



# Parent Handbook

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[www.openarms-ccdc.org](http://www.openarms-ccdc.org)

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**OUR SAVIOR'S WAY**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



**I. Dear Parents**

We welcome you to our family at the Open Arms Christian Child Development Center. We thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child.

Your child's well-being is our primary concern. We want you to feel comfortable and confident as you combine your life as parents with your career. We want the time your child is in our care to be as free from worry to you as possible. We do this by adhering at all times to strict operational policies that govern, for example, discipline, administration of medications, and release of children to others. We will call you immediately if any emergencies arise. Otherwise, we will share your child's day with you when you arrive to pick up your child. Because consistency in child-rearing philosophy between the childcare center and the home is best for the child, we will honor parents' concerns and wishes for development.

Open Arms is a ministry of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church. The pastors and ministry staff of Our Savior's Way are here for the families of our community. It is our privilege to invite you and your family to worship and live out our faith together:

**Sunday Mornings**

Liturgical Worship Service	8:00am
Alternating Worship Service	9:30am
Grace Place Sunday School	9:30am
Praise and Worship Service	11:00am

This handbook provides detailed information about our facility and programs. Please feel free to talk with other staff members, or myself, if you have any further questions about Open Arms Christian Child Development Center and what we have to offer to you and your child.

God's Blessings,

**Bill Mann,**  
Our Savior's Way Senior Pastor

**Ned Waterhouse,**  
Open Arms Director



## OPEN ARMS CHRISTIAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER HANDBOOK

### II. HANDBOOK PURPOSE

This handbook is to be used as a general guideline for informational purposes and is updated on a regular basis. We hope this will be a good reference for information about the center. The center does not update and redistribute the handbook with every dynamic change and therefore may not reflect the most current policies and practices over time. Always check the online version, as it will be the most current.

### III. GOALS AND ORGANIZATION

#### History

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church began meeting in the Broad Run High School Gymnasium in 1995. Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church began their Open Arms ministry in 1999.

Lutheran parochial education has 150 years of rich heritage in the United States. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has over 1,100 early childhood centers dedicated solely to the education and spiritual growth of young children.

#### Ownership and Governance

The Open Arms Christian Child Development Center at 43115 Waxpool Road is a ministry and community service of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church. The school is operated as a not-for-profit institution, licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is open to children of any race, color, or creed from the ages of 6-weeks through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Open Arms Christian Child Development Center is governed by the constitution of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church, and will be accountable to the congregation of Our Saviors Way through the Open Arms Board of Governance. The Board of Governance members are elected by the congregation of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church. The Board of Governance meets on a regular basis, typically monthly, and the meetings are open to parents and the public. Parents may contact the Board of Governance via [bog@oswlc.org](mailto:bog@oswlc.org).

The center director shall be accountable to the Open Arms Board of Governance. The director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Open Arms Christian Child Development Center. Parents may contact the director via [director@openarms-ccdc.org](mailto:director@openarms-ccdc.org).

#### Mission

Our mission is to provide a nurturing and safe environment for the development of children and families in the community, through a loving, Christ-centered, Bible-based child care, preschool, full-day kindergarten, and after-school program.

#### Philosophy

Open Arms Christian Child Development Center is a not-for-profit ministry of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church, providing a preschool program of the highest quality designed to meet the needs of families in our community. At Open Arms, each child is guided to develop to his/her potential in every aspect of life within the sheltering and nurturing relationships of Christian love. We operate our center assuming that each child is an individual and must be allowed to grow and learn at his/her own rate and to develop a healthy self-image. At Open Arms we will help each child to grow spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially, and intellectually.

A preschool and/or childcare experience frequently represents the child's first separation from home. It is a first experience in learning that other adults can be helpful and loving. Children have much social learning to do. This



is accomplished best in an atmosphere of love and concern for the needs of each child. Programs are planned to encourage and develop individual strengths and abilities, while helping your child to understand the value of cooperation and interaction with others. This is achieved through working, learning, playing, and sharing with other children as well as adults.

### **Safe and Secure**

Open Arms is unique in that it was built by a church specifically for early childhood development and preschool programs. The fenced playgrounds take advantage of the natural beauty of the site, including the surrounding fields, and nature trail that serve as an ideal setting for outdoor classroom experiences. Resilient surfaces are used on all playgrounds.

The building is constructed of non-combustible material and equipped with a sprinkler system and smoke detectors. Emergency exit routes are posted in each classroom. Fire and emergency evacuation drills are conducted monthly. Access to the building is strictly controlled and each family will be assigned a family access code to gain access into the center and classrooms. Safety, security, and cleanliness are maintained at all times.

We emphasize a safe staff-to-child ratio with several different class sizes throughout the center. The size of the groups will vary somewhat depending on the age of your child. The Executive Director and/or administrators are available to assist with the classrooms when needed.

Firearms are prohibited on school premises unless carried by qualified law enforcement officers in accordance with federal and state laws (Pub. L. 90-618, 82 Stat. 1213).

### **Trusted Staff**

Our teachers are professionally trained and qualified in early childhood education, and experienced in working in the early childhood school setting. Staff members are required to continue their professional development by annually attending continuing education throughout the year. Each staff member has on file a criminal history records check conducted by the Virginia State Police, has been fingerprinted, has a sworn disclosure statement, has a central registry search conducted by Virginia Child Protective Services, and has a current tuberculosis screening.

### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

Open Arms admits students of any race, color, religion, and national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities and does not discriminate in administration of its educational and admission policies.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. Open Arms takes confidentiality very seriously and makes every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communications among staff and parents about children should be kept confidential at all times. Open Arms recommends that conversations about a child, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of the Open Arms community. Confidential discussions should never take place in the hallways. If a parent has a question or concern, we suggest that this parent first contact the teacher via email or in person to arrange a time to discuss.

