

Mission Statement: First English Christian Preschool is a mission outreach of First English Lutheran Church to assist parents in the Christian development of their children.

Therefore, our objectives are:

1. To encourage development of the **whole** child in ways that enable children to be more mature and to feel secure in the love of God.
2. To teach simple **Christian truths** related to the child's experience and level of development.
3. To encourage the child in **self-confidence**, concern for others, **cooperation** in work and play, and a spirit of **sharing**.
4. To increase the child's skills in **listening, self-discipline, conversation, creative self-expression, and independent work and play**.
5. To better utilize the facilities of First English Lutheran Church.
6. To provide a Christian educational outreach program for all child ages three to five years old.

First English Board of Education

PHILOSOPHY

The early training of a child is the **most significant training** he or she receives. In a Christian preschool, a child becomes conscious of the daily presence of Christ.

We believe that our congregation's life and mission include **assisting parents/guardians** in the development of their children. A preschool learning center offers young children a Christian setting in which to grow, learn, and develop in their physical, spiritual, intellectual, and social skills.

We believe that the Christian early childhood learning center offers preschool children one of the best opportunities for **achieving the goals of Christian education** outside the home. It can help them develop the conscience, feelings, and attitudes that form the foundation for a positive self-image and good relationships.

We believe that dedicated and committed **Christian teachers** can provide young children with numerous opportunities for growth and development.

We believe that an early childhood learning center can **expand the child's perception of God**, of other people, and of the physical world in which God has placed us.

We believe each child is **respected and valued** and we take an interest in all aspects of the children's development, both at home and at school. It is hoped that we may work closely with parents/guardians in helping their children achieve their full potential, while letting them develop at their own pace.

CURRICULUM

We use Creative Curriculum. It is a research-based, developmentally age-appropriate curriculum for children 3-5 years of age. Curriculum addresses the social, emotional, physical, spiritual, mental, and educational development of children in relationship to readiness for the kindergarten programs of our schools. Children are taught using a variety of stimuli that encourage and appeal to a variety of learning styles and promote fine and gross motor skills. Health and language development are also integral parts of the curriculum.



The preschool sessions provide activities in directed and free play, active and quiet play, indoor and outdoor programs, and both group and individual experiences.

Some of the skills focused on include socialization, fine and gross motor skill development, creative expression through play, art and music, intellectual development in language, numbers, sizes and shapes, colors, alphabet, time awareness, matching and classification, directionality, and body awareness.

Preschoolers begin to learn to share, take turns, listen and follow directions, wait, give and take, care for and about each other, play cooperatively with others, and develop a positive self-identity.

As part of a complete curriculum, physical activity in children is important. Physical play, whether it takes place in the gym, outside, or in the classroom, is part of our daily schedule for at least 20 minutes each day. This amount of time meets all standards and guidelines within our curriculum.

PRESCHOOL LOCATION

The First English Christian Preschool classes are held in the educational wing of First English Lutheran Church located at **1311 East 18th Street**, Spencer, Iowa. The preschool phone number is **(712) 262-3699**, should you need to reach the director, secretary, teacher, or when messages are necessary for the children. E-mail messages may be sent to FELCpreschool1979@gmail.com



TOBACCO-FREE AND NICOTENE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

All facilities and grounds of First English Christian Preschool are tobacco-free and nicotine-free environments. Smoking cigarettes, cigars, or e-cigarettes or using chewing tobacco are prohibited in any of these areas and in view of the children in the program. All are included within this definition of a tobacco-free and nicotine-free environments. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

LICENSED PRESCHOOL

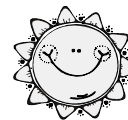
Our teachers have B.A. degrees in Early Childhood Education. The State of Iowa Department of Human Services licenses the First English Christian Preschool. We comply with all the childcare regulations set forth by the DHS. A copy of the Child Day Care Licensing Standards is available upon request. In addition, due to our partnership with Spencer Community Schools, we also adhere to the Iowa Department of Education rules for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for 4-year-old children.

