

2023-2024 Parent Policy

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St. John's Wee Care Learning Center
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Wee Care 2023-2024 Parent Policy

The Parent Policy contains guidelines and policies based on information available at the time of printing. **Wee Care reserves the right to amend the Parent Policy at any time during the school year if necessary. Parents would be notified of changes.** These changes may be based on a variety of factors, including health and COVID-related guidelines, which continue to involve. Health and other licensing guidelines may impact many of our policies, including, but not limited to: health exclusion guidelines, immunization requirements, allowable vaccine exemptions, drop off and pickup procedures, visitor policies, field trips, special events and other policies.

Educational Methods, Philosophy and Child Care Plan

Wee Care Learning Center is a non-profit, organization, licensed through the Minnesota Division of Licensing (651-431-6500). It is designed for toilet-trained children ages three through five years of age. Wee Care has a licensed capacity of 40 children and operates from September through May, Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 to 11:30 am or 12:00 pm.

Wee Care uses a variety of educational methods to provide quality preschool education. Our curriculum is based on the needs of the students, utilizing many sources including *The Creative Curriculum*, *The Letter People* and other age-appropriate curriculum resources. The document [Areas Explored on a Typical Day](#) describes ways our classes allow our students to interact and learn in a nurturing Christian environment.

Our philosophy is that each child who uses the center will develop, through Christian guidance, a good self-image and leave liking him/herself and others. The document [Wee Care Philosophy](#) describes, in more depth, our approach to education. As required by State law, Wee Care has developed a **Child Care Plan**, which is written and evaluated by the Director and a qualified teacher. This plan is reviewed annually and is available to parents upon request.

Registration

Children will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis (priority given to current families), upon receipt of the registration form and fee. There will be no verbal notification of acceptance. **A non-refundable registration fee of \$50** must be sent with the registration form. No sibling registrations will be taken from families with *past due* accounts.

All required forms should be submitted as soon as possible and **no later than July 15**. Additional forms may be required if the child has a medical condition, allergy, or special education need. Notify Wee Care of any information that changes during the school year. Minnesota law requires each child's **Health Care Summary** (due within 30 days of enrollment) and **Immunization Record** (due at the time of enrollment) to be kept on file with our center.

Payment Policy

Payment must be paid monthly on the first session of each month. Tuition is averaged over the nine-month school year according to the number of sessions per year in your child's class. Families with more than one child attending in the same school year will receive a 20% discount off any additional child's tuition. Payment received after the 10th of each month (even if your child is absent that day) must include a \$10 late fee. If payment is not received by the end of the month, your child will not be able to attend class until payment has been made in full. A fee will be assessed for any returned checks. This fee will be equal to that of the fee assessed by the bank holding our account.

Number of Sessions	Caterpillars (2 ½ hours)	Butterflies (3 hours)
1 day/week (29-30 sessions/year)	\$60/month	\$70/month
2 days/week (60 sessions/year)	\$105/month	\$125/month
3 days/week (90 sessions/year)	\$150/month	\$180/month
4 days/week (120 sessions/year)	\$190/month	\$235/month

Withdrawal

Classes are scheduled as full school-year classes. If a child must withdraw after classes have started, a **two-week written notice** must be submitted to the Director. Tuition for that month is non-refundable. Parents must sign a release form, which serves as written notification.

Calendar and Communication

Calendar: Wee Care has its own calendar. **Days may differ from the public school calendar.** Read it carefully and keep it on hand for reference. Parents will be notified of any changes. A monthly calendar is sent home summarizing themes, activities and snack assignments. Wee Care is in session September-May, Monday-Thursday from 9:00-11:30 or 12:00.

Student Folders: Daily newsletters, parent bulletins, monthly and annual calendars will be sent home in your child's folder or via electronic communication. If two sets of information are required, notify the office. Important information is also posted on the bulletin board outside of the office.

Wee Care Website: Our website also contains important information, and forms
<https://www.stjohnsandweecare.org/wee-care-learning-center/>

Communication App: Our staff communicates with families via an electronic communication application (specific app varies). Only parents and legal guardians will be given access to student information, photos and/or links. For the safety and privacy of our students, **ANY INFORMATION OR PHOTOS SHARED VIA PARENT COMMUNICATIONS MAY NOT BE SHARED ON ANY PUBLIC MEDIA SITE.** *A similar app may be substituted if necessary based on changing communication needs of the center. Parents would receive notification and permission slips.*

Contact the Office: The Wee Care office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:30 to 12:30. Staff can be reached at 533-6260. You may reach the Wee Care Administrative Assistant at weecareoffice@stjohnsandweecare.org or the Wee Care Director at director@stjohnsandweecare.org. Contact the Director if you have a complaint or grievance. This will be acted upon immediately and the concerned individual will be contacted within a week.

