



2024-2025

Preschool Parent Handbook

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crossofhope.org/school-main-page



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*“Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.”
Proverbs 22:6 (NRSV)*



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Message from Pastor

August 2024

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Dear Cross of Hope School Families,

Welcome in the name of Christ!

We are grateful for YOU! Whether new or returning children and parents, teachers, and staff, we join in learning and growing in life and faith. It is a tremendous blessing to abound in hope together.

On behalf of the community of faith of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church, we are honored and blessed to share this journey with you. As we begin this new academic year, we are excited to share in the nurture, love, and education of your child during. Our School Ministry is grounded in God's love made known in Jesus and dedicated to the mission of educating our children from this place of love and care.

I invite and encourage you to participate in the life of the church community! We welcome all to worship on Sunday at 9 a.m. for a traditional Lutheran worship and at 10:45 a.m. for a more contemporary worship with our Praise + Team. We look forward to renewed opportunities to gather in faith formation this year and hope you'll join us. Keep up to date with what's going on at: www.crossofhope.org.

Along with Ms. Rivera and our staff, I am eager to get to know you and your child, to provide pastoral care and support along the journey, and to show God's unfailing love as best as I am able as we grow in life and faith together. During times of illness, joy, death, and celebration, please be encouraged and invited to contact me so we may join in prayer and response as a community of faith. It is a blessing to be in ministry together.

God bless you as we share this journey!

Peace,
R. Adam Berndt, Pastor

Message from the Preschool Director

“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Hebrews 12:1(NIV)

Dear Cross of Hope Families,

Welcome to Cross of Hope Preschool! I hope your summer was full of fun and relaxation, and that you enjoyed the time spent with your children. Taking time to sit back and make memories with your family is what summer vacation is all about. The time spent with you is what allows your child to learn and grow in a positive and enriching way.

As you prepare for this journey of preschool, always remember that you are your child’s first teacher and the moments spent with you are what your child will always remember. I encourage you to make the time to sit down to play and listen to your children and continue to cherish every moment you have with them.

We are excited about this school year and look forward to everything it has to bring. We love each and every child and are passionate about teaching God’s love and watching them grow in HIS image.

In HIS name,

Courtney Knutilla, M. Ed.
Preschool Director





Compass Statement

Compass Statement

We are set free into HOPE-filled ministry to
Love God, Transform Relationships and Serve Others.

Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School is a
multi-generational Christian community
that joyfully follows Jesus.

We Value:

A Warm Welcome

We embrace you wherever you are on your journey of faith.

A Diverse and Inviting Community

We want everyone to feel love and acceptance.

Dynamic Worship

We experience God's presence through prayer and worship.

Learning about God

We embrace opportunities to learn and grow in faith.

Community Outreach

We share God's love with others.

Mission Statements

Church Mission Statement

Cross of Hope is a Spirit-centered community that shares Christ's love through worship, education, and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.

School Mission Statement

Cross of Hope School is a welcoming, Christ-centered community providing high quality education in a nurturing environment that respects each child's development.

Community Covenant

As members of the Christian community of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and Schools, we commit, with the help of God, to relate to each other through Christ, and thus hold ourselves and each other to:

- 1. Listen to each other** *“Let everyone be quick to listen slow to speak.” James 1:19*
- 2. Respect the privacy of those who confide** *“A gossip goes about telling secrets, but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence.” Proverbs 11:13*
- 3. Challenge each other with the truth** *“Rather speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:15-16*
- 4. Deal with people directly. Don’t complain to others.** *“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone”. Matthew 18:5*
- 5. Strengthen each other** *“Speak only what is useful for building up...so that your words may give grace to those who hear” Ephesians 4:29*
- 6. Be gentle with one another** *“My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.” Galatians 6:1*
- 7. Do not speak ill of others in the fellowship** *“Beloved, do not grumble against one another so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!” James 5:9*
- 8. Do not judge each other** *“Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things.” Romans 2:1*
- 9. Pray for and with one another** *James 5:16*
- 10. Confess your sins to one another** *James 5:16*
- 11. Forgive one another** *“Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you.” Luke 6:37b-38a*
- 12. Freely participate in the Body of Christ according to your gifts and talents** *“As you go, proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near!” Matthew 10:7*

