide your child with the best and safest environment possible. A copy of the minimum standards and licensing inspection report is available in the ELCMDO office for review at any time.

Their website is www.dfps.state.tx.us and the local office number is 713-287-3238.

Firearms

Epiphany Lutheran Church Mother's Day Out, in accordance with the TDFPS licensing rule, does not allow firearms or other weapons on our premises. Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty are exempt.

Gang Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

Texas Abuse & Neglect Hotline/DFPS

The child abuse hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

ELCMDO staff members are REQUIRED, by Texas State law and licensing requirements, to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Staff members are not required to notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called. Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on a child's body, and child hygiene/ neglect issues. More information posted on the bulletin board in the Director's Office.

Protect My Ministry

Epiphany Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe environment for our children and staff. All ministries of Epiphany Lutheran Church are conducted under the guidelines of Epiphany Lutheran Church's Protect My Ministry Policy. All Epiphany Lutheran Church staff and ELCMDO teachers have been certified for and will follow these guidelines. Should you have any questions, the director can provide you with more information.

Questions or Concerns

ELCMDO is pleased that you are a part of our school family. We are grateful for the opportunity to enjoy these early years with you and your child. By enrolling your child in ELCMDO and signing the Handbook Policy Agreement Form upon Registration, you agree to cooperate with and abide by our written and implied policies and rules. We do realize that questions and differences may arise and we ask that those be brought to the attention of the Director first. If you have ANY questions or concerns, please know that we are here to be of service to both you and your child.