Class Cancellations

Wee Care's policy is that classes will be held when at all possible. The center **does not follow** the Stewartville Public School regarding weather closings. If Wee Care must dismiss early or cancel class sessions, the Director will inform K TTC and KAAL and will post it on our Facebook and communication app. Be sure to always check for the "**St. John's Wee Care, Stewartville**" announcement. The office voicemail message will also reflect the closure. In the event of an early dismissal, parents should pick up children as soon as possible. No tuition credit is offered for individual snow days. If more than one snow day occurs for one class session, either a make-up session or a tuition credit will be offered. The Director will decide which option is offered. Scholarship families do not receive tuition credit as tuition is already reduced; however, they are eligible for make-up sessions.

CLOSINGS DUE TO COVID-19 OR OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH MANDATES: Health and COVID-related guidelines for licensed childcare centers are rapidly changing. At this time, it is not possible to predict what those guidelines will be at the start of the school year. Therefore, policies regarding makeup days and/or tuition credit options will be determined at a later date. This information will be released to families prior to the start of school in September.

Absences

When a child is unable to attend a class, call Wee Care at 533-6260. Messages may be left on the machine. If your child has a contagious disease, you must notify the office. Tuition is not adjusted for days missed due to sickness, holidays, etc. If a child misses two consecutive weeks, and notification has not been given, the child will lose his or her place in the program and a new child will be added. Parents will be contacted and are required to pay the tuition for the missed sessions in addition to the two-week notification period.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Children

Drop Off: Wee Care allows a 15 minute arrival time. Therefore, **children do not need to arrive before 9:00 am.** Parents are required to escort their children into the building to check in with a staff member. Students will be instructed on where to put their coats, backpacks and folders.

Pick Up: At the end of the day, wait for your child in the large main room of the center. If the children are playing outside, please wait for them inside the building. Send a note to inform staff if you are picking your child up early. All families are required to fill out and return **Student Information Form**, specifying who has permission to transport your child. Your child will not be allowed to leave with anyone who is not on this list unless we have been notified in writing prior to pick up. Staff must also be notified **in writing** if someone else is picking up your child. Please note, firearms are not allowed on Wee Care or St. John's Church property.

Late Pick Up: Parents who have not picked up their child within 15 minutes of the end of class will be charged a fee of \$5 for every fifteen minutes. This amount is payable to staff present at pickup or added to the next tuition payment.

Immunization and Health Records

State law requires all children to have an **Immunization Record** on file with our center. This must be turned in at the time of enrollment. A **Health Care Summary** (signed by the child's physician) must also be turned into Wee Care within 30 days of enrollment. Students who have not turned in the required forms will be unable to attend school until these forms are received by our office. All records must be current and updated when additional immunizations are received. *If there is a medical reason for a missing immunization, the physician must provide a signed statement. Any immunizations opposed by parents must be documented with a notarized statement. In the event of an outbreak or exposure of a vaccine-preventable disease (as defined by the Olmsted County Health Department), or health department directives by State or Local authorities, Wee Care reserves the right to refuse enrollment or ask a non-vaccinated child to stay at home from class.

*As a state-licensed facility, St. John's Wee Care Learning Center must follow state and federal guidelines regarding required immunizations. If official licensing or government guidelines change during the school year (including, but not limited to: prohibiting exemptions or requiring additional vaccinations), Wee Care will inform parents of the requirements. Families would be required to follow the updated guidelines. Wee Care reserves the right to dismiss a student who does not comply with immunization requirements as specified in licensing, state, federal or local guidelines.

Illness and Medication

If a child becomes ill at Wee Care, he or she will be taken to the office to rest under the supervision of the Director or Office Assistant, who will contact the parents. If not available, the other adults listed on the emergency form will be called until someone is found to take the child home. If transportation cannot be arranged, parents may request to send

a child home or to day care using Grisim Bus. Prior written permission (on the Information Form) must be given before Grisim may transport. Bus transportation of an ill student will only be offered if permitted by Grisim Bus Company.

Wee Care does not dispense over-the-counter medications. It is preferred that all medications be given at home before or after Wee Care classes. If it is necessary for Wee Care to dispense emergency prescription medications, a doctor's form is needed. Both the parents and physician must sign and date the form. Prescriptions must be in the original, labeled container. Written parental permission must be given to administer medicine, sunscreen and insect repellants.

Parents must notify Wee Care of any medical conditions or allergies at the time of registration or as soon as they are discovered by medical staff. Parents will be asked to fill out an Individual Child Care Program Plan (ICCPP) describing the condition/allergy, specific triggers, avoidance techniques, symptoms of condition or allergic reaction, treatments, procedures for responding to an allergic reaction/medical emergency (including medication and dosage), physician contact information and emergency plan. This document will be shared with any staff member that would be onsite during the child's care. If necessary, it may be shared with parent volunteers during special events (classroom parties) and/or field trips.