Staff Roster

NAME	POSITION	EMAIL
ADAM BERNDT	CHURCH PASTOR	COHPASTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
SUSAN RIVERA	DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL MINISTRY	ESDIRECTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
NANCY LACHER	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	NLACHER@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
ANGELA DURHAM	KINDERGARTEN	ADURHAM@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LINDA ARAGON	1 ST GRADE	LARAGON@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
NATASHA NATEWA	2 ND GRADE	NNATEWA@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
ELAINE PRATT	3 RD /4 TH GRADE	3TEACH@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JOY THORNHILL	4 TH /5 TH GRADE	4 TH -5 TH TEACH@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
DEBRA GONZALES	LITERACY INTERVENTIONIST	DGONZALES@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
PAULA WILLIS	MATH INTERVENTIONIST	PWILLIS@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LYNNE BAGBY	SPANISH	LBAGBY@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
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LISA WHITE	LIBRARY/ART	LIBRARY@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JULIE MARTIN	LUNCH MANAGER/FRI ENRICHMENT	LUNCH@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LEILANI DIXON	LUNCH/FRIDAY ENRICHMENT	NA
FLORENCE BEGAY	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	NA
COURTNEY KNUTILA	PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR	PSDIRECTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
ANN MARTIN	PRESCHOOL TEACHER - 3'S	PK3S@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LORI BRAUNHARDT	PRESCHOOL TEACHER - 4'S	EAKINDER@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
RHONDA CANTU	Ps EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	PKEA@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JADE GILMORE	Ps EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	JGILMORE@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
BRIANNA MARES	FINANCE OFFICER	FINANCE@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG

School Mascot

Roadrunner



Our Foundation

Cross of Hope Church and School Faith Statement

Cross of Hope Church and School is part of the Church established through the Holy Spirit for Christ's disciples throughout the ages. We are orthodox and apostolic in this sense. We were once part of the Roman Catholic Church but were separated from that church in the 16th century. At that time, Martin Luther and other reformers agreed to the faith of the Roman Catholic Church, as supported in Scripture, but rejected certain abuses of the faith. Our faith was summarized in documents called confessions. Chief among these writings is the Augsburg Confession, A.D. 1530.

As Christians our faith can be summarized below:

1. We believe in God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20).
2. We believe that Jesus Christ is God's Word to us through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection we have life. Jesus is Lord (John 1:1-2, 14).
3. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. They are inspired and announce the good news in Christ Jesus. Scripture is the guiding source and norm for our faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16).
4. We accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true reflections of the faith of the Church (Ephesians 4:4-7).

Statement of Objective

We will provide qualified teachers, a rich environment and curriculum with developmentally appropriate activities that will allow children to grow and develop as unique individuals as well as strengthen them spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. We seek to instill in each child the foundations needed for success in school and a lifelong love of learning. We strive to develop a partnership with families that results in families' active educational involvement and mutual respect between parents and teachers that support the child's growth and development.

Purpose and Goals of Preschool

Cross of Hope School has a church Preschool ministry for three- and four-year-old children that is based on the following goals for early childhood ministry: Christian Nurture, Mission Outreach, Quality Education and Community Service.

- Christian Nurture sets our school apart from the secular preschool programs. Christian teachers and staff will be engaged in modeling Christian values for the children, as well as in direct teaching of Bible stories, songs, prayers, and other Christian teachings. Teachers will need to be practicing Christians who have thought out for themselves the relationship between Christianity and their daily lives. (Ephesians 4:1-6:18)
- Mission Outreach is an important goal of the preschool. The preschool becomes a bridge between church and family. By involving our Pastor with the Director and the children, the connection with the church is made stronger. Children are the greatest evangelists we have in the church. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- A Quality Education is provided by following a developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to meet the spiritual, intellectual, social/emotional, and physical needs of each child. Each child will be supported in his/her intellectual development through manipulation of materials and interaction with the environment, fostering curiosity, creativity, problem-solving and decision-making ability. Physical development is to be supported using activities and equipment designed to build large and small muscle coordination. Children will be helped to become aware of the unique potentials and characteristics of self and others, plus develop a sense of self-worth. Through group interaction and acceptance, a positive self-concept will reflect God's love for all people. (John 13:34-35)

- Community Service is a goal for our community, heavily populated with young families with young children. The preschool will give our church a greater visibility and a greater range of influence. Research tells us that the greatest learning takes place during the first six years, and those children who attend quality preschools simply fare better as they begin school. We want to provide this service to our community. To help the children learn that God is pleased when we help others, the preschool provides the families with several opportunities to participate in community service projects. (1 Timothy 6:17-19, Luke 21:1-4)

Quality Christian Family and School Education

Our preschool is committed to assisting parents in teaching their children the truths of God, a love for themselves and all people and the skills and knowledge necessary to equip them for lives of joy in service to our Lord. These truths are the foundation of our ministry:

1. All people are created by God. *“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply...” Genesis 1:27-28 (NRSV)*
2. Parents are the first teachers representing God to their children. *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home or when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (NRSV)*
3. The Bible is the Word of God and the guiding source on how we are to live our lives of faith daily. *“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NRSV)*



What can you expect in terms of Christian education for a three, four, or even a five-year-old child? One way to answer this question is to let you know that our purpose will not be indoctrination, but rather will be very simple concepts about God which will be worked into everyday life of the school. Our purpose is that the children will learn to know God's love through direct experiences, which is the way young children learn best.

God will be introduced carefully to avoid confusion with Santa Claus or magic. Young children have trouble understanding abstract concepts. The children will be taught that: God is love, God created all living things and God cares about everyone. Jesus will be talked about as God's Son and our Special Friend. Concepts such as the Trinity and Resurrection will be introduced using age-appropriate materials. They will learn that the church is God's family and there is a Pastor there who explains what God is like. The Pastor will help the children learn about and how to worship. Since much religion is "caught" rather than taught, young children acquire much of their knowledge about religion through the loving concern of their teachers, parents, and pastors.