## **IV. PROGRAMS**

### **General**

The main objective for each of the Open Arms programs is to provide a safe, loving, Christian program for early childhood education, which includes teaching, storytelling, sharing, music, playing, Jesus-time, and chapel in an informational, home-like environment. We believe that hearing Bible stories is an important part of the development of a child because of what it teaches about God's love for the world, especially as shown in Jesus Christ. Open Arms' programs provide experiences and activities, which will meet your child's spiritual, emotional,





social, intellectual, and physical needs. Your child will be guided to start taking part in small and large group activities. This combination of experiences will broaden your child's aptitude for future schoolwork, while allowing free reign for imagination and creativity. Children are attended to at all times by trained and experienced teachers.

Your child will be guided:

- to become aware of and have an interest in the world around them
- to develop a sense of pride in himself/herself, his/her school, church, and nation
- to make a happy transition from home life to school life
- to talk to God through a regular practice of prayer
- to work and play comfortably with other children
- to manifest self-discipline and self-control
- to hear basic Bible stories and apply the lessons learned
- to grow in verbal, sensory-motor, and conceptual skills
- to observe and use simple health and safety rules
- to help, think, and act for themselves while growing in common courtesies

The program includes outdoor play with games, exploration and exercise, indoor child-selected play with developmentally appropriate toys, sand and water play, prayers, songs, Bible stories, music, chapel, story time, nature study, and age-appropriate field trips.

### **Curriculum**

Curriculum in an early childhood classroom is what happens throughout the day that contributes to the growth and development of young children. Faith development is the core of our curriculum at Open Arms. All planned activities will add to the spiritual life of the young children who are placed in our care. The curriculum will help to integrate experiences that help our children understand God's love for all people.

Open Arms has chosen to implement a play-based learning framework through a representation of monthly themes. It is a comprehensive system of learning based on research and knowledge regarding all areas of child development – social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The teachers use their own experiences, as well as the children's interests, to adapt the curriculum to be unique to each Open Arms class. Classroom observations and assessments become important tools for the teachers to communicate with parents.

Play allows children to learn about the world and themselves. As children play, they learn new skills, develop coping mechanisms, test new ideas, and master their bodies. The Open Arms curriculum provides extensive guidance for teachers in the content areas of literacy, math, science, social skills, and the arts. As children make choices about where to play in the classroom, they are learning a variety of skills. In the area of art, teachers emphasize the process rather than the finished product. As children use art materials, they are planning and carrying out a task and also using symbols to represent their ideas. Our play-based curriculum offers children many opportunities for positive interactions with other children and adults. We treat each child with respect and reinforce his/her value as an individual and as a unique member of the Open Arms community.

Music, Physical Education, and Spanish are part of every student's week. Known as "specials," these classes are led by teachers who are experts in their respective fields and provide students with opportunities for plenty of hands-on learning and fun. Specials offer an introduction to topics like music, foreign language, and physical education, creating the foundation for increased challenges as the children grow.

Spiritual values are strongly promoted through exemplary interaction, as well as Bible stories, prayers before meals, and weekly chapel worship. Our main objective is love and individual attention through proper stimulation by the environment.



### **Tadpoles Daily Reports**

The director and/or your child's classroom teachers are available to discuss your child's progress at any time and will regularly bring matters to your attention. In addition, we will communicate through Tadpoles, an easy-to-use mobile app that enables the child's teacher to share daily updates about the classroom activities.

These reports may include developmental milestones, current themes of study, and special events. They intend to inform you regarding your child's progress, and to provide you with information on activities that you may wish to reinforce at home with additional discussions or activities.

### **Diapering and Toilet Training**

Children are checked frequently throughout the day and changed at the first sign of wetness or soiling. No child is knowingly left in wet or soiled clothing. Parents will provide an ample supply of diapers and baby wipes.

The changing table is disinfected after each use, and teachers and children wash hands with disinfectant soap after each change.

We will maintain your practices regarding potty training. When you think you and your child are ready to begin toilet training, we will assist you in accomplishing this skill for your child.

### **Standard Practice for Transitions**

***ALL TRANSITIONS TO THE NEXT PROGRAM ARE BASED ON AVAILABILITY IN THE PROGRAM.***

If space is available, transitions will be considered based upon individual birthdates.

Younger Infants – Will transition to the next program between 12 – 13 months.

Older Infants – Will transition to the next program between 17 – 18 months.

Toddlers – Will transition to the next program at 2 years old.

Beginning Preschool – All children 3 years old by October 31<sup>st</sup> will transition to the Intermediate Preschool program at the start of the new school year. Open Arms will hold November – March 31<sup>st</sup> birthdays until the end of the current school year (June time frame). April – August birthdays will transition at the start of the next school year (end of August/beginning of September time frame).

Intermediate Preschool – All children 4 years old by October 31<sup>st</sup> will transition to the Pre-Kindergarten program at the start of the new school year. All November – August birthdays will transition at the start of the next school year (end of August/beginning of September time frame).

Pre-Kindergarten – Students will remain in the Pre-Kindergarten program until the start of the next school year (end of August/beginning of September time frame). Students who attend the Private All-Day Kindergarten program at Open Arms will transition at the start of the next school year. Students who attend LCPS Kindergarten will transition to the After-School Kindergarten Extension program at the start of the next school year. Students who will not be 5 years old by the cut-off date for LCPS or Open Arms Private Kindergarten will remain in the Pre-Kindergarten program until the next school year.

### **Infants (6wks-16mo)**

An infant's capacity to learn is present from birth. Infants learn about their world primarily through social contact—the experiences they have with those who take care of them beginning at birth. Every infant is an individual with a unique temperament. All infants possess a set of skills and abilities, which change with development. Although the rate, pattern, and quality of development will vary from child to child, all infants progress through similar stages of development. Our infant/toddler program is based on the predictable sequences of normal infant development in the areas of motor skills, language and communication, cognition, and socialization.





Reinforcement of these basic stages of development are provided by our caregivers who play with the children, talk with them, make faces with them, and respond to them.