ENROLLMENT

Children must be three or four years of age by September 15. It is recommended that the child is fully potty trained in order to attend preschool. Registration forms for enrollment are available from the preschool office. Unless noted otherwise, these forms are required by the State of Iowa, and shall be updated annually. The Department of Human Services carefully checks these forms to be sure the information is complete, including the doctor's address and phone number, specific dates and signature. For questions or concerns about licensing standards you may contact the Child Care Consultant for our area by contacting the Department of Human Services at (712) 255-2913 EXT 2083.

Parents must provide the program the following forms:

- **Current physical** signed by your child's own doctor
- **Iowa Certificate of Immunization** signed by a health official and parent, noting the complete date and source of each immunization. (Must be on file in the preschool office at the beginning of the school year.)
- **Authorization** for emergency medical and dental care
- **Pick-up Permission Form**
- Permission for **field trips, busing, media release, and class lists**
- **Registration form** complete with information about your child
- **Birth Certificate** for all preschool classes.



DISCHARGE POLICY

If your child is not yet ready for the group experience, or if necessary, requirements are not met, the preschool staff has the right to discharge any child after a conference with the parents and with the Preschool Board's consideration.

SELF-HELP SKILLS

Many self-help skills are learned in preschool. However, we encourage you to work on these skills with your child before school begins:

1. Putting on and taking off shoes, jacket, boots, hats, or mittens. (We will help with zipping, tying, snapping, etc.)
2. Cooperating during clean up time.

Some self-help skills are required to be in place before school begins:

1. Toileting skills should be managed independently by your child with the exception of a snap or zipper.
2. Basic handwashing skills.

PRESCHOOL TIMES AND TUITION

Upon the enrollment of each child the following fees shall be paid:

May tuition (refundable until June 15)

And a non-refundable registration fee of

\$75 per family (includes a t-shirt)

\$10 for additional Preschool t-shirts

Preschool for 3-year-olds (Must be 3 by Sept. 15):

2 sessions per week

Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday ~ 8:30 - 11:15 a.m.

Tuesday/Thursday ~ 12:30 - 3:15 p.m. *(added if class filled)*

\$150/month or \$1350/year

Preschool for 4-year-olds (Must be 4 by Sept. 15):

5 sessions per week

Half-Day Monday - Friday ~ 8:30 - 11:15 a.m.

Cost funded by the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant

Full-Day M, T, Th, F ~ 8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. & W ~ 8:30 - 11:15 a.m.

\$250/month or \$2250/year

***Children 5 years old** (by Sept. 15 - Inquire on pricing with Preschool office)



Scholarship opportunities are available for those who would financially qualify or where special circumstances apply for the family. Call the preschool for more information.



Monthly tuition is due on the first preschool day of each month. Your payment may be deposited in the tuition box located outside the preschool office, given to your child's teacher, or mailed to the preschool. We also utilize Brightwheel for making payments online. Tuition is considered late if not paid by the 10th of the month. A reminder will be sent home on the first school day that payment is late. If there is a financial hardship, please make arrangements with the preschool secretary or director. You may be able to apply for some financial assistance through the scholarship program. Your child may not attend preschool classes until arrangements are made to bring your account current.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS

First English Preschool will attempt to accommodate students with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. First English Preschool is located on ground level and has ground level entrances, which do not require ramps or stair steps. Doors and halls are wide enough to accommodate most child size wheelchairs. Due to the structural integrity of the school building, doorways will not be enlarged to accommodate large wheelchairs or special transporting modifications made. A special handicap accessible restroom is available. Staff may help special needs students use existing restrooms if this is agreeable to the child's parents/guardians and if parents/guardians train staff on how to give this assistance prior to the child attending preschool.

Preschool staff will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the visually and hearing impaired, including the use of certified therapy dogs at preschool. Availability of signing for the hearing impaired will depend on the existing and available training for staff at the time of the child's enrollment.

Budgetary restrictions do not allow First English Christian Preschool to hire additional staff members to care for special needs students. If additional adult assistance is needed for a child, the parents/guardians of the child with approval of the preschool director must provide this assistance. Parents/Guardians of a special needs child wishing to enroll their child in First English Christian Preschool need to meet with the director prior to enrollment to discuss the accommodations needed and determine if our preschool will be the best option for the child.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about your child and family is confidential and will be released to other centers, schools, or agencies only after the preschool has received written permission and/or a request from you.