The children will celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas and his life at Easter, as they think of new life when new baby animals are born and flowers bloom, etc.

Our school will focus on loving each other as God loves us, with teachers, parents and pastors modeling respect, encouragement, cooperation, and forgiveness. They will also learn about the need to care for all of God's creation, including themselves.

The Bible will be introduced as a special book about God, and they will hear Bible stories, sing simple religious songs, pray simple prayers, and learn simple Bible verses.

Research shows that developmentally, preschoolers may still only be able to think of God in human terms. Thus, these are the years when the humans with whom they interact can provide that very crucial experience of love, which they will learn to know, is God!

Educational Philosophy

“Jesus said, Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 19:14

The preschool has been designed for children; it is above all else their school. The primary objective is to allow all children enrolled in our program to grow and develop as unique individuals. To accomplish this, the environment has been carefully prepared so that children can explore a variety of equipment and materials. We believe in providing a physical environment that is clean, safe, and oriented to children. Classrooms are arranged to offer challenging learning choices at a range of developmental levels. Activity (learning) centers allow children the opportunity to explore, to experience and most importantly...to succeed. From books and a writing center to blocks and dress-ups, from creative art projects to interesting science and cooking experiences, a child's choice of firsthand experiences will be many and varied. Child-initiated activities will allow each child the opportunity to make discoveries or practice skills at his/her own pace.

Teacher-directed activities encourage children to experience new ideas and concepts in a concrete way. Our teachers plan a creative thematic plan

throughout the year that strives to accomplish all our spiritual and academic goals through planned learning time, exploration, and interaction with adults who serve as facilitators and role models. We believe that parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We strive to create mutual respect between parents and teachers and develop a partnership for the benefit of the child. We encourage daily communication between parents and teachers.

Children will be encouraged to learn self-help skills, such as hand washing and putting on coats. They will also be expected to help maintain the classroom by cleaning up after they finish an activity. In this way, children develop self-confidence in their abilities and learn to cooperate with their classmates.

By providing the children with many opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking about disputes, children begin to learn to solve interpersonal problems. The freedom to interact with others and to explore the classroom also encourages the development of problem-solving skills, independence, and the ability to make choices.

Our Framework

Developmentally Appropriate Education

What is it?

Child development means that children develop skills as they grow, mastering simple tasks before they go onto the more complicated ones, such as a baby learns to crawl before he walks. Developmentally appropriate education means that we structure the preschool classroom and activities around the developmental levels of three- and four-year-old children. A six-month-old baby is developmentally unable to talk but is learning to talk by listening to others around her. Developmentally appropriate education for this child would involve talking to her, reading stories, and just allowing her to be around grown-ups who talk to each other. At three and four years of age, children are not development-tally ready to sit at desks and learn the mechanics of writing the alphabet or doing math problems, but if provided a rich environment they will develop and practice skills that will carry them through life.

How do we know what the development levels of a three- or four-year-old are?

Our teachers are professional educators with degrees in child development and their combined experience working with children exceeds thirty years. They keep their education current by taking classes and attending annual conferences of the Association of Christian Schools International.

What does all this mean for my child in the classroom?

It means that your child will be learning by doing. Don't expect to see children sitting at desks writing their letters or practicing math problems. These concepts are too abstract for three- and four-year-old children. Instead, expect to see children busy in the classroom. They will be learning cooperation by working together to build a wooden block structure, they will learn responsibility by being expected to pick up after themselves, and learn creativity through art, music and dramatic play activities designed to let them express themselves. No, we don't ignore the alphabet or arithmetic. But instead of drill work the children will be gluing beans to an outline of their names or helping count the number of children who came to school. We believe this is the best way to teach young children. We present simple concepts and then give them plenty of opportunity for practice. There is lots of learning going on in our classroom and the children are "learning" that school can be fun. Children learn as the teachers serve as facilitators during this time of explorations.

Curriculum

The Cross of Hope preschool staff has developed a comprehensive research-based curriculum guide and assessment plan. Developmental Objectives have been completed which serve as the basis for curriculum implementation. Classroom activities are based on the COH Developmental Objectives and follow an outlined yearly concept calendar developed by the teachers. The following



areas of development are covered by the Cross of Hope Preschool

Developmental Objectives:

- Spiritual
- Physical Development, Health, and Well-Being
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Aesthetic Creativity
- Scientific Conceptual Understandings
- Self, Family, and Community
- Approaches to Learning

Our Design

Accreditation

Our preschool program is accredited through the Association of Christian Schools International. We are a 5-star rated school; the highest rating awarded by the Early Childhood Education & Care Department of the State of New Mexico. Our current accreditation term is from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2025

Licensing

Our program is licensed by the Early Childhood Education & Care Department of the State of New Mexico. A copy of the State Regulations has been given to all employees for their review. Copies of the State Regulations and our license are also posted in each classroom. Our licensing review process occurs every May.

