



Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program

2023-2024 Parent Handbook

Gehlen Catholic School

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www.gehlencatholic.org

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WELCOME TO GEHLEN CATHOLIC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Program Offerings

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program (GCPP) is designed to provide a secure and stimulating environment for your child when he/she is away from home. The preschool program provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel cared for, safe, respected and secure. The preschool program provides an opportunity for all children to take part in planned, active learning experiences, to explore and learn by the discovery method in a variety of learning centers in order to build their readiness skills. The activities are designed to satisfy the emotional, social, physical and intellectual needs of children at their own individual level of development. Each day offers challenging active periods integrated with quiet, restful times.

Gehlen Catholic's Preschool Program includes three opportunities, with families encouraged to select the setting(s) which best serves their child(ren).

1. The full day program includes 15 hours of preschool weekly accompanied by daycare/extended preschool activities for the remainder of the school day.
2. The half day program includes 15 hours of preschool weekly.
3. The Statewide Voluntary Preschool includes 12.5 hours of preschool weekly.

Full-Day Program

The full day program includes 12.5 hours of free preschool weekly provided through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) which is fully funded by the State of Iowa. Aligned and accredited by the Iowa Department of Education, Gehlen Catholic's SWVPP implements the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) through the research-based Creative Curriculum. Student progress is monitored via the state and nationally supported GOLD assessment.

The full day program also includes Preschool Plus, an additional 2.5 hours of preschool weekly during which religious instruction is provided. This portion of the program is funded with a small tuition fee.

The remainder of the full day program includes daycare and extended preschool activities to support and enhance the SWVPP portion of a child's day. Both rest and active play opportunities are part of this portion of the day. Minimal daycare fees support this portion of the day.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program aims to meet and exceed the expectations and standards established by the Iowa Department of Education's Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) as well as those of Northwest Early Childhood Iowa Quality Rating Standards (QRS). Licensed by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS), the daycare/extended preschool portion meets and exceeds the expectations and standards established by DHS, providing lunch and a balance of rest, snack and engaging activities appropriate for preschool children.

Half-Day Program

The half day program includes 12.5 hours of free preschool weekly provided through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) which is fully funded by the State of Iowa. Aligned and accredited by the Iowa Department of Education, Gehlen Catholic's SWVPP implements the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) through the research-based Creative Curriculum. Student progress is monitored via the state and nationally supported GOLD assessment.

The half day program also includes Preschool Plus, an additional 2.5 hours of preschool weekly during which religious instruction is available. This portion of the program is funded with a small tuition fee.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program aims to meet and exceed the expectations and standards established by the Iowa Department of Education's Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) as well as those of Northwest Early Childhood Iowa Quality Rating Standards (QRS).

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program

The SWVPP includes 12.5 hours of free preschool weekly provided through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) which is fully funded by the State of Iowa. Aligned and accredited by the Iowa Department of Education, Gehlen Catholic's SWVPP implements the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) through the research-based Creative Curriculum. Student progress is monitored via the state and nationally supported GOLD assessment.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program aims to meet and exceed the expectations and standards established by the Iowa Department of Education's Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) as well as those of Northwest Early Childhood Iowa Quality Rating Standards (QRS).

Mission: Gehlen Catholic School

Gehlen Catholic School strives to promote openness to God, to provide a quality education and instill Catholic values in a caring, challenging and prayerful environment.

Philosophy: The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program believes:

- Each child is created by God.
- Each child is a unique individual.
- Each child grows at a different rate.
- Each child has different needs to be met.
- Each child needs to explore his/her environment.
- Each child needs to interact with peers.
- Each child needs opportunities to solve problems.

Program Goals for Children:

- The Gehlen Catholic Preschool shall be a place of fun, warmth, security, and discovery.
- The Gehlen Catholic Preschool shall be a place where staff nurture and encourage enjoyment, safety, curiosity, and exploration.
- The Gehlen Catholic Preschool shall be a place where children may grow in self-worth, self-control, and positive relationships with others.

- o The Gehlen Catholic Preschool shall be a place where students experience a quality environment for learning and growth through Creative Curriculum.

Program Goals for Families:

- o Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- o Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be prepared to learn.
- o Families will be advocates for their children.

Preschool Program Staff

- o Program Administrator/Center Director: Elementary Principal; PreK-6 Administrator licensed by Iowa Board of Education Examiners
- o Administrative Assistant
- o Teacher & Daycare/Extended Preschool On-Site Supervisor: (licensed as Early Childhood Education/Elementary Education Licensed Teacher)
- o Early Childhood Para Educator & Temporary On-Site Alternate:(licensed as Early Childhood Para-Educator)
- o Para: (licensed Para-Educator)
- o School Nurse: (licensed Registered Nurse) available to staff and children throughout each day. She maintains student health records, attends to the health needs of students and administers all medications given to students. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.
- o Support Staff: Northwest Area Education Agency (NWAEEA) provides resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request in order to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultants, speech and language pathologies, social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists and others.
- o Volunteers: When available, adults from the community volunteer in the classroom several hours a week to engage with the children in play and activities under the supervision of the teacher.

Staff Ratio

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool maintains a staff to student ratio which meets the requirements of QPPS and QRS respectively. All staff in-ratio are at least 16 years of age. If younger than 18 years of age, the staff in-ratio are under the direct supervision of an adult. At least one person on duty in the preschool/daycare outdoor play area or on a field trip is 18 years old and has current certification in CPR and first aid. At least one staff member is present in every room where children are resting. The ratio is maintained during mealtime and outdoor activities. A ratio of ten to one is maintained during the full and half day programs while a ratio of twelve to one is maintained in the daycare/extended preschool program portion of the day. Two adults are present when seven or more children are present on field trips or where children are transported in one vehicle. If the ratio is reduced to one staff member at the beginning or end of the daycare's operation time frame, not to exceed 2 hours, the ratio will not exceed six children.

Substitutes & Volunteers

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program staff is hired according to the policies and standards of the Diocese of Sioux City. The hiring process includes an application process, interview, and reference checks. On occasion substitutes or volunteers may join the preschool/daycare. Both volunteers and substitutes in the daycare will:

- Have successfully completed Safe Environment check/training.
- Be at least 16 years of age.
- Have signed statements indicating no conviction of any law in any state or record of founded child or dependent adult abuse.
- Be free of any communicable disease or other health concerns that pose a threat to children.
- Have been informed of responsibilities as mandatory reporters.