FOOD & NUTRITION

First English Christian Preschool will provide a healthy snack from two food groups during each regular class session. Children will be provided with a variety of foods from their own culture and others to help them develop an appreciation of a diverse range of foods. A monthly calendar of the snacks and meals will be posted.

Each student will be scheduled to celebrate his or her birthday during the school year. **Special birthday treats** may be brought on the designated day but are not required. The treats must be prepackaged to make it easy to hand out to classmates.



All students will be served a snack or meal at least two hours apart, but not more than three hours apart. While students are encouraged to eat and try new foods that may be served, they are not required to do so. For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist involved in the child's care. Families of students with special dietary needs may also be responsible for providing pre-packaged healthy snack items to be served to their child as needed. A staff member will be responsible for serving special snacks to students when the daily snack conflicts with dietary restrictions.

- All children will be provided a snack during regular class sessions.
- Snacks and meals are served family style with adults and children eating together.
- Snacks and meals are at least 2 hours apart, but not more than 3 hours.
- Snacks and meals are served at regularly established times.
- Children are encouraged to drink milk.
- Children are guided to clean up spills.
- Children bus and scrape their dishes.
- Staff is encouraged to have casual conversations with children to promote language development, social relationships, and personal skills during snacks and meals. Staff allows children to guide the conversation. Mealtimes are a meaningful experience as well as an opportunity for learning.

CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

We recommend that children wear **play clothes** appropriate for the weather of the day. **Seasonal clothing** should be marked with the child's name (jackets, boots, coats, gloves, hats, etc.). Please send an extra set of clothing, including socks and underwear in a gallon size zip-lock bag to keep at school.



Tennis shoes are recommended. Flip-flops, crocks, open backed shoes, or dress shoes with slick soles are strongly discouraged. If a skirt or dress is worn, shorts must be worn underneath it. Post puberty items such as make-up, bras, acrylic nails, and jewelry hinder our preschool play and are discouraged.

A **FULL-SIZE backpack** will be needed to carry things to and from preschool. The preschool has a list of suggested supplies needed for the school year. This list is provided in your registration packet so that you can purchase prior to the start of school. You may be asked to donate certain items throughout the year, this helps to keep our tuition costs down.

ILLNESS AND ABSENCE

In the case of any planned or unplanned absence, always contact the office or message the teacher. If we do not hear from you, we will try to contact you regarding the absence.

We strive to prevent the spread of illness, and your cooperation with our policies will be of great benefit to all the staff and children attending. Other factors such as: appearance, temperament, and ability to take part in planned programming also need to be considered in your decision to send your child to school. **Your child must be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to preschool.**

If your child has any one of the following conditions, you will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible:

- Contagious disease
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Active diarrhea

Accident requiring medical attention.

(see Sick/Injured Child section)



If your child has surgery, we recommend a **minimum of 7-10 days** out of school. Your child may return with a doctor's note and when they can fully participate in activities.

SICK/INJURED CHILD

Any child exhibiting bacterial/viral or other unusual symptoms will be reported to the director for evaluation. Staff may administer first aid to an injured child within the scope of their training (apply pressure to stop bleeding, check for consciousness, do rescue breathing, etc.). Another staff will call either the child's parent/guardian or 911 based on the severity of the injury, as treatment is being administered. A copy of the emergency consent form from the child's file will be given to emergency personnel upon their arrival. Children must be transported to a doctor or hospital by their parent/guardian or by an ambulance service. First English Christian Preschool/First English Lutheran Church staff may not transport the child.

MEDICATIONS



First English Christian Preschool staff **will only** administer medications prescribed by a physician (i.e. allergies, diabetes). Pre-authorization forms must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. **All medications** must be in the original labeled container. Only staff members with the appropriate medication administration training will be allowed to administer medication. No medication is to be kept by students in their cubby, backpacks, or on them personally (including lip balms, lotions, & hand sanitizer). Medications are to be kept in the school's designated area. To ensure the safety of all students, a parent/guardian must deliver all medications to a staff member and vice versa.

First English Christian Preschool **will not** administer insect repellent.