Admission Policy

Children are eligible for admission if they meet the following requirements:

1. Three-Year-Old Class: Must be three years old by September 1 of the school year attending.
Four-Year-Old Classes: Must be four years old by September 1 of the school year attending.
2. Completely toilet trained. (See Toilet Trained Policy).

Once a class is full a waiting list will be created, and families will be notified of vacancies based on their position on the list.

Assessments and Parent Conferences

Two parent conferences are held during the school year. These conferences are scheduled during the fall and spring semesters. A sign-up sheet will be available at the preschool two weeks prior to the conference week.

Children are assessed in each area of development based upon the Cross of Hope Preschool Developmental Objectives. Assessments take place throughout the year and are shared with the parents at the Parent/Teacher Conferences held in the spring. A Student Portfolio is created for each child and is sent home at the end of the school year.

Attendance Information

The preschool classes are:

Morning sessions:

- 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Three Year Old's Ladybugs T/TH
- 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Four Year Old's Busy Bees T/TH, M/W/F and M-F

Afternoon sessions:

- 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.- \$20 or 12:30 p.m.- 3:00 p.m.-\$30 - An After School option is available, for an extra fee, for both the 3's and 4's, M-TH (Fridays will be included with the Arts and Culture Program in the Elementary).

Note: The child/staff ratio is 1:9 in our 4's and 1:9 in our 3's.

Teachers are prepared to take your child when class starts, not before. The preschool gate will be unlocked for arrival and locked back again at 8:40am and will remain locked until pick up time. The gates are kept locked to ensure the safety of our children and our staff.

Your child will feel more comfortable if you arrive to pick them up promptly. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged every 10-minute period (or portion thereof) after 12:40. If a parent has not arrived to pick up a child 10 minutes after the class is over, the teacher or director will attempt to contact the parents at home and work. If neither parent can be reached, the teacher or director will call the emergency contact listed on the registration form. Children not picked up will always remain in the care of the teacher or director until either the parent or an authorized person arrives to pick up the child.

If your child is absent due to illness or vacation, **the full monthly tuition is still required.** If your child will be absent from preschool for any reason, please notify the preschool office by 8:30am of the day your child will be absent.

Authorization to Pick Up Your Child

No child will be released to a person who is not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. The school must have written or verbal authorization from the parent and identification will be required of this designated person.

Birthdays and Holidays

We celebrate each child's birthday. When we make up the Special Person assignment sheet, we try to make sure that you will be assigned on or near your child's birthday. If there is an oversight, please let us know. In view of our policy to serve only nutritious foods, and the alarming statistics on childhood obesity, please do not bring edible treats for your child's birthday or holidays.

If you are planning a party after school at your home or elsewhere, you are asked to mail the invitations rather than handing them out at school, so that no child feels left out.

Class Lists

To protect the privacy of families, class lists will not be distributed in the cubbies. Parents must give permission for their names and phone numbers to be released to the other parents in their child's class.

Confidentiality

Cross of Hope School will keep all children's records confidential and will not share them with any outside person or agency without parental consent. We expect families to abide by these guidelines and not share personal information about other families or teachers within the preschool program.

Cubby Policy

The teachers and administrative staff distribute newsletters, activity, and pertinent information in the classroom cubbies. Information distributed in the children's cubbies is at the sole discretion of the school Director.

Daily Schedule

For your child's safety and security, you will be required to sign your child in and out and establish eye contact with a preschool staff member both before and after school.

The following is a general flexible outline of the daily program:

- Group time, to say, "Hello," and discuss the day's activities
- Outdoor Time
- Self-selection/small group activities
- Clean-up
- Storytime
- Lunch
- Music/motor
- Outdoor play
- Chapel/Devotion

Dress Code

Please . . .

- have your child wear clothes that will be appropriate for active work and play.
- provide simple clothing free of complicated fastening.
- provide clothing that is washable.
- have your child wear shorts under their dresses.
- have your child wear shoes that are sturdy and appropriate for running and climbing.
- wear sneakers or other comfortable closed toed shoes to school.
- avoid open-toed sandals, flip flops and dress shoes make it difficult for your child to play safely on the playground.

Note: *For those children in a Three-Year-Old class we ask that you send an extra change of clothes which can be kept in his/her cubby. This is particularly important if your child has just attained toilet training. Most children feel better if they have their own dry clothing to change into when “accidents” occur. Extra clothes are also kept on hand in the preschool.*

End of the Year Celebration

At the end of the year, we celebrate the four-year-old's who are moving up to kindergarten. All the children will participate in classroom end of year celebrations. The Ladybug class will have an end of the year picnic.

Expulsion Policy

Our school will work to provide a safe environment for all children present. It is our policy to work with each child, through problematic behaviors, within the structure of our guidance policy. If a child's behavior is disrupting the safety and/or educational environment the parents/guardians will be contacted to assist in resolving the issue. In some cases, we may ask that the child be taken home for the remainder of the day. If a child exhibits behaviors which cannot be corrected, a referral to outside organizations will be made. With your consent as the parent, these agencies will help give techniques/strategies to work through the behaviors successfully.