Additionally, each will undergo a record check (criminal and abuse) process if he/she:

- Is included in meeting the required child/staff ratio.
- Has direct responsibility for a child or children.
- Has access to child(ren) when other staff are not present.

The needed criminal and abuse checks are repeated every two years.

Hours

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will typically follow the Gehlen Catholic's yearly calendar. Teachers may attend 2-3 days of in-service during the year when no preschool classes will be held. Dates will be provided to parents well in advance.

Preschool classes meet from 8:30-11:00 daily following the Gehlen Catholic School calendar. Students may arrive anytime after 8:00 a.m. There are potentially 3-5 days of in-service during which the preschool program will not be in session.

Preschool Plus hours: 11:00-11:30 am.

Daycare/extended preschool hours: 11:30 am – 3:20 pm.

As part of the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, Gehlen Catholic offers 12.5 hours of free preschool to all students each week. In addition, Preschool Plus offers students an additional 2.5 hours of preschool beyond the free hours each week. The additional hours are funded through parental financial investments and include religious instruction.

The daycare/extended preschool hours include lunch, snack, rest and other activities to support the first half of the day. These additional hours are funded through daycare fees.

Attendance

Students who are enrolled in the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program are expected to be present during the scheduled hours of the program and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary (i.e. health reasons or appointments). Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of children and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have

been absent. Parents are expected to call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

Childhood Visitors

Due to state regulations in regard to class size and teacher/child ratios, it is not possible for children to bring friends to visit at the preschool.

Transportation and Parking Privileges

Transportation of children to and from the preschool/daycare is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

At morning drop-off, parents are asked to park along the Plymouth Street main entrance of the school and enter via Door A. Handicapped accessible parking spots are available near Memory Lane at the corner of 7th St. and Plymouth St. NE.

Parents are expected to use crosswalks when bringing and leaving school grounds with their children, modeling safe crossing for their children.

Dress Code (Updated 2020)

In all cases, Gehlen Catholic administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes proper dress code in the spirit of its intent and in accordance with good taste and modest contemporary standards for a Catholic school.

Special days of dress must be approved by administration.

Shirts

- Shirts must be (button) polo or oxford style: short or long sleeve: solid black, white, Gehlen yellow, Gehlen green
- If an undershirt is worn, it must be white and without writing
- Shirts must not be form fitting or oversized.
- Gehlen logos (only those approved through school which are no larger than 4" by 4" and placed on the front left corner only), no wording or design anywhere else on the shirt.
- All shirts must be tucked in at all times. Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in even when sitting or when hands are raised over the head.
- A maximum of two buttons may be unfastened from the neck down.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts/Skorts

- Navy blue, black or khaki trouser style pants, dress slacks or capris
- Navy blue, black or khaki walking shorts, uniform style skirts or skorts of appropriate length (no shorter than 4" above the knee) Shorts acceptable before November 1st and after March 15th
- Navy, khaki or black jumpers for PreK – 6 girls only
- Belt on all garments with belt loops for grades 7 – 12
- Foundation garments (underwear) should not be visible at any time
- Solid black, white or navy leggings may only be worn under skirts, skorts or jumpers

Sweatshirts

- **ALL crewneck sweatshirts** with logos must be **no larger than 4" x 4" and placed on the front left corner** no wording or design anywhere else on sweatshirt
- Gehlen crewneck sweatshirts in white, Gehlen yellow, Gehlen green, or black

- If sweatshirts are removed, the shirt beneath must meet code

Quarter Zip Pullovers (only purchased through the Birdhouse at school)

- Quarter zip pullovers can now be worn in black, white or green with Gehlen Logo.

Neckties

- Neckties may be Gehlen yellow, Gehlen green or black
- Special neckties may be approved by the administration
- Ties must be tied appropriately

Footwear

- Dress shoes, athletic wear, or sandals with back strap
- Socks, tights or hose must be worn
- Leggings or tights worn under skirts, skorts or jumpers must be solid black, white or navy blue only

Grooming

- Students are to be neat and clean at all times. Boys well groomed hair off the collar and not below the ear (no ponytails), and out of eyes with sideburns no lower than the lobe of the ear. No body piercing other than ears and no unnatural or distracting hairstyles and or hair colors.

Winter

During winter months, snow boots, hats, gloves/mittens and snow pants are required attire for students in grades PK – 6.

ACCEPTABLE JEAN DAY ATTIRE

Only items listed below are acceptable. Regular dress code is always acceptable.

- Any acceptable dress code length jeans: Capri, full length, shorts when in season. No holes in jeans.
- Tops: Gehlen attire (Gehlen t-shirts, Gehlen jerseys, Gehlen sweatshirts without hoods)

Items not listed within the approved attire list are not acceptable. Unacceptable dress includes, but is not limited to the following:

UNACCEPTABLE DRESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Denim
- Flannel or flannel look-alikes
- Bibbed garments
- Sleeveless garments
- Garments with rivets
- T-shirt as outer garment
- Athletic wear such as sweatpants
- Tattoos
- No body piercing (no clear studs) except earrings; boys with one stud is acceptable.
- Faded, badly-worn, torn, frayed or fringed garments
- Garments designed primarily for outerwear (hats, coats, hooded sweatshirts other than Gehlen Catholic non- zippered sweatshirts), nylon or fleece
- Oversized garments

- Nylon or silk pants or leggings as main pant
- Midriff baring garments
- Make-up for elementary students

Parents of **elementary students** out of code will be advised of the violation by written notice from the principal.

In the event of a dress code violation and if appropriately-sized garments are available from the nurse, the student will be provided these to wear for the day.

Clothing should be easy for children to manage (elastic waistbands, Velcro shoe closings), be washable and comfortable. Though sandals with back strap and socks are acceptable during warm weather, preschoolers are encouraged to wear closed-toed rubber soled shoes to school for safety and comfort. Paint shirts are encouraged during art projects, but spills and stains may still occur. A pair of gym shoes will be needed when students use the gymnasium. This pair will remain at school and be worn to protect the gym floor.

For easy identification, parents are asked to clearly label all clothing with the child's name. An extra set of clothing is also requested to be left at school in the event of an accident or spills. Soiled clothing will be sent home with children for laundering.

Enrollment and Admission

Equal Educational Opportunity

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program advertises in the public media, welcoming children regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin or religion. Students are educated in a way which fosters knowledge of, respect and appreciation for the historical/contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men/women in our society. Students will be admitted upon the approval of the administrator.