DENTAL EMERGENCY



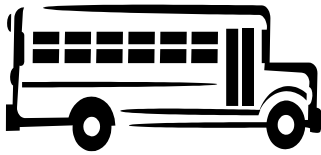
If a child should have a dental emergency, the child's parent/guardian will be notified. The family's dental provider may be contacted for instruction on the best care and solution to follow until a parent/guardian can get the child to the provider. The staff member will follow the instruction given by the dentist on how to proceed to provide the best care and solution to the dental emergency. The preschool will contact the local pediatric dentist for care information should there be no family dentist listed on the medical emergency sheet.

PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF



Children should be brought promptly at 8:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. arriving no earlier than 10 minutes before class start time and picked up at 11:15 a.m. or 3:15 p.m. Drop off and pick up your child in the classroom. **NEVER** drop children off outside the building. If your child is picked up more than 10 minutes late on three occasions, written notification will be given. After four late pick-ups, a late fee may be implemented. Carpools for transporting children to and from preschool are the responsibility of the families.

TRANSPORTATION



First English Christian Preschool uses a bus for field trips and to transport children after preschool. We do not charge for transportation. Donations are accepted to help fund the bus service. In addition to the bus driver, a staff member will supervise children. First English Christian Preschool reserves the right to refuse transportation to any student. Transportation is provided to students within the city limits whose stop falls within the guidelines of the bus policy. Additional bus policies are found in the Parent Bus Policy contract. A copy of our bus policy is found in the back of this handbook.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are conducted at various times of the year. A **field trip permission slip** will need to be signed upon registration and will apply for all field trips taken during the school year. Transportation for field trips will be arranged by the preschool staff and will most often be by bus. First aid kits will be available on field trips for emergency treatment of students, staff, or volunteers. Parents/Guardians are occasionally asked to assist with field trips. Parents/Guardians volunteering to help may be asked to sign a statement that they will be a mandatory child abuse reporter while traveling with the children.



TOYS



We ask that your children not bring toys from home to preschool because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or backpack buddies to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home. It is very difficult for a child to share his/her toy and even harder to understand if it is broken or lost.

We cannot be responsible for items that are brought to preschool by your child.

NO GUNS OR WEAPONS OF ANY KIND ARE ALLOWED!

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO and SOCIAL MEDIA



Students may be involved in school-sponsored activities that may result in photographs being taken of students engaged in those activities. These activities may include, but shall not be limited to programs, family nights, displaying samples of student work, or representing a particular instructional program. These visual images may take the form of videos, photographic (film or digital) display, or pictures in newspapers, magazines, reports, school or church-sponsored internet sites or class social media pages. Students may or may not be identified. Parents who do not want their student's directory information and/or visual image to be given out and/or published must notify the Preschool Office by specifying on the **Class List Permission and Photography/Media Permission Form** by the first day of school each year. Our staff follows the code of ethics and will be respectful when using photography, video and social media.

SUNSCREEN POLICY



If you would like sunscreen administered to your child before going outside, a medication form needs to be filled out and signed to be kept on file. Parents are responsible for providing appropriate sunscreen for their own child. Sunscreen must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name.

Sunscreen will be kept in a cupboard out of reach of children and will only be administered by appropriate staff members and will be documented when applied. Sunscreen will be applied 30 minutes prior to going outside in the warm summer months. SPF 30 or greater is recommended in lotion form.

ACCIDENTS

The church carries liability insurance for the preschool. We make every effort to safeguard the children. However, accidents do happen. Incident reports will be made for every incident and a copy will be given to the parent to review, sign, and keep on file in the office as well as home. *Please keep addresses and phone numbers updated with the preschool office and your child's teacher.

ACCESS

Parents are welcome to visit the preschool at any time and are encouraged by the teachers to do so during the normal hours of operations. Parents may have access to their child's information file upon request unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. To help students adjust to preschool, settle into a routine, and get acquainted with the teachers, we suggest that parents not linger when bringing students to class or visit until after October. This gives the child a feeling of independence and confidence to handle the transition of going to preschool without relying on a parent for emotional support.



Occasionally a student may be involved with court orders, which prohibit parental contact. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to notify the staff in writing if this situation exists. The notification needs to include the name of the restricted parent, effective date, and any other pertinent information. The custodial parent is also responsible for seeing that the parent restricted from contact with the child is listed on the student's transportation form as NOT being allowed to pick the student up from preschool. Staff will comply with court ordered contact restrictions and denials of consent to pick up a preschool student. If the restricted parent attempts such contact, they will be asked to leave, the custodial parent will be informed of the contact attempt, and if necessary, the police will be called to remove the restricted parent from the premises.