Consistency in response makes a child's environment more predictable and comfortable. Varied experiences such as textures, different foods, shapes and sounds, going for strolls outdoors, watching birds and animals, are all offered to help stimulate your child to respond to his/her environment.

No child is ever left unattended, even when asleep. Our staff is highly qualified, loving, and patient. We do not allow a child to "cry it out," but rather try to comfort the child in every way possible. We encourage nursing mothers to continue as their individual schedules permit. Mothers may bring a day's supply of fresh breast milk.

Each child has his/her own crib or cot. When a child is not asleep or eating, he/she is free to move around the room and to explore and interact with others. The children are held, rocked, talked to, sung to, and as appropriate, taught basic concepts of language.

We will ask you to furnish a daily schedule for your infant with regard to eating, sleeping, and other routines. We will adhere to it as much as possible. Remember to label all personal items for your child, such as bottles, baby food, diapers, blankets, and any spare clothing that will be left at the center. Also, parents will fill out a form to indicate if their child can be swaddled and which specific foods their baby can eat. Any special request can be made to our staff on a daily basis by making written entries on your child's Tadpole account. The child's daily record will include detailed information on foods your child has eaten, how long your child slept, and special experiences during the day. The Tadpoles app will provide information about the child's day. Parents can access the information through the app.

### **Toddler Program (17mo-23mo)**

The toddler room is designed to serve children between the ages of 17 months through 23 months. This program engages your one to two-year-old's natural curiosity of their expanding world through social interactions and hands on-exploration of our developmentally appropriate curriculum. We take pride in our toddler teachers' ability to foster your child's growing language, self-confidence, independence, play skills, and social skills in an energetic, safe, and risk-taking environment. Social skills such as sharing toys and positive interactions are stressed throughout the day. The positive atmosphere in the toddler rooms enhances a child's good feelings about himself/herself and those around him/her. For the first time, your toddler is provided the opportunity to engage in more structured activities, such as circle time and learning centers. All toddlers are assessed using Parent Progress Reports developed from the Virginia's Early Childhood Development Alignment Project to ensure your child is meeting developmental objectives. As part of our extended curriculum, all toddlers participate in our Spanish, Music, and Gross Motor Classes.

### **All-Day Beginning Preschool Program**

The all-day Beginning Preschool room is designed to serve children who are 24 months old through preschool age. Communication and academic skills are introduced as well as self-help skills, such as table manners and children dressing themselves. Self-help and social skills will focus on potty training, sitting in chairs, eating with utensils, and other fine motor development activities. Our teachers' ability to implement purposeful play, guided centers, and structured learning environments enrich your preschooler's educational experience. All preschoolers are assessed using Parent Progress Reports developed from the Virginia's Early Childhood Development Alignment Project to ensure your child is meeting developmental objectives. As part of our extended curriculum, all Preschool programs participate in our Technology Lab, Spanish, Physical Education, and Music Classes.

### **All-Day Intermediate Preschool Program**

As children continue their experience at Open Arms, new considerations are given to their increased attention span, activity level, and the need to satisfy their curiosity. A more structured environment is created in the classrooms and the opportunities for exploration are increased. The All-Day Preschool program serves potty-trained children who are 3 years old by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Emphasis is placed on cognitive skills, and our curriculum



includes pre-reading activities, pre-mathematics, science, creative art, and music. Planned activities are used to reinforce the natural learning that is part of every activity in a child's day. We encourage the children to learn by doing and experiencing, in a safe and well-supervised environment. We use age appropriate experiences to extend the children's knowledge of the world around them. Trained professionals present all these activities in a positive, caring atmosphere.

Consistency is given through routine. Variety is promoted through activities to stimulate all areas of development. Social interaction is encouraged, communication and cognitive skills are enhanced, and emotional and spiritual development are carefully nurtured.

### **All-Day Pre-Kindergarten Program**

The all-day pre-kindergarten program serves children who are 4 years old on or before October 31st. Programs for older children include early development of pre-reading skills, writing skills, language development, math, science, art, music, and nature studies. The children select activities from a variety of interest centers throughout the classrooms. Learning activities alternate with indoor and outdoor play periods every day, weather permitting. The pre-kindergarten program at Open Arms is designed to provide children with the security of a "home" room, and the flexibility of experiencing various structured activities at learning centers throughout the classrooms.

The Pre-Kindergarten Program welcomes children into a bright community of learners focused on essential foundational skills to ease your child's transition to kindergarten and aid in a successful year. Program objectives were developed from the Virginia's Early Childhood Development Alignment Project and Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) and are presented within a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Emphases include phonics, handwriting, emergent math, social preparation, and kindergarten readiness. We take pride in our Pre-K teachers' ability to provide structured learning environments and guide their children's intellectual learning through a balance of self-directed, purposeful play, guided centers, and large group activities. All Pre-K children are assessed using Parent Progress Reports developed from the Virginia's Early Childhood Development Alignment Project to ensure your child is meeting developmental objectives. As part of our extended curriculum, all Pre-Kindergarten programs participate in our Technology Lab, Spanish, Physical Education, and Music Classes.

### **Half-Day Preschool Program**

Our half-day preschool programs serve potty-trained children between the ages of 2 ½ to 5 years. Emphasis is placed on cognitive skills, and our curriculum includes pre-reading activities, pre-mathematics, science, creative art, and music. Planned activities are used to reinforce the natural learning that is part of every activity in a child's day. We encourage the children to learn by doing and experiencing, in a safe and well-supervised environment. The children select activities from a variety of interest centers throughout the classrooms. Consistency is given through routine. Variety is promoted through activities to stimulate all areas of development, and creativity is promoted. Social interaction is encouraged, communication and cognitive skills are enhanced, and emotional and spiritual development are carefully nurtured. Learning activities alternate with indoor and outdoor play periods every day, weather permitting. We use age appropriate field trips and other special experiences to extend the children's knowledge of the world around them. Early childhood trained professionals present all these activities in a positive, caring atmosphere. Spiritual values are strongly promoted through exemplary interaction, as well as, Bible stories, Jesus-time, prayers before snacks, and weekly chapel worship. Our main objective is love and individual attention through proper stimulation by the environment.