Inclusion

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program is open to all children, including those with unique learning needs within which the school is able to serve. Reasonable accommodations are made for children with disabilities to the level the school is able to provide. Staff will be made aware of the identified needs of the individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is the belief of the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program that inclusion in the preschool program will enrich the experiences of teachers, students, and other children and their families. The preschool/daycare facilities meet the American with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Eligibility

- A child must be 4 years old on or before September 15 of the year enrolled.
- If classes are filled when a parent inquires about enrollment, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list.
- Registration instructions and materials will be provided on the Gehlen Catholic School website or by calling the elementary principal at Gehlen Catholic School at 712-546-4181 Ext. 243.
- As vacancies occur during the year, the openings will be filled from the waiting list or from new registrations.

- Children with special needs may enroll with approval of the Gehlen Catholic School Board. If the developmental needs of the child cannot be met by the Gehlen Catholic Preschool curriculum, other placement will be required.
- The maximum preschool class size is 20 children per classroom. An adult staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times in the preschool to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will call the main office, and the principal will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio.
- The daycare/extended preschool is currently licensed for 30 children. An adult-child ratio of at least 12:1 will be maintained in accordance with DHS requirements.

Informational Meeting

Each spring, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program holds an annual informational meeting for all parents/guardians interested in learning more about the program. During the one hour meeting, parents will be provided information about the mission, philosophy, goals, curriculum, assessments, parental/family involvement opportunities, costs and tuition assistance opportunities of the preschool/daycare program. The preschool program handbook is provided to each family.

Open House

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program offers two open house sessions. In the spring, in conjunction with other preschools in the community, Gehlen Catholic Preschool invites all families to “Come and See” what GCPP has to offer. Families are encouraged to visit the classroom and meet the staff.

On the evening prior to the first day of school, the preschool program hosts an open house. This event offers an opportunity for families to bring their child to the preschool room, meet the staff, and drop off supplies.

Within two weeks after school begins, parents will be invited to an informational meeting to learn more about the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program and, in particular, the classroom, teachers, curriculum and assessments used in the preschool program. The teaching staff will explain schedules, activities and family involvement opportunities. It will also offer an opportunity for parents to meet one another and share ideas, ask questions, and begin to form friendships.

Registration and Required Documents

Registration is held in the spring of each school year. Children may enter the program at other times during the year as openings allow. Registration materials and instructions will be available on the Gehlen Catholic School website at www.gehlencatholic.org or by contacting the school office at 712-546-4181 ext. 243. The following information is due August 1st and must be provided before the child may attend:

- ✓ Registration form
- ✓ Proof of Birth (i.e., birth certificate, hospital record)
- ✓ Tuition Payment Form
- ✓ Race & Ethnicity Form
- ✓ Home Language Survey
- ✓ Parent Questionnaire
- ✓ Speech/Language Developmental Questionnaire

- ✓ Pick-up permission form
- ✓ Health & Safety Emergency medical form (including authorization to meet medical and dental emergencies)
- ✓ Picture release form
- ✓ Sunscreen and insect repellent release form
- ✓ Travel and activity authorization form

Within three weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted, demonstrating that the child is current for routine screening tests and immunization according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Requirements for health records include:

- ✓ Physical exam form signed by licensed MD and containing health history, present health status including allergies, medications and acute/chronic conditions and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
- ✓ Up-to-date immunization record

These records must be presented within the time frame required in order for children to remain in the program. If not presented within the time frame requested, parents must provide evidence of a pending appointment with a physician, indicating the exam and update immunization records will be presented as soon as possible.

Tuition

Preschool Plus

Parents may choose to enroll their child in Preschool Plus which offers 2.5 hrs. of preschool weekly beyond the 12.5 free hours provided through the state-wide voluntary preschool. This opportunity is tuition-supported. Tuition fees may be paid in full, at each quarter, semester or in 9 monthly installments or in any special arrangement approved through the Gehlen Catholic Business Office.

Because fees are determined on an annual basis, no tuition or snack refunds are given for illness, vacation or snow days. Missed sessions will not be “made up” with the exception of snow days which will be scheduled according to the school calendar. Payments may be delivered via ACH, or in person to the school business office, or sent in the preschooler’s backpack or mailed to the school. All payments sent with children should be sealed in an envelope and labeled with the recipient’s name and the party providing the payment clearly written on the outside of the envelope.

Full Day Program

Parents may choose to enroll their child in the full day program which offers 2.5 hrs. of preschool weekly (Preschool Plus) beyond the 12.5 free hours provided through the state-wide voluntary preschool as well as daycare/extended preschool. The Preschool Plus and daycare/extended preschool opportunity are tuition-supported. Tuition fees may be paid in full, at each quarter, semester or in 9 monthly installments or in any special arrangement approved through the Gehlen Catholic Business Office

Because fees are determined on an annual basis, no tuition or snack refunds are given for illness,

vacation or snow days. Missed sessions will not be “made up” with the exception of snow days which will be scheduled according to the school calendar. Payments may be delivered via ACH, or in person to the school business office, or sent in the preschooler’s backpack or mailed to the school. All payments sent with children should be sealed in an envelope and labeled with the recipient’s name and the party providing the payment clearly written on the outside of the envelope.

Tuition Assistance

Families requesting \$1 or more in tuition assistance for Preschool Plus are encouraged to apply for Preschool Tuition Scholarship Application provided by Northwest Early Childhood Iowa (NWE CIA). The application may be obtained on the Gehlen Catholic website or from the school office when made available by NWE CIA.

Families who do not qualify or receive a full preschool scholarship from NWE CIA may apply for any local tuition assistance grants that may be available. If any local grants are made available, families will be notified of these opportunities before school starts. In keeping with Gehlen Catholic School’s tuition payment policy, any remaining tuition balance is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Families who qualify for daycare assistance are eligible for funding through the Department of Human Services. Applications are available on the Gehlen Catholic School website or from the elementary principal’s office. Approved recipients’ daycare fees will be deposited directly into the child’s school account.

Fees and Financial Agreements

The Preschool Plus and daycare fees are determined annually by the Gehlen Catholic School Board. Fees are the responsibility of the parent and include snack fees, lunch and daycare/extended preschool fees. A fee schedule is available upon request from the elementary principal’s office. Daycare fees, lunch and snack fees are to be paid separately from preschool tuition. Fees may be paid in full, quarterly or monthly (9 months). Parents will complete an agreement designating payment responsibility and preferred method of payment.