Visitors are asked to give prior notice before visiting a child's classroom. This would include grandparents and any other family members. These visitors would not be left unsupervised with the child and would not have access to the child's information file.

Sex Offenders - Anyone required to register on a sex offender's registry must meet with the director to establish an individualized written agreement to visit their child at preschool.

BITING

We want to ensure that every child is safe while in our care. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between the children. Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and are developing their language skills. Biting normally occurs between 13-24 months of age. By preschool age we expect this issue to have been resolved.



For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. When it happens, it's very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, or attention.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is the following:

- The biter is immediately removed from the group with firm NO. The bitten child is consoled, and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, then redirected.
- A written incident report is sent to the parents of all children involved that day. The name of a biting child is not released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult.
- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- We make special efforts to protect potential victims.

We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child and to the other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

CHILD'S PROGRESS

Parents may contact the teachers, and the teacher is encouraged to contact the parents concerning the progress of their child. There will be a conference period, designated by the teacher. **Conferences are held in the fall and the spring.** It is beneficial for the parents/guardians to attend to discuss the progress and development of their child.

DISCIPLINE



A safe, supportive and respectful environment is important in a preschool setting. Redirection, working through challenges, and positive reinforcement will be the primary methods used. On occasion a child may need to be removed from the situation to regain their composure.

First English Preschool has an established safe environment for children to play and learn. We want to provide a "yes" environment where children are free to explore. The established routine, including nutritious snacks, activities, and taking care of the student's basic needs can go a long way toward establishing the comfort children need to feel free to explore.

Teaching staff help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting them using these techniques:

1. Distracting the student by calling attention to another activity which is more suitable.
2. Redirecting the student, by removing the materials with verbal directions and substituting other toys or materials.
3. Ignoring undesirable behaviors in some situations.
4. Using natural or logical consequences which are connected to the child's behavior and teach responsible behavior.
5. Providing a setting of good example, role modeling, and imitating how something should be done.
6. Providing an ample variety of equipment and activities for the children.
7. Encouraging students to work out their problems by talking to each other. Staff will monitor these discussions to resolve conflict and will guide students to reach their own conclusions in problem solving. The students may be asked to choose separate learning centers if they cannot resolve the conflict.
8. Touching the child's arm, taking them by the hand, picking them up, holding them, restraining them, and removing or isolating them, may be part of discipline depending on the severity of the behavior. Staff will be able to observe the child at all times, even if the child is being separated from the group.

9. Making use of a thinking space only when all other steps have been taken and the behavior is disruptive or causes potential harm to self or someone else. The time spent in the thinking space will not exceed 5 minutes. If the child refuses to sit in the thinking space, staff will sit with the child for the appointed time. If the child still refuses to sit in the thinking space or becomes physically aggressive toward staff or other children instead of sitting, the staff may phone parents immediately.

Teachers may request a conference with parents if a child's behavior is continually disruptive to others. At no time is biting, hitting, spitting, or otherwise harming self or others acceptable.

Discipline will never be administered through corporal punishment, humiliation, scare tactics, verbal abuse, or threatening to or denying food. Staff is expected to act in a professional manner at all times.

PARENT ACTION

If a situation should arise where a parent has a concern about a specific incident or action involving a staff member, that concern will be addressed in the following way:

1. Parent/Guardian and staff member should discuss the situation and try to work out the problem.
2. If the situation cannot be resolved between these individuals, then the Pastor and preschool director should be notified.
3. If additional assistance is needed, the situation will be brought to the Preschool Board for further discussion and to be resolved.



EMERGENCY PLANS

The First English Christian Preschool building is equipped with an **Emergency Alert Sentinel (EAS)** system affiliated with the **KICD radio station** that alerts us all of weather warnings for our area.