### **Full-Day Kindergarten**

Open Arms Full-Day Kindergarten Program provides a challenging, developmental curriculum, in a Christian environment. Children must be 5 by October 31<sup>st</sup> to be enrolled in our Full-Day Kindergarten program. Kindergarten is a time of abundant gross and fine motor development, so our children are provided with a variety of physical activities to aid their growth. Our teachers assist your child in the development of social skills through opportunities to make positive choices along with coping and self-concept skills. Our curriculum is developed from the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs), Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI), and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) with hands on experiences at its core. Focusing not only on



academic learning, but intellectual learning through play provides our students a solid foundation in literacy, language, and math skills while building social skills and self-confidence. In addition, we offer four curriculum extension programs: Bible Study/Chapel, Spanish, Music, and Physical Education to ensure that your child receives a well-rounded education while at Open Arms. Our accredited kindergarten is recognized by Loudoun County Public Schools.

### **After-School Age Program**

Our After-School Program to children in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Transportation will be available from some of the local schools to Open Arms within the driving radius of our school. Transportation is only available on days when Loudoun County Public Schools are in session. The After-School Age program will provide your child with a nutritious snack and a supervised homework period. Outdoor activities will take place, weather permitting, as well as both organized and free choice activities such as arts and crafts, music, science and nature studies. There will be *no regular* TV viewing. An All-Day School Age Program will be available for registered children on school holidays, school vacation weeks, and snow days. Camp for students who have completed kindergarten through 5th grade is available during the summer.

## **V. POLICIES OF OPERATION**

### **Communication**

Communication between home and school is vital to a successful preschool program.

### **School-Wide (Nonemergency) Information**

The Open Arms office communicates with parents in a number of ways:

- Director's Updates
- Tadpoles Emails
- Open Arms Website: <http://openarms-ccdc.org/>
- Open Arms Facebook Page
- Parent Orientation
- Back-to-School Night
- Notices sent home in children's backpacks
- General parent information found near the office at the main entrance to the center

### **Emergency Response**

- Notifying Parents: Depending on the emergency situation and the school's communication capabilities during and after the emergency, Open Arms will attempt to inform and instruct parents/guardians about the emergency by an email message sent to primary family contacts by the office staff.
- In order to contact Open Arms during an evacuation or emergency, you may call (703) 459-0516.
- In the event that Open Arms were to relocate to our temporary evacuation center at KinderCare next door, all pick-up procedures and policies would still apply and an authorized adult would need to sign out your child/ren.

### **Classroom Information:**

- Tadpoles app will provide families with up to date information.
- Classrooms communicate through email.
- Lesson Plans will be posted on classroom parent boards located at the entrance to each classroom.
- Please be sure to check the contents of your child's backpack each night so that you can find important notes, art projects, and so forth.



### Child-Specific Information:

- **During arrival and dismissal times, staff members must devote full attention to all of the children. Please keep conversations brief. If you need to communicate specific information, a written note or email is preferred.**
- Parent-teacher conferences are held two times per school year (fall and spring). Both conferences are an informal meeting for parents and teachers to have an opportunity to discuss the child. For each conference, the teacher will prepare your child's portfolio for the purpose of sharing observations and documenting the development of your child. At the conference, teachers and parents will discuss your child's developmental progress. Your child's portfolio will be emailed before the conferences.
- If, at any time, you have special concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher by using email, sending a note, or calling the office to leave a message. The teacher will respond as soon as possible.
- If you wish to talk to the teacher at length, you can email the teacher to arrange a time to meet in person or over the phone.
- Please do not discuss problems or concerns in the presence of your child or other parents.
- Please communicate with the teacher about any changes at home or within the family (i.e., parent on a trip, family member in the hospital, sick grandparent). These changes can affect your child's behavior, and it is useful for staff to be aware of these developments. Open Arms will always respect your privacy.
- If your child is going to be out of school for any reason, please let the office know. For illnesses, this is especially important so that we can inform families of any communicable disease symptoms while maintaining confidentiality. In addition, teachers and children miss a child when they are absent, so they would like to know that the child is okay.

### Parent Visits

Visits to Open Arms by parents are always welcome. However, we do ask that if you wish to visit your child's classroom, that you first make arrangements with your child's teacher. We do this to try and minimize disruption in your child's day, since some children have little concept of time and think that when they see you, it is time to go home. A parent's departure after a short visit can be very unsettling to a small child.

### Our Savior's Way

All families of the Open Arms Christian Child Development Center are welcomed into the fellowship of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church. Your family is invited to attend all the activities of the Our Savior's Way congregation and the Open Arms Christian Child Development Center. Should any situations arise in your family life, which could benefit from counseling Pastor Justin Kumfer is readily available.

### Weddings and Funerals

Open Arms is a mission of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church and exists in an active, working church building. At times, church activities, such as weddings and funerals, take place during school hours. We will do our best to provide parents with advance notice that such events will be happening. This may affect school operations in minor ways such as pick up patterns and parking.

### Hours

The center operates from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday through Friday, year-round, except for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday (center closes at 1pm)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following
- Christmas Eve (center closes at 1pm)
- Christmas Day

PLEASE NOTE: If a holiday occurs on Saturday, the previous Friday is observed as a holiday. If a holiday occurs on Sunday, the following Monday is observed as a holiday. The Half-Day Preschool program operates on the Loudoun County Public School system's school year, including holidays and breaks.



## Weather related closings

**FULL-DAY CLASSES (Flower Classes):** Open Arms follows the federal government’s weather-related delayed opening or closing recommendations. In addition, Open Arms reserves the right to close or alter scheduled hours in cases of severe local weather conditions or emergency situations.