USDA Free & Reduced Lunch

Families who qualify for free and reduced lunches based upon income are encouraged to apply. Application forms and guidelines may be located on the school website under the Admissions tab. For additional assistance, parents may contact the school business office.

Le Mars Backpack Program

Families who qualify for free/reduced lunch will be offered the opportunity to participate in the Backpack program. This service provides weekly foods/snacks to supplement family food over the weekend. Information in regard to the program may be directed to the development office at Gehlen Catholic School.

Lunch/Snack Fees

The SWVPP provides snacks for children. For children enrolled in the full day program, lunch and afternoon snacks are provided for a fee. Menus are provided to parents at least one week in advance.

Fees are billed separately for each.

Typical Preschool Day

Arrival

Children may arrive any time after 8 a.m. Upon arrival parent/guardian and child will be greeted by a staff member. Any information pertinent to the child shall be shared by parent/guardian with the staff member. The conversation shall include any health concerns.

Preschool Curriculum

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program implements *Creative Curriculum*, a state-approved preschool curriculum, a research and evidence--based comprehensive curriculum designed for birth-5 year olds. It addresses the developmental areas of early learning: language, literacy, math, science, technology, social studies, and the arts as well as the physical, social-emotional and cognitive aspects of development. It provides children with an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways – through play, problem-solving, movement, art, music, drawing, and writing, listening and storytelling. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum. Launchpad-Really Great Reading is an evidence based foundational reading phonics and literacy program that is used to enhance students skills.

In addition, Gehlen Catholic Preschool Plus provides for the spiritual development of students through daily religious instruction provided in the time beyond the state-wide-voluntary preschool hours. Students learn prayers, listen to and discuss Bible stories, and are taught about God and the many gifts He has provided to us. The preschool curriculum materials produced *by My Sunday Visitor*, “I Am Special” are utilized in providing quality religious instruction at a preschooler’s level of understanding.

Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities for children. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activity with solitary time, indoors with outdoor play, quiet play with noisy play. Information about the weekly activities is sent home to families in children’s backpacks as well as electronically, if parents desire. An agenda, posted each day in the classroom, is shared with students at the beginning of each day.

Gehlen Catholic SWVPP Schedule

8:00-8:45: Students Arrive & play with shelf toys

8:45-9:10: Message Board

9:10-9:20: Restroom Break

9:20-9:40: Snack

9:40-9:55: Large Group/Activity Time

9:55-11:00: Free Choice Time

Gehlen Catholic Preschool Plus Schedule

11:00-11:15: Religion

11:15-11:30: Story/Songs

Gehlen Catholic Daycare Schedule

11:30-11:45: Story/Songs/Restroom Breaks

11:45-12:15: Lunch

12:20-12:30: Letter People

12:30-1:00: Large Gross Motor Skills (Recess)

1:00-2:00: Rest Time/Restroom Break

2:00-2:20: Snack

2:20-3:00: Large Motor Skills/Free Choice Time

3:00-3:15: Story Time

3:15: Dismiss

Each child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities each day:

Preschool:

<i>Large and Small Group Activities</i>	<i>Self-directed Play</i>	<i>Snack</i>
<i>Learning Center Activities: Art, science, writing, games, library, blocks, dramatic play, put together toys</i>	<i>Story Time</i> <i>Outdoor Activities</i>	<i>Computers</i> <i>Individual Activities</i>
	<i>Music</i>	

Preschool Plus:

<i>Religion</i>	<i>I Am Special</i>	
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Daycare/Extended Daycare:

<i>Large and Small Group Activities</i>	<i>Story Time/Songs Letter People Large Gross Motor Skills</i>	<i>Lunch Snack</i>
<i>Library</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>PE</i>

Outside Play and Learning

Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program students have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise and be active. Sometimes children spend longer getting bundled up than they spend outside. GCPP uses the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the wind chill factor, temperature or heat index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when children cannot go outside due to weather conditions, they are given the opportunity to use the gym facilities within the building and are supervised at the same level as when outdoors.

In order to make sure that each child may play comfortably outside, families are expected to dress each according to the weather. When it is cold outside, each needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and hat (each labeled with the child's name). For the warmer days, dressing each child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing each child in layers is a practical idea.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program encourages children to bring a hat or other clothing to wear as another protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protections with SPF of 15 or higher will be applied to the child's exposed skin (only with parental written permission). The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with parental written permission) no more than once a day to protect children from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Our playground equipment is installed according to the manufacturer's instructions including anchoring. A playground safety general maintenance checklist will be completed by custodial or preschool staff daily-weekly. Staff are trained to know what to look for hazardous items and follow our playground safety guidelines. Daily-weekly inspection of the playground environment includes the following:

- Missing or broken equipment
- Protrusion of nuts and bolts
- Rust and chipping or peeling paint
- Sharp edges, splinters and rough surfaces
- stability of handholds
- visible cracks
- stability of non-anchored large play equipment (playhouse)
- wear and deterioration
- safety hazards such as broken bottles, toys, insect nests, discarded cigarettes, and packed surfacing under frequently used equipment
- falling surfacing at the required depth in all use zones

Water Activities

A water table is provided in the classroom for children to stand and play with hands in the water. During water play, children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. All students will wash their hands, following the hand washing guidelines, before entering the table area and after they are finished playing. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table.

Field Trips

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program offers several field trips each year. Parents are informed of each trip beforehand and provided permission slips to sign for their child to participate. If parents do not wish for their child to attend an outing, they are required to make alternative child care arrangements. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program uses school buses for field trip transportation. At least 3 adults are present on field trips when five or more children are participating. Phone numbers for parents of each child shall be taken by staff when on field trips and non-center activities away from the premises.

Community Visitors

Throughout the school year, community members (police, firemen, dentist, doctor, etc.) may visit the classroom to share information and topics with preschool children. Information will be supplied via the preschool newsletter.

Child Assessments

It is Gehlen Catholic School's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction and program improvement. Assessments will never be used to label children or include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential and stored in student files. Children are assessed in the following ways:

- Launchpad-Really Great Reading assessment tool use to enhance reading and phonics skills.
- The *Teaching Strategies GOLD* assessment tool is modified to align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Teaching staff record and submit student progress data in all developmental areas throughout the year. Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often demonstrate different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

- Ages and Stages is a questionnaire that assesses a child's physical, intellectual, and social growth.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones; and
- To indicate possible areas that requires additional assessment.