If the child does not show progress toward the elimination of disruptive behaviors, he/she will be subject to disenrollment to find a more suitable environment for the child. One week's written notice will be given to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) if disenrollment actions are recommended. If a child is harming teachers or other children, we reserve the right to shorten notice as needed for safety.

FACTS Tuition Plans

Preschool families who choose the payment plan through FACTS Tuition Management and miss a payment due to insufficient funds will be assessed a missed payment fee by FACTS and may incur a fee from their own financial institution. The missed payment will be reattempted by FACTS within 20 days.

In addition, families who have missed two monthly payments and have not made suitable arrangements within fourteen (14) calendar days of the second missed payment will be informed that their child(ren) will not be readmitted to school according to the specifications of this policy.

For the sake of your family's security and peace of mind, and for the general financial stability of our school, we encourage parents or guardians to contact the school Director as soon as possible when they are experiencing economic difficulties.

If your child is absent due to illness or vacation, the total monthly tuition is still required, as stated on the enrollment contract.

First Day of School

Frequently, both parent and child are a bit nervous about the first day of school. To help both of you feel more comfortable, there will be a scheduled OPEN HOUSE prior to the beginning of school so your child can become familiar with the environment.

When you are ready to leave, say, "Good-bye," (do not sneak away) and leave. Drawn-out or repeated "good-byes" can make your child think that you have doubts about leaving him/her in school. The teachers are experienced in handling any crying in a gentle and reassuring manner. Feel free to call later in the class time to check on how your child is adjusting.

Guidance/Discipline Policies

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise) that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." Ephesians 6:1-3 (NRSV)

Guidance is an essential teaching part of the classroom and is not viewed as punishment. Guidance is used to help children learn self-control, to help develop their self-esteem and a regard for and acceptance of others in the classroom. The following techniques, as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children will be used:

1. Guide children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior.
2. Value mistakes as learning opportunities.
3. Redirect children to more acceptable behavior or activity.
4. Listen when children talk about their feelings and frustrations.
5. Guide children to resolve conflicts and model skills that help children to solve their own problems.
6. Patiently remind children of the rules and their rationale.

Health and Safety

Sanitation

Children wash their hand multiple times a day as per their daily schedule. The classrooms are cleaned nightly, by a janitorial company, cleaning the floors, carpets, bathrooms, and trash cans. Once per week, the classroom toys are

cleaned and sanitized, as well as being cleaned as needed daily. Tables and chairs are cleaned after every use and before and after mealtimes. Mats used for nap time are sanitized daily after use. The windows and doors are cleaned twice a year or as needed.

Immunization Policy

All children attending Cross of Hope School must be current in all immunizations required by the Department of Health. Required shots should be scheduled by the date the shots are due. A copy of your child's current immunization record with the physician's signature **must** be on file at the school **NO LATER** than the first day of school. Children will not be admitted to the preschool without proof of current immunizations. Immunization records must be always kept current with the school office. A copy of the New Mexico Childcare/Pre-School/School Entry Immunization Requirements can be obtained from the NM Department of Health.

Parents of children who are on a delayed immunization schedule must provide the preschool with a current copy of their child's immunizations along with a letter from the child's pediatrician stating the reason for the delay and the dates the required missing immunizations will be administered. Parents of children who choose to not have their child immunized **must** obtain a state approved Certificate of Exemption. The Certificate of Exemption **must** be on file at the preschool **NO LATER** than the first day of school. There are no exceptions. The Certificate of Exemption can be obtained from the NM Department of Health.

It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the preschool informed of immunizations. If parents do not comply with the required immunization documentation, the child will no longer be able to attend the preschool.

Sick Child Policy

We cannot accept a sick child. Please keep your child home if there are or have been within the past 48 hours indications of:

- a fever (100.4° or above) or the need to control fever with medication.
- a bad cold
- a heavy nasal discharge
- a constant cough
- diarrhea and/or vomiting
- pink eye - child must be on antibiotics a full 24 hours before returning to school
- an undiagnosed rash
- the symptoms of a communicable disease.

Please note that the school does not have a nurse. If your child becomes ill at any time during school hours, you will be contacted. Your child will be cared for in the get-well room until you arrive. All children are expected to go outside at playtime if weather permits. If your child is too ill to go outside, she/he should not be at school.

Separation/Isolation policy: (Sick Student)

In the event a child becomes ill during classroom hours, they will be separated from the other children until a parent/guardian or approved person on the child's authorized pickup list picks them up.

Medications Policy

Do not send medications to school with your child. We do not have a nurse on site and the only allowed medications are life-sustaining medications (Epi Pens and Inhalers). These medications must be brought to the school office by the parent and accompanied by a Medical Plan of Action signed by the appropriate medical professional. All prescribed medications are kept in a locked cabinet as required by state law. All medication must be in original containers with child's name, medical professional's name, along with clearly visible written instructions, including the name of the medication, the dosage, and the hours and dates the child should receive the medicine. A Request to Give Medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent. These forms are available from the Director.