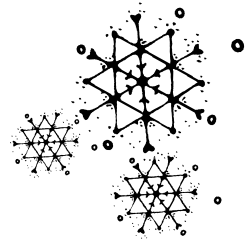
WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

When the Spencer Community Schools announce no school or an early out, the preschool will do the same except in the case of heat dismissals. If the school announces a late start for their classes, our classes will begin at **10:00 a.m.** and run until **11:30 a.m.** KICD carries all announcements of school closings or late starts and teachers will send out a message.

After more than three days of preschool have been missed due to weather related closings, days will be made up. The director will decide the make-up days and written notice will be given to the parents/guardians.

BLIZZARD/ICE STORMS

First English Christian Preschool will close if Spencer Public School is dismissed early due to weather conditions. Our preschool may also close for any other building emergency. To find out if First English Christian Preschool is closed, listen to KICD radio 1240 AM or 98.3 FM/107.7 FM.



If it begins to sleet or snow during the school day, and conditions are forecast to worsen throughout the day, the program encourages parents/guardians to pick up early. Sometimes an ice storm or blizzard develops during the time the children are in attendance, which makes it difficult for parents/guardians to pick up their children. The children will remain at the program until such a time that the parents/guardians can safely pick up their child. A teacher or parent/guardian that has not been given written permission to pick up a child may not attempt to do so.

If parents/guardians do not arrive to pick their child up from the preschool, staff will attempt to contact them. If parents/guardians are unable to be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified, and we will continue to try to reach the parent/guardian. If we are unable to reach a parent/guardian or an emergency contact person, the child will remain at the center with the staff. We will pray for everyone's safety.

SEVERE WEATHER

Drills are conducted once a month during varying times of the operation of the center. (See FIRE section for rationale) The signal for the drill will be a whistle blown followed by the teacher's verbal announcement with eye contact made for the hearing impaired. Each classroom exit will be posted with the identified drill area and follow the procedures below:



- The 3-year-old class should be directed to the machine room in the office area.
- The 4-year-old classes should be directed to the church library.
- Staff and children shall remain in this area until an all-clear signal is heard. Children and staff will receive training regarding the correct tornado drill positions. The director will verify that all children are accounted for. The drill will be recorded upon completion.

For children who are outdoors, staff will immediately assess whether there is time to return to the school building. If unable to return to the building, children and staff will lie face down in a low area nearby with hands shielding their heads.



If lightning is observed by staff or children while playing outdoors, children will immediately be directed to return to the school building.

In the event of a real weather event, the procedures outlined above will be followed. Staff and children will not exit from the safety area until an all clear has been sounded on the emergency warning system or radio. If there is structural damage, the director will call 911 for directions and then decide if it is possible to exit the building. If it is possible and necessary to exit the building, staff will follow emergency procedures to contact families.

EARTHQUAKE

In the event of an earthquake, staff will direct indoor children to take cover under tables, desks, and door frames, away from windows. Children who are outdoors will move away from the main building and sit down together with staff. Structural damage will be assessed by official personnel and director before children are allowed to remain in or reenter the building.

FIRE

Fire escape routes will be posted at every exit in each classroom with clearly marked evacuation procedures. Staff will receive training during their orientation upon hiring. Staff and children will participate in monthly drills that will be conducted at various times



of the day during program hours. Children and staff will receive training to respond quickly and efficiently to the building/program signal. This involves a routine hearing of the alarm and immediately exiting using the appropriate door. Since children at preschool may be in other parts of the building at any time, random time selection will ensure that all children are familiar with various exit points.

Staff will be responsible for checking rooms used and hallways for all children to ensure complete evacuation. All staff and children will proceed outside, at a safe distance away from the building. The children will be taken to the back (west) parking lot by the playground. Attendance will be taken to verify all children have successfully and safely evacuated the building. Drills are recorded upon completion and if other exits are used, it will be noted.

In the event of an actual fire, the preschool staff will use the emergency contact information to notify families of the situation and procedure to pick up their child. Children and staff may return to the building only when fire officials have determined it is safe to do so.

FLOOD

If danger is imminent, staff will be notified, and arrangements will be made to bus the children to Spencer Middle School. Staff will take emergency numbers and parents/guardians will be called. KICD will be notified, and a sign will be posted on the main doors of the church notifying families where they can be reunited with their child.