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. In addition, the *Creative Curriculum GOLD* assessment data will be sent home in November, February, and May. On-line access to GOLD may be available to families. The preschool teacher will communicate at least weekly regarding children's activities and developmental milestones. Informal conferences are always welcome and may be requested at any time.

Assessment	Purpose	Time of Year	How Given	Use of Data
GOLD	Evaluate student progress toward standards	Throughout school year	Through teacher observation	Shared with parents three times a year (Nov., Feb. May); used to guide instruction
Interest Survey	Gain understanding of child's interests	Beginning of school year	Completed during home visit	Used in planning instruction and educational experiences for children
Parent Survey	Gain understanding of family goals, interests and functioning; learn ways to communicate with families	Beginning of the school year, and two times additionally throughout the year (Oct. & April)	Formally at home visit; through conversations and other communications throughout the year; during preschool advisory board meetings	Used in planning communications with families, planning instruction which reflects family diversity and which incorporates family involvement
Height and Weight Check	Monitor student physical growth	September and May	School nurse measures and weighs	Shared with parents
Vision Screening	Check for vision problems	Spring	School nurse assesses sight with vision chart	Concerns shared with parents with referrals suggested as needed

Hearing Screening	Check for hearing issues	February	NWAEA staff assess with hearing test equipment	Concerns shared with parents; retesting provided as needed; referrals provided as needed
Developmental Screening for Children with Special Needs	To determine child's areas of need	As needed upon parent or teacher concerns	NWAEA	Used to determine plans of action to meet special needs of children
Speech Assessment	Determine a child's speech needs	As needed (by teacher or parent request)	NWAEA speech pathologist completes the screening	Results shared with parents used to determine services needed (i.e. IEP)
Ages & Stages	Early Intervention	August	At Home Visits	Used in planning instruction and educational experiences for children

If, through observation, or information on the *Creative Curriculum GOLD* or through concerns expressed by parents, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concerns.

If the need is related to academic or social/behavioral progress, the teacher/parent will follow up with the Student Assistance Team and AEA Staff, following Gehlen Catholic's Student Assistance Protocol to address student needs, and as a resource for an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plans interventions, provides support, and makes outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.

A request may be made to Northwest Area Education Agency for support or more formalized testing. With parental consent, the preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Supervision

No child will be left unsupervised while attending the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible. In these cases, the teacher will check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.). Any person who does not have a record check completed shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not a parent or

guardian/custodian.

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete a daily safety scan of the classroom. The primary purpose for “supervision” is to keep all children safe. The indoor environment is designed so staff can supervise children by sight and sound at all times without relying on artificial monitoring devices. Staff is actively engaged through conversations, singing and games with children during play in the classroom, outside on the playground and transitions(meal time, rest time and bathroom breaks). During the basic care routine, staff are present and care for the children. Semi Private areas are designed for both children and adults to be observed by an adult from outside the area. At field trips, our program will provide additional staff/ volunteers to make sure the children are in close proximity to an adult. Staff are trained to actively supervise zones in the classroom, playground, meal time and bathroom areas to assist children.. We do not participate in swimming activities. There are no bodies of water near our program to maintain touch supervision.

Guidance and Discipline

Gehlen Catholic School employs Early Childhood Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) as its discipline program. PBIS focuses on creating a positive climate wherein children are taught expected behaviors, provided time to practice those behaviors, are recognized for positive behavior choices and are provided additional support as needed in order to gain self-control and self-management of their own behavior. Gehlen Catholic’s PBIS program is known as **BIRDS: Be Positive; Imitate Jesus; Respect Self and Others; Do your Best; Show Responsibility.**

Teaching staff will equitably use instruction and practice in expected behaviors, positive guidance, redirection, and planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules and involving children in problem solving to foster the child’s own ability to become self-disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action.

Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear and understandable to the child. They will help children to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs and learn to take turns. The staff will actively involve children in solving their conflicts and problems (i.e. children talk out problems and think of solutions; children are encouraged to be sensitive to the feelings of others, etc.) through Love and Logic techniques.

Challenging Behavior

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful and purposeful in PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports). The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children;
- modeling turn-taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors;
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials;
- engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity

- to contribute to the group; and
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

Teaching staff will provide positive guidance to children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in the relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication and emotional regulation skills with direction in resolving conflict and setting limits. If a child displays persistent serious and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, BIRDS' Tier II/III Teams and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Biting

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program understands, but does not tolerate biting.

Students who bite are immediately removed from the group with a firm, "No." The bitten child/adult is consoled and the bitten area is washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The child who bit is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, then restricted.

A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day. The name of the biting child is not released as it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation worse.

In an effort to prevent further biting behavior, Gehlen Catholic staff investigate and review the context of each biting incident for a pattern. The adequacy of supervision will be reviewed with the program director to determine the need for any changes in supervision. Each child is provided instruction and support in resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner. The staff tries to adapt to the environment and works with the parents to reduce any child stress.

The preschool program staff makes special efforts to protect potential victims. Every effort is made to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance the school's commitment to the family of the biting child and to that of other families. Only after the staff feels that all attempts have been made to make the program work for the biting child will the school consider asking a family to withdraw a child.

Permissible Methods of Discipline

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting), staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may (1) separate the children involved; (2) immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) notify parents or legal guardian of children involved in the incident; (5) review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of the program activities, and administrative corrective

action if there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices

Gehlen Catholic School does not and will not employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- harsh or abusive tone of voice with children nor threats or derogatory remarks;
- physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking or grabbing;
- any punishment that would humiliate, frighten or subject a child to neglect; nor
- withholding nor threatening to withhold food as a form of discipline.
- punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, food or rest.

Removal of a Child

Physical and emotional safety of all children and adults is the fundamental assumption in classrooms at Gehlen Catholic School. Children and teachers need to feel physically and emotionally safe in all classrooms. Every effort will be made to ensure a healthy environment in each classroom. Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping the administrator informed about children who are experiencing challenging behaviors and events, the guidance strategies they are using with these children and the ways they have informed and involved the parents in these situations.

First, the parents of a child in a publicly funded early childhood program are constitutionally entitled to notice and an opportunity to be heard before any expulsion or lengthy removal (removal of more than ten days). *See, e.g., Goss v. Lopez* (U.S. Supreme Court, 1975). These are the same disciplinary protections in place for children in grades kindergarten through twelve receive.