**HALF-DAY CLASSES (Animal Classes) & FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN:** Open Arms’ half-day program and full-day kindergarten program follow the **inclement weather policy** of the Loudoun County Public Schools. If Loudoun County Schools **ARE CLOSED**, half-day preschool and full-day kindergarten **ARE CLOSED**. If there is a 1 or 2-hour delay for Loudoun County Schools, the half-day preschool and full-day kindergarten will run on a modified schedule for that day (see weather closure schedule at the back of this Handbook).

Once enrolled at Open Arms, your email will be entered into the parent communication app, which will send you an alert via text or email (based upon parent preference) in the event of school closures.

## Admissions

Open Arms Christian Child Development Center is open to children of any race, color, religion, or creed from the ages of 6-weeks through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. If parents have any developmental concerns about their child at the time of registration, parents need to discuss these concerns with the enrollment coordinator prior to registering at the school. It is important that a positive and appropriate learning environment be established for each child. In an effort to create the best fit for your child and family, Open Arms reserves the right to place children in classes by age, gender, and developmental level. Open Arms does not discriminate in administration of its educational and admission policies.

If your child has an Individualized Education Plan, IEP/IFSP, a copy is to be submitted prior to registration.

## Procedures for Enrollment and Withdrawal

### Enrollment:

- Half Day registration for enrollment begins in January with a lottery system.
- Full Day registration for enrollment is on a continual basis and re-enrollment for current students starts in March. Applications are taken on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Upon completion and submission of the required enrollment forms and fees, students are admitted to Open Arms when space is available.
- Enrollment priority is given to currently enrolled students and/or their siblings, Our Savior’s Way Lutheran Church and staff members, and returning Open Arms alumni, in that order.
- Class placement is made on the basis of age and gender (in order to maintain a reasonable balance of boys and girls in each class).
- There is an activity fee for each child that is due at the beginning of the year. All applicants, regardless of entry date, will be charged the full fee for activities. This fee doesn’t apply to the Infant (6 weeks-12 months) program.

### Withdrawal:

- Written notice must be provided to Open Arms **at least two weeks prior to your child’s last day**.
- Any balance on your account must be paid in full during this period.
- If proper notice is not given, two weeks tuition will be charged for students enrolled in the all-day program, and the entire month’s tuition will be charged for students enrolled in the half-day program.
- If you withdraw from the program and decide to re-enroll, a re-enrollment fee will be required.



**PLEASE NOTE:** On occasion, a program is not an optimal fit for a child or family. Open Arms is a school that will make every effort to work collaboratively with families to resolve any challenges that arise. Additional resources may be needed to support a child's success in the school environment. If, after all reasonable efforts are exhausted, and a problem cannot be resolved, Open Arms reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program.

## **Tuition, Fees and Schedule Changes**

### ***Registration & Activities Fees***

All initial registration, activities and re-enrollment fees are **non-refundable**.

Each child is subject to a registration fee that is due upon initial registration and then an annual re-registration fee, due by May each year. Failure to pay re-registration fees in a timely manner may jeopardize ongoing enrollment at Open Arms. Registration fees for simultaneously enrolled siblings are charged at a reduced rate for additional children. Members of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church are responsible for the initial registration fee, but the annual re-registration fee is waived if child/children remain continuously enrolled year-round or return the following school year in the half-day program.

Each child, two-years old and above, is charged an activities fee in August for the upcoming school year. This fee covers any and all field trips and in-school shows and events for the regular school year. Any extracurricular activities or classes (ie: Creative Dance, Happy Feet, etc.) are charged by and paid to the outside vendor and are not included in the activities fee.

### ***Wait List***

Wait list fees are **non-refundable**.

To add your child's name to our wait list, a wait list fee and registration form is required. Our wait list is on a first come, first served basis according to the date your payment is received with priority placement given to siblings of current students, OSW church members, Open Arms staff, and alumni families. If you are offered a future placement, the wait list fee is applied towards the initial registration fee. Should an offer of placement be declined, your child may be moved to the bottom of the wait list. While we can document a desired projected start date, we cannot guarantee or hold a space longer than 30 days from the desired projected start date. Phone/email offers will be made within the 30 days of your desired projected start date, contingent on space availability.

### ***Tuition Responsibilities***

**Full tuition is due even if your child is not in attendance.** In order to maintain proper staff ratios and correct operational costs, Open Arms has based costs on our current enrollment. Therefore, no exceptions are made for illness, vacations (with the exception of vacation credits: see p. 15), holidays, or inclement weather.

We offer a **FREE** electronic funds transfer payment plan, as well as credit card payments through Tuition Express. Checks should be made payable to Open Arms. A charge of **\$35.00** will be applied for all returned checks. After a third returned check, an alternate payment method must be arranged through the finance department. When circumstances warrant, Open Arms may collect any outstanding payments using a third-party collections agency.

As of Wednesday at 12:00pm, any account with an outstanding balance of \$50.00 or more will be assessed a **\$10.00** late fee.

### ***All-Day Program Tuition Payment Schedule***

Tuition is due on the Monday of the week your child is attending. If payment has not been made by noon on Wednesday, it is considered late and late fees will be assessed.





### ***Half-Day Preschool Program Tuition Payment Schedule***

Tuition is payable on a monthly basis and is due the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the month. If payment has not been made by noon on the first Wednesday of the month, it is considered late and late fees will be assessed.

### ***Fixed Part-time Schedules (All-Day Program)***

Fixed Part-time schedules are only available for Intermediate Preschool and above. If your child is enrolled with a fixed part-time schedule (Example: Monday, Wednesday, Friday), please be aware that switching scheduled days is **not permissible** (i.e.: Switch Monday for Tuesday). Staffing, operational expenses, and teacher/child state licensing ratio requirements are based on your child's **fixed part-time schedule**.

In the event of an emergency, any additional day's attendance outside your child's fixed part-time schedule may be requested in writing. If Open Arms is able to ensure ratio requirements, availability of additional meals, and once teachers are notified of the schedule change, the parent will receive approval. Once approved, you will be charged the additional day. Keep in mind that tuition is due for the requested additional day, even if your child is not in attendance.