CHEMICAL SPILL

In the event of a toxic spill near or related to First English Christian Preschool and the preschool personnel are the first to witness it, 911 will immediately be called. Staff and children will cooperate fully with official personnel. All staff and children will immediately return to the classroom and will stay in the area until the All Clear is given by officials. If officials determine that evacuation of the center must occur, staff will take the emergency numbers and follow directions from official personnel.

BOMB THREATS

In the event of a bomb threat, notify the Pastor and the on-site supervisor. They will use professional judgment to assess the situation and determine the legitimacy of the threat. They will err on the side of the safety of the students and personnel.



If the threat appears to be legitimate:

- **Call 911**
- Evacuate the building and use fire drill alarm and procedures.
- When emergency personnel give the "all clear," return to the building.
- In inclement weather we will call to arrange for a bus to transport us to Spencer Middle School.
- Persons receiving the bomb threat should, as soon as possible, record the exact time/words used in the threat and identify priority search areas to help guide the officers. The priority areas would include areas that the caller stated, areas of unusual circumstances identified by staff, lockers, cafeteria, and church.
- Send a letter regarding the incident to parent/guardian.

GAS LEAK

If staff members smell gas in the building, even if there is no power outage, the following steps should be taken:

1. Inform other staff members of the odor and initiate evacuation of the building following the emergency fire plan.
2. Notify the gas company of the odor and possible leak as soon as the building is evacuated. Follow the instructions given by the gas company. Arrange for the students to be bussed to Spencer Middle School if deemed necessary. Staff will call families to pick up students and KICD will be called to report that the students have been moved to the middle school.
3. WE WILL NOT re-enter the church until a gas company representative gives clearance to enter the building.

In the event that the children and staff of First English Christian Preschool **must leave the school property** (i.e. building on fire, chemical spill, etc.), either the preschool bus driver or the Spencer Community School Transportation Director will be notified. A bus will be sent to transport the children and staff to Spencer Middle School and the parents will be notified to pick up their children there. KICD will be called requesting parents/guardians to pick up their children.

POWER FAILURES



Power failures in Spencer are generally infrequent and of short duration. The classrooms at First English Christian Preschool have large windows, which provide adequate light for most activities if weather conditions are not too dark.

In the event of a power failure, the staff will first reassure students and attempt to make the experience positive. Staff will wait 5 minutes after the failure begins before calling SMU or Gas Company to report the failure and to learn if this is a widespread outage or a problem at the school. If the power failure is widespread, staff will ask for a projected time for service to be restored. During this time staff will be alert to any signs of fire or other emergency, and preschool activities will continue. Preschool will proceed as planned unless the temperature inside drops below 65 degrees for more than 5 minutes or windows are not able to let in adequate light for activities. Under these conditions, parents/guardians and/or childcare providers will be called and asked to pick up students immediately due to the power failure.

MISSING CHILD

In the event that the center is unable to account for one (or more) attending child(ren), all children will be taken to the classroom. One staff member will stay with the children and the remaining staff will immediately be directed to completely search the ground and building while the others are being supervised. If the child is not found within 15 minutes, 911 will be contacted and then the missing child(ren)'s family. No staff or children shall leave the center until the authorities have arrived. Staff will cooperate fully with the recommendation of official personnel.

DANGEROUS ADULT

Because our preschool is located in a church, there will be people in the building other than parents or staff. The preschool and church secretaries monitor who enters the church building. The children spend most of their day in their classroom and do not have contact with anyone other than preschool staff. If the children do leave the classroom, they are accompanied by the teacher and/or associate. In the event of the presence of an adult who is deemed by the director to present a danger to the children, or a specific child, 911 will be called immediately. Staff will calmly request that the person leave the premises and advise them that officials are on the way (unless they feel that this action will present a direct danger to themselves or the children or escalate the situation).

If possible, staff will attempt to remove the children from the immediate area and relocate to another location, such as the neighboring house, locking the door to hallways, and remain with the children until the danger has passed.

A dangerous adult would include an adult exhibiting inappropriate behavior, bearing arms, and or showing signs of intoxication by either drugs or alcohol. This also includes any person who is prohibited by court order (copy contained in the child's file) to see or transport the child. In the event that the person leaves the center before the officials arrive, staff will write down the license plate of their vehicle and a full description of the individual. Staff will not place themselves or the children in danger by attempting to detain the individual.