Second, children with disabilities in early childhood programs are entitled to additional protections when they are removed from their educational program for disciplinary reasons. These protections are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Third, early childhood programs must implement disciplinary removals in a nondiscriminatory manner. Suspensions and expulsions of children administered in a discriminatory manner may violate federal civil rights laws. Discipline practices should not disproportionately impact any group of children. For example, for young children with disabilities (or for whom a disability has not been ruled out), the program is obligated to consider the implications of the child's behavioral needs, and the effects of the use of disciplinary removals when ensuring the provision of FAPE. Failure to make behavioral supports available throughout a continuum of placements, including in regular education settings, could result in an inappropriately restrictive placement and denial of placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (IDEA, 300.114(a)(1)).

Snacks/Food and Nutrition

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn and their overall behavior. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program has the opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible and healthy.

Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. Snacks and lunch foods are prepared in the Gehlen Catholic School cafeteria kitchen. The food program is part of the federal lunch program.

Children may choose to have breakfast before class begins. Breakfast is served daily in the cafeteria from 7:45-8:15. A parent/guardian will need to accompany and supervise any preschooler who wishes to enjoy breakfast in the cafeteria before 8:15. Parents are asked to notify the preschool teacher if their child will be using this service. Breakfast is provided at a reasonable cost and will be charged to the child's account. Reduced rates are available for families who qualify for free and reduced lunch according to the USDA Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) program. Applications for the FRL will be available on the school website after July 1.

A snack is served mid-morning and mid-afternoon in the classroom. The preschool program serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snack menus will be provided to families monthly and posted outside the classroom. Children will be encouraged to try new foods. Water is available to students throughout the day.

Hot lunch is available to all children enrolled in the daycare/extended preschool and is encouraged as the best option for children to experience a balanced, nutritious lunch within the guidelines of USDA standards. Children may bring lunch from home if desired. If food brought from home is below USDA standards, supplemental food is provided with charges passed to the parent. A refrigerator is available within the preschool program room to assure appropriate food safety. Lunch fees are reasonable and charged to a family's account. Reduced rates are available for families who qualify for free & reduced lunch according to USDA (FRL) program. Applications for the FRL are available on the school website.

As an important part of the curriculum, meals are learning experiences for children. Small groups come together to socially interact, fostering self-help skills and good nutritional habits as well as practice of table setting and manners. Conversation is encouraged at snack time and supervision by staff is provided at anytime a child is eating. In addition, "cooking" activities in the classroom will be part of the preschool curriculum, offering students an opportunity to enjoy food they have prepared.

All other snack foods (those not prepared by students) are prepared, served and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Clean sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of child's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. When any child with a disability has special feeding needs, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program staff will provide parents with a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes. **Due to severe peanut allergies of some students, no products containing peanuts or which have been produced in factories**

where peanuts may be used are allowed. Any food items coming into the building during school hours must be pre-packaged and meet the criteria. Fresh fruits and vegetables are acceptable.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program does not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Additionally, the preschool staff will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Those who have summer birthdays will be celebrated on their half birthdays. Food treats must meet the guidelines below:

- food must be pre-packaged, unopened, and preferably nutritious;
- any treats, cakes or cookies purchased at a store, are acceptable and must remain in the original package to list ingredients to allow monitoring of food allergies;
- servings adequate to serve all children must be included; and
- when planning for a child's home birthday party, parents are asked to consider inviting all of the children or none. Invitations may be distributed at school if all children are invited. If this is not possible, invitations must be mailed directly to children's homes to avoid sad or hurt feelings.
- Good choices include fresh or dried fruit, low fat yogurt, whole wheat crackers or pretzels, low fat cheese sticks (mozzarella, cheddar).

Rest/Napping

If rest or napping time is needed or provided for preschoolers, a rest mat for each child will be provided. A quiet and comfortable space will be provided within the classroom and under the supervision of the preschool program staff. The daycare/extended provides daily rest/napping time.

School Supplies

School supplies that parents will need to provide for each student are as follows: 1 pair of tennis shoes (to leave for PE); 1 complete change of dress code appropriate clothes; 1 art shirt; 1 full size backpack. Please label all items with the child's name.

Objects from Home

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for children, Gehlen Catholic Preschool asks that parents limit toys brought from home. If a child brings an "attachment" item from home, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program asks that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack. Children are not allowed to bring gum, candy, money or toy weapons (toy guns, toy knives, toy swords, etc.) to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Pets

Animals kept on site shall be in good health with no evidence of disease, will not possess a safety threat and are maintained in a clean manner. All pets (dogs, cats) must have written proof of current vaccinations by a veterinarian before admittance to the classroom. The information must be given to the

administrator prior to the visit, must be pre-planned and pre-approved. Reptiles, ferrets, turtles, and birds of the parrot family are not allowed. Pets are not allowed in the food prep or kitchen areas.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Parental Access

Parents of children attending the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program have unlimited access to their children and to the staff providing care for their children during the daycare hours of operation or whenever their children are in the care of the daycare unless parental contact is prohibited by court order.

Open Door Policy

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informational conversations, phone calls, *Remind App*, or emails or text messages. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all staff who work with the child may share the parent's communication. Teaching staff will write notes for families no less than weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs—email, in person, notes or phone calls. Parents of children attending the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program have unlimited access to their children and to the staff providing care for their children during the hours of operation or whenever their children are in the care of GCPP unless parental contact is prohibited by court order.

Newsletters

Gehlen Catholic School provides a monthly school newsletter which is sent electronically to all families. It is also posted on the school website at www.gehlencatholic.org.

Gehlen Catholic's principal provides a weekly newsletter entitled, "*News from the Nest*," which is prepared and distributed via email each Tuesday. Paper copies will be provided to families without Internet access. The "*News from the Nest*" will also be posted on the school website under Quick Links or under the Parent tab.

The preschool teacher will also provide a monthly newsletter and a monthly calendar which will be sent home with students in paper format as well as being posted on the preschool parent bulletin board located outside the preschool classroom.