### ***Schedule Changes***

Should you desire to change your child's fixed schedule (i.e. move from Monday-Friday to a fixed Tuesday/Thursday schedule), written notice must be provided **two weeks** in advance to the enrollment office ([enrollment@openarms-ccdc.org](mailto:enrollment@openarms-ccdc.org)). Schedule changes will be approved based on availability and must be changed for a *minimum of three weeks*. Please note that changing to a part-time schedule may impact your child's ability to resume a full-time schedule later.

### ***Vacation Credits (All-Day Program)***

Each child enrolled in the Full Day program, whose tuition account is in good standing, receives a one-week vacation credit (5 consecutive days, Monday-Friday) after the family has been enrolled for three consecutive months. Vacation credits are reissued on January 1st to be used during that calendar year and may not be carried from year to year. A written request for a vacation credit must be submitted to the billing office ([billing@openarms-ccdc.org](mailto:billing@openarms-ccdc.org)) **two weeks prior** to the use of the credit, enabling Open Arms to adjust staffing, billing, and food service. The child may not be in attendance during the days/week of vacation. If in attendance, the family request for vacation credit will be void, and the family will be billed their normal tuition amount.

### ***Late Pick-up fees***

Children become anxious when it is time to go home and no one has come for them yet. It is not only unfair to your child, but to the teachers as they cannot perform their end-of-class duties. For these reasons, a \$20 late fee is assessed after program's end and an additional \$20 late fee will be added every 15 minutes thereafter. The fee will be charged to your account the following day and is to be paid no later than the next tuition week. Please keep in mind that the late pick-up fee affects every all-day (full-time & part-time schedules) and half-day program, including Lunch Bunch.

If late pick-up occurrences become frequent, you may be asked to make other pick-up arrangements for your child/children.

### ***After School-Age Schedule Changes***

Parents of After School-Age children are responsible for notifying the center when your child's schedule changes, including if they are out sick. Bus drivers will wait at your child's school until the school confirms your child's absence (or that they had taken alternate means of transportation home). Open Arms must be notified before 2pm that your child is not to be picked up from school. Families who fail to notify the center will be charged a \$20 fee. Again, we ask families to please consider the staff and children on the bus pick up route.



Open Arms busses will only run on days when Loudoun County Public Schools are in session. Enrolled Drop-In students from other elementary schools are welcome to attend the center on days when Loudoun County schools are closed, however, no transportation will be provided.

### **Permission to Pick Up**

No child is released to anyone without prior authorization. If someone other than a parent comes to pick a child up, they must show proper identification and have permission to pick up. Parents may provide written permission by completing the necessary form at either reception desk. Phone permission and email permission will be accepted and verified.

### **Daily Attendance**

If your child is ill or absent for any reason, please call the center and let us know.

### **Arrival and Departure**

#### ***Full-Day Program/Full-Day Kindergarten***

All full-day students (including full-day kindergarten) should be checked in and out of the ProCare electronic system daily by our main entrance and reception desk. This helps us to know who is in the building at all times. Access to the building can *only* be obtained through the security doors using the parent access code. Pick-up from full-day kindergarten is via car-line.

#### ***Half-Day Program***

Please walk your child to his/her classroom and check them in with a designated Open Arms staff person before you leave each day. Access to the building can *only* be obtained through the security doors using the parent access code. Pick-up from the Half-Day Program is via car-line.

### **Toys from Home**

Generally, we discourage children from bringing toys from home, except for specific program purposes such as "Show and Share Days." The toys often cause conflict, and we cannot be responsible for their safekeeping. We request that no weapons (play guns, knives, swords, etc.) be sent to school with your child.

### **Food from Home**

Children should not bring food into Open Arms. Adequate meals and snacks are provided. Food exceptions are not made for individual children except in the case of allergies or a written note from a physician. Please send to the center the necessary food your child must have in these cases. Please feel free to discuss any specific concerns with your child's teacher.

If your child requires an alternative to cow's milk, parents will be required to provide this option by supplying the alternative labeled with child's name and date. A current allergy form must be on file.

**Open Arms is a peanut-safe center**, meaning that any products containing peanuts may not be brought to the classrooms. All outside food items that will be provided to a group of children must receive a "Peanut Safe Sticker" at the reception before they can be brought to the classrooms.

### **Meals**

Snacks are provided for your child every day. Lunch is provided to all children scheduled to be at Open Arms from 12:00-12:30pm (lunch may be served at different times in each class). In regards to infant care, we do not provide baby foods, cereals, formulas, or bottles. We request that each family label these items with the infant's name and date with a written daily feeding schedule, indicating the amounts and times to be fed.

Breakfast is available (and voluntary) for \$1.00 per day between 7:45 and 8:15a.m. We stop serving breakfast promptly at 8:15a.m.



A vegetarian lunch plan is available on request. Parents who wish to enroll in this plan should complete an Allergy and Dietary Restriction Alert Form.

All meals and snacks meet the nutritional standards as set forth by the Child Care Food Program of the USDA. Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) guidelines are followed to promote optimal growth and development. Monthly lunch menus are posted on our website. Snack menus are posted in each classroom.

Children are given as much time as needed to eat. Children are encouraged to be interested in the food before them, and assisted when needed, but no child is forced to eat any food. Second helpings are provided upon request in accordance with licensure requirements. Special eating problems or marked changes in lunchtime behavior will be reported to the parent at once.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays may be celebrated at the center, and we ask that you make arrangements one week in advance with your child's teacher. Birthdays are observed in your child's classroom during their snack time. PLEASE DO NOT BRING IN PEANUT PRODUCTS OR FOOD FROM A FACILITY THAT PROCESSES PEANUTS. All outside food items that will be provided to a group of children must receive a "Peanut Safe Sticker" at the reception before they can be brought to the classrooms.

### **Transportation/Field Trips/In-School Shows**

All of our classrooms enjoy taking walking trips to explore our property and the community. Children are always accompanied by their teachers, and the proper staff-to-child ratio will be maintained at all times. We will have permission slips for parents to sign prior to all field trips off of the Open Arms property.