Allergies or Medical Conditions

Cross of Hope School will not discriminate against children with allergies, health, special needs, or medical conditions. If your child experiences any of these conditions, you will need to inform us. To assess whether we can adequately care for your child in our environment, we may request a meeting with both parents prior to enrollment. If your child is admitted to Cross of Hope School, the director will ensure that all state mandated forms and protocols are on file in the preschool

office. So that the special needs of your child are fully understood, the director, classroom teacher and educational assistant may request a meeting with both parents (or guardians) prior to or soon after admittance to determine the safest and most appropriate course of action while your child is under our supervision. Parents (or guardians) may be asked to provide documentation from the appropriate medical professionals.

Emergencies/Accidents Policy

A completed Online Registration Form with medical and emergency information is required.

In case of accidental injury, we will try to contact a parent immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or the paramedics. Until the arrival of a parent, the physician, an ambulance or paramedics, the Director, teacher, or assistant will be in charge and make decisions about the care of your child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by our insurance. The school will maintain a parent's signed consent agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on the telephone numbers and other pertinent information. Please notify the school IMMEDIATELY if changes occur. All Cross of Hope School staff are trained annually in CPR and First Aid.

Abuse/Neglect Policy

As a licensed preschool in New Mexico, we are mandated by law to report any suspected neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse to the Human Services Department.

Cross of Hope School follows NM State Law about reporting child abuse as stated below:

- Mandated Reporting

Every person who knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected in New Mexico must report the matter immediately to CYFD's Statewide Central Intake child abuse hotline (1-855-333-SAFE [7233] or #SAFE from a cell phone), or to law enforcement or the appropriate tribal identity. Specific professionals mentioned under the law as mandated reporters are licensed physicians, residents or interns, law enforcement officers, judges presiding during a proceeding, nurses, schoolteachers, school officials, social workers, and members of the clergy who have information not privileged as a matter of law.

- Reporting Abuse or Neglect

It is important for every person to take child abuse and neglect seriously, to be able to recognize when it happens, and to know what to do when you see it. Call CYFD's Statewide Central Intake (SCI) at 1-855-333-SAFE [7233] or #SAFE from a cell phone if you suspect child maltreatment is occurring.

When making a report of abuse or neglect, you may choose to remain anonymous as the reporter, and will be immune from liability, civil or criminal, if

you have acted in good faith by reporting this abuse. We encourage reporters to provide information about who they are, as it assists CYFD in their investigative process. The reporter's name remains confidential unless ordered to be released by a court of law. In rare cases, a reporter could be required to testify in court if such testimony is necessary to protect the child.

Child Referral Process:

If the teacher has concerns of a child's development, they will:

1. Observe child and document specific behaviors
2. Meet with parents to present findings
3. Determine steps to accommodate needs
4. Teacher will use these steps and further document behaviors over the period of 6 weeks to see if the behaviors change
5. In the event the behaviors do not change the teacher will give resources to families on where they can seek services. (Child Find, pediatrician)
6. Follow up with families after a predetermined period

*At the request of the teacher, the director will be involved during this process.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Cross of Hope Church and School has an emergency plan in place in compliance with New Mexico State licensing regulations. You may receive or



review a copy of our emergency plan. In the case of an emergency, teachers will implement the Cross of Hope Emergency Plan.

Evacuation Sites:

1st Evacuation Site – Taylor Ranch Community Center

4900 Kachina NW 505-768-6006

2nd Evacuation Site – Mesa View United Methodist Church

4701 Montano NW 505-898-3506

Cross of Hope School uses the REMIND system to notify parents of emergency situations, either evacuations or lockdowns and where and when to pick up your child. All parents must sign up in the preschool office for the REMIND system prior to the first day of school.

In the event of an emergency that prevents us from providing school that is deemed as unforeseeable and the following steps are taken:

- The preschool will be closed
- The necessary steps will be taken to rectify the situation depending on the nature of the emergency
- Parents will be notified of the situation and advised that school will resume when the situation is rectified
- School will resume once the emergency situation has been rectified and it is deemed safe for students and staff to return

Toilet Trained Policy

All children who attend Cross of Hope School must be fully toilet trained. Our policy is as follows:

- Children wear regular children's underwear (no pull-ups allowed).
- Children can control their bodily functions for extended periods of time.
- Children can verbally tell the teacher when they need to go to the bathroom.
- Children will take initiative to go to the bathroom on their own during times of free play.
- Children can care for their clothing as much as possible. (Pulling down and up pants/panties, etc.). Please avoid belts/jumpers.
- Children can wipe themselves and flush the toilet under normal circumstances.

Cross of Hope School will make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs, however, under normal circumstances there are **no exceptions** to this policy. If it becomes evident that a child is not fully potty trained, she/he will need to be dis-enrolled.