Postings

A family bulletin board/brochure center is available near the entrance to the preschool/daycare room. Among the items parents will find there include:

- Daycare Certificate of Licensure with the number of children who may be cared for at any one time.
- QRS rating
- Certificate of Participation in QPPS
- Any notifications of preschoolers' exposure to communicable diseases
- Notice of action to deny, suspend, or revoke center license or reduce to provisional status
- Mandatory reporter requirements
- Notice of availability of preschool/daycare handbook
- Program activities
- Requirements and procedures for mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse
- Nature of availability of child care centers and preschool licensing standards & procedures
- Contact information of Child Care Consultant
- Contact information of Department of Human Services

Ethics and Confidentiality

Gehlen Catholic staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent.

Arrival and Departure

For safety reasons, under no circumstances may children be admitted into the classrooms unless teaching staff is present. **Children may not arrive before 8:00 AM as there are no adults available to supervise the children prior to that time.**

Guardianship of the child is transferred to the school once the parent makes known the child's presence to the teacher and is returned to parent at dismissal once eye contact is made between teacher and parent. The school is not officially responsible until parent-teacher contact is made. A check in/out system will be utilized at arrival and dismissal.

When preschoolers are brought to school, a responsible adult must accompany the child directly to the classroom to greet the staff and assure the child has safely arrived. A responsible adult must also pick up the child at the conclusion of the day. For security reasons, parents/responsible adults bringing or picking up the child must use the main entrance Door A located on Plymouth Street. Proper conduct (walking quietly with parents) is the expected behavior of preschoolers entering/leaving school.

If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, it is essential that parents inform the teacher in advance. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the enrollment paperwork. Please notify him/her that he/she may be asked to provide identification to insure the child's safety. If someone other than the parent is bringing the child to the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program for the day, please notify that person of start/ending times as well as drop-off/pickup locations and procedures.

During arrival, it is very important to set up a routine that the family can follow every day. This routine provides each child with a sense of security. It is expected that the responsible adult will walk the preschooler into the building, greet the teachers and friends, and encourage the preschooler to put away

items in the coat room. When it is time to go, the adult should tell the child he/she is leaving and say good-bye. If the child is having difficulty separating, signal a teacher for assistance. If the child is upset when the adult leaves, the adult is free to call later to find out how the child is doing.

During departure it is also important to follow a set routine. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program recommends that the adult greet the child and the teachers upon arrival and let the child know it is time to go. While the child is finishing up, the parent may touch base with the teachers to discuss the child's day. Parents are asked to say good-bye to the teachers so they know you are leaving. Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program requests that parents avoid a prolonged departure.

Since the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program teachers have additional responsibilities at the end of each session, it is very important that each child be picked up on time. Students need to be picked up within 5 minutes of the end of the session. The time immediately following the dismissal is used to put away materials and equipment, assess the day's events, and to modify the curriculum plans for the next school day. Being prompt is expected and greatly appreciated.

Once parents have reunited with the child and are departing, Gehlen Catholic is no longer responsible for the child. For safety reasons, parents are asked to avoid allowing children to run ahead of them either inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive within 5 minutes of dismissal to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact the emergency contact persons. If parental arrival becomes routinely late, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool administrator will schedule a meeting with a parent to determine a solution to the problem.

Weather Related Program Cancellations

If TK-12 is not having school, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program WILL NOT be in session. If Gehlen Catholic School has a 2-hour late start due to weather, the full day program will begin 2 hours late; the PreK Plus and SWVPP-only session will not meet. If Gehlen Catholic School has an early dismissal due to weather, the sessions will dismiss accordingly.

Weather-related school announcements will also be shared on the local radio station, KLEM (1410 AM or 99.6 FM) and on KTIV Channel 4 TV. If the radio station/TV announces Gehlen Catholic does not have school, this WILL include the preschool/daycare program.

Weather-related announcements will also be shared via textcaster for those who register for this service on the Le Mars Daily Sentinel's web page at www.lemarssentinel.com. Unplanned school late starts or early dismissals will be texted to those who have signed up for this free service. In addition, changes in schedule will be posted on the Gehlen Catholic School web site at www.gehlencatholic.org

Children's Records

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the

Diocese of Sioux City if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of Gehlen Catholic's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the Education Office of the Diocese of Sioux City.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency. The form will state to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when the right expires, and that the parents may withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Grievance Policy

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. Gehlen Catholic administration and staff want parents to be confident that each child is being cared for and has a quality experience. If there is ever a time in which parents have a concern regarding their child, parents are encouraged to address the concern with the child's teacher. If parents have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, they are asked to contact the elementary principal who is the program administrator for the preschool. If a parent remains dissatisfied, he/she may contact the Gehlen Catholic School President.

As part of the preschool program assessment, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will invite families to complete a questionnaire(s) to evaluate the program. This information helps assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents are the first teachers of their children. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program encourages families to be very involved in their child's education. When school and home work together, each child benefits in many ways. Parents are always invited to observe their children during the day when possible and meet with the staff as desired. Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program staff look forward to the opportunity to work with each child and his/her family.

Parent/teacher conferences are held in both the fall (November) and spring (March/April) semester as well as when either party requests. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teacher or administrator at any time.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program invites parents to become involved in one or more of the following ways:

- Support their child's daily transition to school by sharing information about the child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect a child allows the teacher to be more responsive to each child's needs;
- Return all forms, questionnaires, etc., promptly;
- Attend family/teacher conferences in the fall and spring semesters;
- Take time to read the family bulletin board;
- Check each child's backpack each day;
- Share some parent talents in the preschooler's classroom through activities such as reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, professions, or artifacts from trips

taken;

- Share any family cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs;
- Read all material sent home with each child;
- Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms including such things as preparation of material at home, making phone call, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting materials for projects, running errands , photography, setting up before events or cleaning up afterwards;
- Serve on the Preschool Advisory Committee; or
- Provide other ideas for consideration.

Non-discrimination

It is the policy of Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IV or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats on request, and to the extent possible, in a language families understand. Translators will be provided as needed to assist families in their native language as is possible.

Custody

A copy of any document issued by the court, such as custodial arrangements, “no contact order” or “joint custody order “ must be on file with the school administrator in order for Gehlen Catholic School to fully abide by the legal requirements of the court.

Divorce Records Policy

Gehlen Catholic School will comply with lawful court orders in the case of divorced parents. In the case of a student whose parents’ marriage has ended in divorce, the names and addresses of both parents should appear in the student’s file. A certified copy of the Order of Dissolution as well as any subsequent modifications of the order should also be on file. Unless otherwise decreed in the order, information commonly made available to parents of any student in attendance may be provided to both parents (i.e. notice of school functions, report cards, appointments for parent-teacher conferences, etc.) A complete copy of this policy is available in the main office during school hours.