Children Kindergarten age and up will ride on our center vans and buses and are expected to use all of our safety rules, which include using quiet voices, following teacher directions, remaining in their seats while the vehicle is moving, and always keeping their seat belts locked until the vehicle is stopped and parked. **We ask that parents talk to their children before all field trips and remind them of our center's van/bus safety rules.** If a child is continually disruptive on the van or bus during field trips, which causes a hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle by the driver, that child may not be allowed to participate on future trips.

The half-day program relies on parent carpooling to and from all non-walking field trips.

### **Positive Discipline Practices**

Open Arms is committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for all children. The school's behavior practices encourage children to develop social skills that reflect many of Open Arm's values, including self-control, respect for others, and a positive self-esteem. Teachers model appropriate behavior and guide positive interactions among children and adults. Nurturing these social skills is a central component of our school, and it helps children grow as successful, lifelong learners.

Open Arms' commitment to an age-appropriate and play-based curriculum ensures that activities are child-centered and promote positive social interactions. Teachers carefully craft the environment, communicate and enforce clear boundaries and expectations for behavior, and use nonverbal cues and/or redirection of a child's behavior to foster success.

When a problem arises, the teacher relies on modeling appropriate behavior, teaching peacemaking skills, and presenting stories or scenarios that reinforce the desired behavior. Children learn to make suitable choices and develop techniques for regaining self-control when they feel frustrated. An example of this is the Cozy Corner, a calming area of the classroom where kids can cool off. Instructive and individually appropriate consequences help to strengthen the child's self-control and self-esteem.



When a child experiences a particularly challenging time, the school encourages parents and teachers to work together and develop appropriate strategies. If a specific circumstance needs attention, the teacher will follow these procedures:

1. The teacher will observe and document the child's behavior.
2. The teacher will discuss the child's behavior with a parent and inform him or her of learning-based strategies for the teacher to implement. The teacher will discuss options with the Early Learning Coach and director, if necessary.
3. The teacher will follow up with the parent about how these strategies are influencing the child's behavior.
4. If concern persists, a conference will be held with teacher, parent, Early Learning Coach, and director, if necessary, to discuss options in order to help the child further develop appropriate social skills.
5. Staff members will make reasonable efforts to work with the child and his/her family to resolve behavioral concerns. At any time, an individual plan of action may need to be implemented, depending on the severity of the concern. The plan may include removal of a child from the classroom and/or calling the parent to take the child home. Repeated severe problems may result in Open Arms excluding a child from attending the school.

#### ***Behavior Practices Specific to Biting:***

Biting can happen in a preschool situation, especially with young children who do not have the verbal skills to express their feelings. Children's feelings can be related to many environmental factors, as well as internal emotions, such as frustration, tiredness, overstimulation, seeking attention, and so forth. In line with Open Arms' overall behavior practices, teachers try to create a positive, peaceful, and nurturing environment that encourages children to maintain self-control.

#### **Physical and Immunization Records**

A certificate of immunization and a current physical record for your child (signed and dated by a physician/physician's assistant or registered nurse) is required prior to enrollment. **Updates are required at the following ages: 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, and once between 4-6 years old.** An administrator will send written reminders home if records may be required in the near future. Families who fail to provide required records in accordance with licensing standards may be dis-enrolled at any time.

#### **Health Procedures**

We promote the health of your child by providing a clean, smoke-free environment, with safe toys that are regularly disinfected, and supervised physical activities that are offered daily. Therefore, in order to protect the children in our care, we must enforce the following rules regarding illness and the administering of medications.

##### **Illness**

**Sick children should remain home.** Please do not bring your child to the center if he/she is showing any signs or symptoms of illness. Some potential signs and symptoms are:

- Temperature of over 101 degrees within last 24-hour period
- Unusual spots or rashes on the skin or in the mouth
- Continuous mucus from the nose accompanied by upper respiratory symptoms
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Unusual behavior
- Child is lethargic
- More crying than normal
- General discomfort



Children may attend Open Arms with a slight cold, as long as their temperature is less than 101 degrees and none of the above-mentioned symptoms are present. Any child with a fever of 101 degrees or higher is not permitted to remain at the center.

### **Diarrhea/Vomiting**

If a child has two diarrhea stools or one vomiting episode, a staff member will notify the parents. After a third diarrhea stool or a second vomiting episode, the parents will be called to pick up their child. **To eliminate the spread of infection, children who are sent home with recurrent diarrhea or vomiting may not return to the center until at least 24 hours.** To return to school, the child must be symptom free or have a doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious.

### **Pink Eye**

In the case of conjunctivitis ("Pink Eye"), any child with redness, swelling, or discharge of the eyes may be sent home. "Pink Eye" is highly contagious. **Therefore, a child with "Pink Eye" may return to the center only after prescription eye drops have been administered for a period of 24 hours, or with a note from a physician.**

**If we send your child home, he/she must remain out of the center for at least 24 hours. This means that a child may NOT return to Open Arms the day after being sent home.** A parent will be asked to sign a "sick policy" form acknowledging their child's illness and minimum "return to" school date, unless you provide us with a dated doctor's note stating the child is **not** contagious.

If your child had a doctor's visit, please bring a note with the doctor's diagnosis and recommended treatment for your child.

Some communicable diseases may be reported to Public Health authorities so that control measures can be used. Parents and staff are asked to notify Open Arms within 24 hours after a child, a person in that child's immediate family, and/or staff member, have developed a known or suspected communicable disease or any other illness of any type.

### **Medication**

If your child is to receive any medication (prescription or over the counter), while at Open Arms, the correct forms must be filled out and accompany the medication. Medication is not provided by Open Arms. All medicine needs to be in the original container with the child's name clearly written on it and dosage to be given.