Custody/Visitation/Legal Status

It is the policy of our school that the parent/guardian who enrolls a child in our program must provide documentation concerning any legal status issues: guardianship, visitation, restraining order, powers of attorney, court orders, CPS orders etc. The school will enforce any legal document but will not prohibit a

parent access to a child without proper authority. The enrollment form must accurately represent the correct names and status of the parent/guardian. During enrollment at our school, it is the obligation of the parent to notify the school of any change in legal status of the child/parent relationship and provide legal documentation which verifies the change in status.

Late Registrations

Families registering after July 1st shall be expected to fulfill their tuition obligation according to the tuition policy stated above. Tuition for students registering on or after the first day of school shall be prorated over the number of school days they will be in attendance according a formula.

Lunch and Nutrition

All children will need to bring in their own packed lunch. Foods should contain as few unnatural preservatives and as little sugar or honey as possible. A variety of foods are also encouraged, for school can be a good place to introduce different kinds of food and nutrition. We highly recommend a lean protein, fruit or vegetables and some dairy, if possible.

Nut Free Policy

Cross of Hope School strives to be a nut-free school. For the safety of our students who have severe nut allergies, **we ask that you do not bring any nut-based products to school**, including peanut butter or Nutella. Sunflower seed butter is a safe alternative to other nut butters. We understand that it is nearly

impossible for children with allergies to peanuts to avoid a reaction if peanut product remnants are in the environment. While Cross of Hope School is unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free program setting, we have procedures in place to assist our students with severe allergies to peanuts and will make every attempt not to expose them during school hours.

Parent Volunteers

All volunteers welcome into our classrooms, typically on your child's special person day. **All classroom volunteers are required to complete and pass a background check.**

Volunteer Classroom Guidelines:

- Please be on time
- Report to the preschool office to sign in and receive a badge
- Ask teacher where to secure purse/bags
- Keep cell phones on vibrate and please do not use them during class time
- Help teachers with classroom management such as: setting up snack or lunch, writing names on artwork, putting paintings on drying rack, and moving around through the learning centers to help children interact in a positive manner
- Interact with the children such as: Playing games, building with blocks, reading a book, helping with puzzles, etc.
- Assist teachers with specific projects as directed

Sibling Policy

Due to classroom capacity, legal liabilities, and safety of the students, siblings are **not** allowed in the classroom during the school day. Siblings over 18 must complete and pass a background check before volunteering in the classrooms.

Special Person Day

Each child is given several opportunities throughout the school year to be the “Special Person” of the day in the classroom. If it is your child’s Special Person Day is a day that school is cancelled, your child will be scheduled to be Special Person the following month if possible.

School Cancellations

The preschool will follow the A.P.S. snow day’s schedule. Snow days will be reported on the television.

The schedule will be as follows:

A.P.S. Cancelled:	Preschool cancelled
A.P.S. Delayed:	Classes begin at 10:30 and will end at the regular dismissal time.

Notes:

- *There will be no make-up classes offered on days the preschool must be cancelled due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.*

- *If it is your child's Special Person Day on a day that school is cancelled, your child will be scheduled to be Special Person the following month if possible.*

Technology in the Classroom

It is the philosophy of Cross of Hope Preschool, that hands on learning and learning through play is vital to young children's development. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages 2-5 years old should have one hour of screen time a day. Because of the amount of technology children receive out of the classroom, we do not want to add more screen time to their day. It is our policy that technology such as TV's or iPads only be used as a tool to enhance content being taught. For example, showing a clip of what dinosaurs may have sounded like, or a time laps video of a butterfly lifecycle. We may also use technology for music and movement or large motor games.

Cell Phone Policy:

Employees and volunteers are expected to promote their full attention to the students and meeting their needs. The use of cell phones is only acceptable when it relates to the school or educational purposes. Cell phones can be used during work hours, for emergency purposes, communication with families (Via Remind app), finding appropriate and educational content to promote students learning, and communicating with necessary staff or administration. Cell phones cannot be used for browsing social media, making personal calls or texts, checking email, playing games, and searching the web for information.

Media Policy

Cross of Hope Preschool will only allow the student's name, photograph, voice, image and information to be used by the school for use in the school's publications, promotion materials, social networks, and website, without compensation and without prior notice **only** with the consent of the Parent/Custodian. Parent/Custodian releases and holds the school harmless from any liability stemming from the use of the student's name, photograph, voice, image, or information.

Pictures or videos taken or shared by other community members (not employed at Cross of Hope Church and School) is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, parent volunteers, church volunteers, or any outside source. Cross of Hope School will not post or release conversations, names, personal schedules, addresses, phone numbers, etc. without noted consent.

Conflict, Complaint and Grievance Policy

In seeking solutions to conflicts at COHS, we follow Matthew 18:15-17. Our intent is to find a peaceful, God-pleasing solution to our differences. This is how we will proceed:

1. If you have a conflict with someone at COHS, arrange a meeting between that person and yourself. Explain your grievance and seek mutual agreement. If an agreement is reached, the conflict is resolved.
2. If upon meeting, an agreement is not reached, request another meeting together with the school director so that everything can be brought out in the

open. Remember that the goal is to seek agreement and resolution to the conflict. If an agreement is reached at this meeting, then the conflict has been resolved.