The health guidelines and exclusions below are subject to change during the year if guidelines from state and local authorities become updated. Families will be notified of any changes if/when they occur.

Do not send your child to school if:

- Your child has a fever of over 100.0°F. He/she may return after being fever free for 24 hours **without** the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Your child has vomited or had diarrhea/loose stools in the last 24 hours.
- Your child has strep throat. He/she may return 24 hours after beginning antibiotics.
- Your child has mattered eyes. He/she should be evaluated for pink eye. If positive, the child may return after being medicated for 24 hours.
- Your child has live lice present.

Parents must **notify the Director within 24 hours** if their child has developed a contagious illness or lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm or chicken pox. The Director will post or give notice to parents of exposed children within 24 hours of the center being notified of the child's illness or condition listed in the previous sentence. Wee Care is required to report some of these conditions to the State of Minnesota. Per Minnesota licensing regulations, a child with the following conditions or behaviors is termed a sick child and **must be excluded** from a center not licensed to operate a sick care program. **Per MN Rule 9503.0080, the license holder must exclude a child:**

- With a reportable illness or condition as specified by law that the commissioner of health determines to be contagious and a physician determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others;
- with chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over;
- who has vomited two or more times since admission that day;
- who has had three or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day;
- who has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye;
- who has a bacterial infection such as streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy;
- who has unexplained lethargy;
- who has lice, ringworm, or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others;

- who has a 100 degree Fahrenheit axillary or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given;
- who has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition;
- who has significant respiratory distress;
- who is not able to participate in child care program activities with reasonable comfort; or
- who requires more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in care.

Accidents, Injuries and Emergencies

The Wee Care staff is trained in Pediatric First Aid, CPR and Universal Precautions. In the event of any injury or illness, trained staff will administer First Aid. Parents will be notified by phone and/or written report regarding any injury or accident occurring at Wee Care. A copy of the report will be kept on file at Wee Care and, if required, filed with the state licensing agency.

If necessary, staff will contact Olmsted Medical Group, and/or Stewartville First Response at 911 to provide emergency medical assistance. The child will be transported to a medical facility if deemed necessary by emergency personnel. A parent, guardian or emergency contact will be reached as soon as possible. All expenses related to an emergency are the parent's responsibility.

Health Policy

Children must wash hands before entering the classroom, after using the bathroom and before snack is served. Hand washing guidelines are posted and followed according to health department standards. A safe and clean environment is maintained. The facility, toys, furniture, bathrooms and equipment are cleaned, sanitized and/or disinfected per state law guidelines. Wee Care will follow guidelines and recommendations from the State of MN and Olmsted Public Health.

Visitation, Volunteering and Conferencing

Per MN Statute 245A.14, subpart 15, "an enrolled child's parent or legal guardian will be allowed access to the parent or legal guardian's child at any time while the child is in care." All visitors and volunteers must check in with the office before entering classrooms. Wee Care has a policy that visitors/volunteers **must have prior authorization from the Director and/or classroom teacher before taking any photos**. If permission is given, the visitor/volunteer **may only take photos of the child he/she is visiting**. We also have a confidentiality policy concerning discussion of children's behavior, performance, and medical or health conditions. We ask that people who visit our classes abide by these rules.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered two times during the year. At that time, parents will receive a written report form. Reports will include assessments of the child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.

Research and Public Relations

By signing the Annual Parental Permissions on the Student Information Form, parents have given Wee Care permission to display their child's picture and/or name on our website, Facebook page, electronic communication app, promotional DVD, newspaper and/or television for publicity purposes. This fulfills the DHS parental permission requirement which summarizes the annual public relations activity for our center.

Per licensing, parental permission would be requested prior to any occasion of research or experimental procedure.

Field Trips

An individual permission slip will be issued each time a field trip is planned. It must be signed and returned before a child can partake in the activity. In the event of unfavorable weather conditions occurring during a field trip, children may be transported by Grisim Bus to and/or from Wee Care. Parents have given permission for this by signing the Annual Parental Permissions on the Student Information Form.

Snacks and Water

Wee Care encourages healthy eating and complies with the Department of Human Services Nutritional Snack Standards. Parents will be asked to provide a nutritious snack and a half gallon of 100% juice or 1% or skim **white milk. (2% and chocolate milk and juices other than 100% do not meet DHS standards)**. Children will be assigned a date to bring a snack. This will be printed on the monthly calendar. The center keeps backup snacks. If you forget to bring a snack, please provide a replacement snack (such as crackers). All snack items must be pre-packaged and store-bought. We are unable to serve any items prepared at home (this includes the cutting of fruits, vegetables, cheeses, etc.).

We are required, by licensing, to serve a snack that **includes items from at least 2 of the stated food groups**. The listed drinks can be counted as a food group. This is not an all-inclusive list. This list may be modified if we are notified of a student allergy or sensitivity OR if modifications in requirements are made by MN DHS.