- **Short Term Medicine:** For medications to be given for 10 days or less, Section A of the Medication Authorization Form needs to be filled out and signed by the parent and by an Open Arms Administrator. This form does not need an authorization from your child's doctor. Exceptions include Nebulizers and Epinephrine auto-injectors. Those require Section B to be completed and signed by a doctor (even if medication is to be given 10 days or less). If the medication says "Ask a Doctor" for dosage and the child is in that age group, Section B needs to be completed and signed by a doctor.
- **Long Term Medicine:** For medication that is needed for 11 days or more, Section A and Section B of the Medication Authorization Form needs to be filled out and signed by the parent, physician, and Open Arms Administrator.
- **Epi-Pen/Auvi-Q:** For an Epi-Pen and Auvi-Q, Sections A and B of the Medication Authorization Form need to be filled out and signed by the parent, physician, and Open Arms Administrator. An Allergy and Dietary Restriction Alert Form also needs to be completed.
- Sunscreen, diaper cream, lotion, lip balm, and insect repellent require a **topical** form to be filled out.



When an authorization for medication expires or the medication expires, the parent shall be notified that a new form and/or medication is needed. Expired medication will not be administered or kept at Open Arms. If the medication is expired or no longer needed, the parents must pick up the medication within 14 days or it will be disposed of by the center.

For students who require emergency medication, all medication and accompanying forms must be complete and current. **Failure to provide current medication or forms will prevent your child from attending Open Arms, until all requirements are met.**

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATIONS IN YOUR CHILD'S CUBBY.** So that you do not have to take medicine home each evening, it may be helpful if you ask your pharmacist to put your child's prescription medications in two labeled containers so that you have one for the center and one for your home.

#### **Accidents (Incident Report Forms)**

In the event of an accident, appropriate procedures will be followed, and parents will be notified. Incident reports are completed based on the severity of the accident, and copies are available to the parents at the end of the day when they come to pick-up their child. In the event a child needs emergency care, we will call 911 then attempt to reach the parent(s).

#### **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

State law requires that childcare workers report suspected child abuse directly to Child Protective Services. In keeping with state law, any report made remains confidential. Once a report has been made, the entire matter is out of the hands of the center, and any further questions will be referred to Child Protective Services.

#### **State Licensure**

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24 -hour day, are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, and the ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program, and record keeping. Criminal record checks, mandatory finger printing, and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required.

Compliance with standards is determined by unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program, which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.

Our local office is:  
DSS – Licensing  
3701 Pender Drive – Su 125  
Fairfax, Va 22030





## VI. YOUR CHILD'S PERSONAL ITEMS

### What to Bring

**Please remember to label each item that your child brings to school** (backpack, coat, sweater, hat, mittens, boots, etc.).

#### ***Dress***

- Your child should be dressed for active play. Open Arms does not want a child's creativity hampered because he/she is wearing clothing that should not get dirty.
- Your child should wear sturdy, protective shoes (no sandals or Crocs®), which will enable him/her to run, climb, and ride bikes with ease.
- Children go outside most days, so please dress your child appropriately.
- In the winter, hat and mittens are needed every day. Snow pants and warm boots are important whenever there is snow on the ground.

#### ***Extra Clothes***

In school, at all times, each child should have at least one set of seasonal clothes that fit – pants, shirt, underwear, socks — which should remain in the child's backpack. Any soiled clothing from the day will be placed in your child's cubby or backpack. Each item of clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name, including jackets and sweaters.

#### ***Backpack***

At Open Arms we encourage children to be independent. Therefore, we strongly recommend a backpack that is easy for your child to manage when putting away his/her own things. Each day your child needs to bring a backpack, clearly marked with your child's name, to hold their belongings, art, treasures, and important communication. **Please be sure to check the contents of this bag each night** so that you can find important notes, view art projects, and so forth.

#### ***Other Personal Items***

Students who have "rest time" each day are allowed to bring pillows (ages 2 and up), blankets, and stuffed animals from home, but these items may only be used during "rest time". Parents are responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of such items. Pillows, if used, are required to have a pillow cover (including Pillow Pets). Blankets and pillows must be taken home every Friday to be washed. Cot sheets are provided by the center and are washed once a week or when they become soiled.

### Records

Your child's records are maintained in an accessible manner at Open Arms. These records include the following and must be kept current and accurate:

- Your child's identifying information (name, birthdate, etc.)
- Parent(s) name, address, home and business phone numbers
- Name, address, and telephone numbers of persons, including the child's physician, to contact in emergencies
- A signed statement by the parent regarding any allergies and other known health problems (medical, mental, emotional, developmental) and any special procedures that should be used in caring for the child
- Parental agreements for obtaining emergency medical care for the child when the parent is not available
- Current Physical and Immunization Records
- IEP (Individual Education Plan)
- Center agreements and releases

Information pertaining to your child will not be disclosed to persons other than the center staff or other authorized personnel, unless you have granted written permission to do so.

All records must be complete and up-to-date in order for your child to attend Open Arms.



**INCLEMENT WEATHER SCHEDULES**

**Half-Day MORNING Programs**

If Loudoun County Schools declare a:	Then Open Arms Half-Day Preschool schedule is:
School Closure	Cancelled
1 or 2-hour delay*	10:15am – 12:15pm (8:50am classes) 10:30am – 12:30pm (9:00am classes)

\*In the case of school delays, LUNCH BUNCH will still be available for A.M. program children and will end at 2pm.

**Half-Day 9AM-2PM Programs**

If Loudoun County Schools declare a:	Open Arms Half-Day Program schedule is:
School Closure	Cancelled
1 or 2 hour delay	10:15am – 2:00pm

**Full-Day 8:30AM-3:30PM Kindergarten**

If Loudoun County Schools declare a:	Open Arms Full-Day Kindergarten schedule is:
School Closure	Cancelled
1 or 2 hour delay	10:15am – 3:30pm

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please feel free to contact us at:

Phone 703.729.9144

Fax 703.729.9149

Emergency 703.459.0516

[www.openarms-ccdc.org](http://www.openarms-ccdc.org)

“Train up children in the way they should go: and when they are old, they will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