In the case of an intoxicated parent/guardian, we would prefer not to send the child with that parent/guardian and would suggest keeping the child until a safe ride home could be found. However, if the parent refuses and leaves the center with the child, the officials will immediately be called with license plate and description of the vehicle.

***When any emergency has passed, we will have a prayer of thanksgiving for God's protection and care.**

INFORMATION

Any questions or requests for additional information are most welcome and should be addressed to the director at the preschool or to the Preschool Board; First English Lutheran Church; 1311 East 18th St., Spencer, Iowa 51301

If you need help understanding any of the information contained herein, or need a translation of this handbook, please contact the director at the address listed above.

Our HHS Consultant is:

Leann Steinhauer, Child Care Consultant
Division of Family Well-Being and Protection
Iowa Department of Health & Human Services
822 Douglas St. 2nd Floor
Sioux City, IA 51101
Telephone: (712) 577-3181 Cell
E-mail: leann.steinhauer@hhs.iowa.gov
<https://hhs.iowa.gov/>

If you have concerns regarding a childcare provider, please contact
the Child Care Complaint Hotline 866-448-4605

BUS POLICIES
FIRST ENGLISH CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL
2025-2026

First English Christian Preschool has a bus ministry that provides free busing for our preschool children after the morning and afternoon sessions. It is intended to be used for those children who have no other means of transportation. If there are too many children for one trip, some of the children will be kept at the preschool under the care of a childcare provider until the bus can return to take them.

1. Parents will be required to establish a set routine so that the preschool knows which children will be riding the bus each day and to what location. If there is a change, the parent must notify the preschool in writing (or phone call) as soon as the change is known, preferably a day in advance. These notes will be dated and kept with the bus log. **Last-minute changes must be made by 10:30 a.m. except in the case of an emergency.**
2. The children are expected to use safe and courteous behavior on the bus. This includes staying buckled and seated, talking in a quiet voice, staying in their own space, respecting the other children, bus assistant, and bus driver.
3. The preschool will set up the bus route for each day. Each day's route varies some depending on the number of children riding and the bus stop count for that day. Once the route is established, an estimated time of arrival can be noted by the childcare provider. *Please note: Route drop-off times may vary from week to week also. Providers should be available to receive children between 11:20 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
4. **The child(ren) cannot leave the bus until their supervising adult either:**
 - a. **Meets the child at the bus door (preferred), driveway or yard.**
 - b. **Acknowledges visual contact with the bus assistant or bus driver from the home's entrance.****No exceptions!**

**** The bus will not leave until the child is a safe distance from the bus.**

If no adult appears to be present, these steps will be taken:

- a. **Bus driver will honk.**
 - b. **Bus assistant will phone the residence. If two or more phone calls are made to the same childcare provider within one month, the parent will be asked to speak with the provider.**
 - c. **If no answer or an adult does not appear within 1 minute, the bus will leave with the child.**
 - d. **The parent will be called, and the child will be taken back to preschool. The parents will be charged \$1 for every 5 minutes the child is cared for at the preschool.**
 - e. **The incident will be noted on the route sheet by the bus assistant.**
5. Once the child leaves the steps of the bus, the preschool transfers the liability for the safety of the child to the childcare provider.
 6. If someone other than the usual childcare provider will meet your child at the bus, **you MUST notify the preschool office.**

7. First English Preschool reserves the right to refuse busing to any family.
8. It is the policy of the First English Christian Preschool that **the bus is not to back up** unless there is an emergency situation that negates this action to occur.
9. For significant behavior issues happening within a one or two week time frame, the following steps will apply for disciplinary action and the safety of all our students:
 1. **Verbal warning given to the child.**
 2. **Phone call to the parents.**
 3. **Written notification to the parents**
 4. **Dismissal from the bus route.**
10. Parents are required to read and sign this bus policy statement showing that they understand these policies and agree to them. **It is up to the parent to make sure their childcare provider knows these policies and agrees to them.**

**Exceptions may be made with the approval of the Preschool Director and Preschool Board.

I agree to these bus policies and understand that it is my responsibility to communicate them to my child's daycare provider.

Parent _____

Date _____