- **Liquid Milk:** 1% or Skim WHITE MILK ONLY
- **Grains:** pretzels, pitas, crackers, English muffins, bread sticks, crackers (any kind), popcorn, flavored rice cakes, granola bars, dry cereals (low sugar), banana bread, tortillas
- **Vegetables:** carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, radishes
- **Fruits:** raisins, applesauce, apples, pineapple chunks, oranges, berries, melon chunks, pears, bananas, etc., canned or packaged fruits, 100% fruit juice (NO FRUIT SNACKS OR GRAPES, PLEASE)
- **Meat & Protein:** peanut butter, nut/seed butter (all kinds), lean meat, yogurt, cream cheese, cheese spread (used as a dip), string cheese, sliced or cubed cheese, cheese curds

Water is offered daily to all children and available throughout the hours of operation. It is offered in a single-serve cup or through drinking fountains accessible to children.

Allergies

Parents must notify staff in writing of any allergies. This should be submitted at the time of enrollment. Parents, along with the child's health care provider, will be required to complete an Individual Child Care Plan which will include (but are not limited to): a description of the allergy, specific triggers, symptoms of allergic response, avoidance techniques, allergic response procedures, medications (and dosages), and medical provider contact information. State licensing requires that this information will be shared with all staff who may work with your child. If a new allergy appears after enrollment, notify the office, in writing, as soon as possible. This will become part of your child's file and will be shared with our staff and the child's class so that parents are aware when providing snacks. Per DHS requirements, food allergy information, along with the child's name, is also posted in classrooms where food is served.

Pets

Wee Care does not have classroom pets. Notify the office if your child has an allergy to pet dander, as pets do sometimes visit for show and tell. Parents **must ask permission** from the center director and the child's teacher **at least one week in advance** to make specific arrangements prior to bringing a pet for sharing. All visiting pets must be healthy,

fully vaccinated and under an accompanying parent's control at all times. Animal visitation is at the discretion of the center director and may be prohibited on an individual basis.

Behavior Guidance Policy

Wee Care's Behavior Guidance Plan ensures that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior. It is tailored to the developmental level of the children that our center is licensed to serve. It follows the general principles:

- Staff members redirect children and groups away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict.
- Children are taught to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in order to reduce conflict.
- Protect the safety of children and staff persons.
- Provide immediate and directly-related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.
- Wee Care has the following rules:
 1. Walk in the building.
 2. Use inside voices.
 3. Be nice to others.
 4. Take care of Wee Care toys.

These rules will regularly be explained and reviewed. A child will be given a warning if he or she breaks a rule and then redirected to another activity. All redirection will be immediate and any consequences will be directly related to the unacceptable behavior. If the child continues the behavior, the Director will problem-solve with the child and come up with alternative ways to deal with the issue that are more appropriate. In accordance with MN Rule 9503.0055, subpart 4, if these less-intrusive methods do not work and the child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the center, he/she may be separated from the group. Any such separations are recorded daily on a Separation Report. The child may rejoin the group when he or she has calmed down and can participate in the activity and follow the rules. If the child does not initiate reentry, the teacher will invite them back after 3-5 minutes.

If the child's unacceptable behavior continues, staff will observe and record the behavior (and any attempted interventions) on a Behavior Log and/or Serious Behavior Report and a conference between parents and staff will be arranged. If appropriate, a Behavioral Individual Child Care Program Plan (ICCPP) will be developed. Consultation with parent(s), staff and other professionals will also be set up if needed. Wee Care Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss any student if unacceptable behavior continues or cannot be controlled.

In accordance with MN Rules 9503.0055, subpart 3, Wee Care prohibits the following actions:

1. Leaving the children unattended.
2. Subjecting the child to corporal punishment. Corporal punishment includes, but is not limited to; rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, and spanking.
3. Subjecting a child to emotional abuse. Emotional abuse includes, but is not limited to; name calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, and using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.
4. Separating a child from the group, except as provided in sub-part 4 of license rules:

No child may be separated from the group unless the license holder has tried less-intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior which have been ineffective and the child's behavior threatens the

well being of the child or other children in the center. A child who requires separation from the group must remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person. When separation from the group is used as a behavior guidance technique, the child's return to the group must be contingent on the child's stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation, and the child must be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops. A child between the ages of six weeks and 16 months must not be separated from the group as a means of behavior guidance.

5. Punishing for lapses in toilet habits.
6. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.
7. The use of physical restraint other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
8. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.
9. Neglecting to report any of the above to proper authorities.

LCMS Nondiscrimination Policy

St. John's Wee Care Learning Center adheres to the LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) school nondiscrimination policy which states: *Wee Care is operated by St. John's Lutheran Church and admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships and other school-administered programs.*