3. If after these two meetings, a resolution or an agreement still cannot be reached, request a meeting with the Church Pastor and the other party. At this meeting, the Pastor will advise and guide both parties to seek agreement and resolve the issue amicably. If agreement is reached, all parties' benefit. If, however, agreement still cannot be reached, the Pastor will render a decision. The decision of the Pastor is binding on all parties.

Tuition, Fees, and Program Costs

Enrollment costs at Cross of Hope preschool consists of:

Tuition, Registration Fee, and an Instructional Materials Fee

- **Tuition:**

For the 2024-2025 School Year tuition is as follows:

Morning Session: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Tuesday/Thursday - \$2,400

Monday/Wednesday/Friday - \$3,600

Monday-Friday - \$6,000

Payment can be made in two ways via FACTS (a tuition management company):

1. **Payment in Full** at the time of registration.
2. **Monthly installments**

After School Enrichment Program: Monday-Thursday

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.-\$20 per day

12.30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.-\$30 per day

Payment is collected for a full month at a time via the FACTS Incidental Billing option.

Please Note:

- Payment schedule is set for 10 monthly installments with first payment auto-drafting through FACTS in July.
- All families are required to sign an annual **Tuition Contract**, a legally binding agreement made with the school that outlines the family's financial obligations to Cross of Hope School.
- **Fees:**

For the 2024-2025 School Year there are two fees associated with enrollment.

- **Registration Fee** - \$150. The **Registration Fee** holds a student's place at Cross of Hope School while administration and staff review applications for admittance. (It does not guarantee acceptance to Cross of Hope School.)
- **Instructional Materials Fee** - \$50. The **Instructional Materials Fee** covers the expense of all textbooks and curriculum related materials used in the classroom.

Please note:

- Both the **Registration Fee and the Instructional Materials Fee are NON-REFUNDABLE.**

Tuition and fee rates are subject to annual review and change at the discretion of the Cross of Hope Church Council. Tuition for the school year is set in the fall of the preceding year and will be communicated via enrollment literature.

Due Dates, Late Payments, Past Balances

Cross of Hope School adheres to the following schedule for payments of school tuition and fees:

Tuition

Families must either sign up for **FACTS** payments (July through April) or declare intent to '**Pay in Full**' when submitting a student application or re-enrollment packet.

FACTs agreements for 10 monthly payments must be completed by **May 31st**. Late signup will roll-over the missed starting payment(s) to the remaining payment schedule.

(Example: late agreement received in June will forward the July payment to be spread out over the remaining 9 months of the payment schedule.)

Payment in Full- must be received by the **first day of school in August**. Students will be **Financially Dis-Enrolled** if payment is not received.

Withdrawal

Thirty (30) days written notice is required to withdraw or dis-enroll your child.

Please Note: *According to the terms of your Enrollment Contract you will be responsible to pay the entire remaining balance of your child's tuition.*



Notice of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School that we will promote the equal access of services for all children and families and prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability, or age (40 or older).



Cross of Hope School

ACCEPTANCE OF ALL SCHOOL POLICIES

I, _____, Parent/Guardian of _____
(Printed Name) (Student Name)

have read and understood the policies outlined by Cross of Hope School.

My signature below constitutes my understanding and my agreement to adhere to the school policies as explained in the 2024-2025 Cross of Hope School Handbook.

Parent / Guardian Signature #1

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature #2

Date



Ladybug Daily Schedule

- 8:30 am ****Children sanitize hands as they walk through the door.**
****Then go to sink and wash hands with soap and water.**
Self-Selective Play
- 8:50 Tidy Up
- 9:00 Carpet time, Devotion and Prayer
- 9:20 Line Up, Outside Time
- 9:50 Come In
****Come in, wash hands together,** bathroom time, and drinks
of water
- 10:00 Brain Break/Stretches
- 10:15 Planned Activity/Self Selection
- 11:00 Tidy Up
- 11:00 Story /Song
****Wash Hands**
- 11:20 Lunch
****Wash Hands**
- 11:50 Tidy Up / Line Up
- 11:55 Outside Time
- 12:20 Line Up to go inside
****Come in and wash hands together**
- 12:30 Home



Busy Bee Daily Schedule



- 8:30-8:40 Drop off/Wash Hands
- 8:40-9:00 Circle Time/ Devotion and Prayer
- 9:00-9:30 Outside #1/Sanitize hands
- 9:30-9:45 Instruction Time
- 9:45-10:50 Small groups/Self Selection
- 10:50-10:55 Clean up
- 10:55-11:15 Story Time
- 11:15-11:20 Wash Hands
- 11:20-11:50 Prayer/Lunch/Wash Hands
- 11:50-12:15 Outside #2/Sanitize hands
- 12:15-12:30 Closing Circle/ Prayer/ Goodbye

MWF

- *Mon-Spanish
- *Wed-Chapel/Science
- *Fri-PE

T/Th

- *Tues-PE/Spanish
- *Thurs-Chapel/Science