Home Visits

Home visits are made in August prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool/daycare teacher to get to know each family, the preschooler and to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet each child’s needs. This is also a great time for parents to share what makes their family unique, how parents prefer to communicate with the

teacher, and to share knowledge of each child's interests, approaches to learning and developmental needs. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will provide family/teacher conferences in both fall and spring. The conferences will be held at school. During conferences, the preschool teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of the preschooler's work.

Preschool Advisory Board

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets four times a year to build positive relationships among parents, their children and the school staff; enhance parent/student interactions at school and home; provide educational programs pertinent to preschoolers and their development; and provide ideas, suggestions and strategies parents may use at home to enhance student learning. All parents of preschoolers are welcome to be part of the preschool advisory board.

Transitions

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program such as transitional kindergarten or special education. GCPP staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Strangulation

Drawstrings are a strangulation hazard. Hazardous items shall not be allowed on children's clothing at school. Parents shall be responsible for removing drawstrings and other hazardous items from children's clothing.

Strangulation Policy

In our classroom, we've eliminated strangulation hazards by doing the following:

- Strings and cords long enough to encircle a child's neck will not be accessible
- Window curtains will not have looped cords
- Dramatic play items with handles and straps will be removed or shortened. Ties, scarves and necklaces will be used under supervision.
- Parents will be asked to remove neck strings from hoodie if long enough to encircle a child's neck
- Lanyards used for lunch tags and dramatic play will be the break-away type.

Health and Immunization Certificates

Within three weeks after a child begins at Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunization according to the schedule recommended and published by the American

Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents/legal guardian or both shall provide

evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's reentry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed and at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, and is immediately available to administrator or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parent or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child health and safety records will include:

- ✓ Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency.
- ✓ Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunization and screening test with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results;
- ✓ Current emergency contact information for each child that is kept up to date by a specified method during the school year.
- ✓ Names of individual authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
- ✓ Instruction for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (i.e. asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
- ✓ Individual emergency care plan for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support.
- ✓ Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.

Under the supervision of the preschool program teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.

All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal

precautions to prevent infection.

All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.

All staff complete “Occupational Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens” annually and shall follow universal precautions when handling body fluids.

At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times.

Wellness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children

For the health and safety of all the children in the program, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. Preschoolers who experience the following during the night will not be admitted:

- Fever greater than 99 degrees F;
- Vomiting;
- Diarrhea;
- Pink eye with drainage; or
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge.

Gehlen Catholic’s Preschool Program policy is for ill children require that the following conditions be in place before a child returns to school:

- Fever free for 24 hours without medication
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without discharge

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child’s ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when they not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of illness during the day at preschool program, parents/legal guardians or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, it is essential that current, accurate phone numbers for the parents/legal guardians or authorized emergency contact persons and the child’s pediatrician are on file. In the meantime, the child will be provided a place to rest under the supervision of someone familiar (typically the school nurse) to the child until the parent/legal guardian or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having contagious disease, then, until she/he can be picked up, the child will be located where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which a child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and those families should implement at home. Communicable disease exposures will be posted on the parent bulletin board and written notes will be provided to parents.

Reporting Incidents

Parents will be notified on the day of an incident involving a child that includes minor injuries, health status changes or behavioral concerns.

Parents will be verbally notified immediately when there is serious injury to a child, a significant change in health status or when an incident includes a child being involved in inappropriate, sexually acting out behavior.

A written report, fully documenting every incident, shall be provided to the parent or authorized person. The report shall be completed by the staff witnessing the incident and the report shall be retained in the child's file.

Medication Policies and Procedures

The Gehlen Catholic School will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order form a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medication outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturers' container that is child-resistant with accompanying physician or pharmacist directions and label intact. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) Verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at school.

For prescription medications, parents/legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication, the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date, and the administration, storage and disposal instructions.

For children with prescriptions for an Epi-pen, parents will provide pens to be stored, one in the nurse's office and one in the preschool/daycare. The medication will be stored as required in a locked container.

Over-the-counter medications will only be administered to a child with a prescription by a physician. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names: specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer and the name of the health care provider who prescribed the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the phone by a physical or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for the type of medication, in a sturdy child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed must be reviewed for renewal by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and initials of the person who administered each dose of medication or reason why medication was not given. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

Vision, Hearing, Developmental and Dental Screening

Annually Gehlen Catholic School offers basic vision screening by the school nurse. Hearing screening is also offered annually through the Northwest Area Education Agency. When possible, dental screening may be provided by Mid Sioux Opportunity during school hours. If this is not possible, dental screening will be the responsibility of the parent. Developmental screening is provided by the preschool teacher through GOLD assessments and Ages & Stages. If problems are detected, parents will be notified and support resources shared.

Tooth Brushing

Children rinse with water daily following lunch. Children are taught appropriate brushing and given cleaning techniques to remove food and plaque. No toothpaste is used.

Hand Washing Practices

Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. A poster of children using proper hand washing procedures is placed by each sink. The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- Upon arrival;
- After diapering or using the toilet (using wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- After handling body fluids (e.g. blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- Before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g. meat, eggs, poultry);
- Before and after playing in water that is shared by two or more people; and
- After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child;
- Before and after administering medication;
- Before or after administering non-emergency first aid if gloves are not worn;
- After assisting a child with toileting; and
- After handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water;
- Rubbing hands vigorously while singing the hand washing song, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well, drying hands with a paper towel or a dryer and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g. by using a paper towel to turn off the water).

Toilet Learning

It is recommended that an extra set of clothing be sent to school with each child so the staff can assist them with changing should such toileting accidents occur. Parents are asked to place clothing in a bag and clearly label it with their child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes. When accidents do happen, clothing that is soiled by urine or feces shall be immediately placed in plastic bags (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering and a clean set of clothing shall be used to replace soiled clothing. Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.

2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:

- Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff members check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.

- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- At all times, staff members have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

3. Potty chairs will not be used.

4. Families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or mess play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes

5. In case of a bathroom accident, all teachers, staff, &/or school nurse will help the child.

Sanitation and Cleaning Schedule

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program strives to be a clean, neat, safe, hazard-free, and sanitary setting for children and staff. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. (Minimum 35 sq. feet of space per child). Sufficient space is provided for dining and bathroom needs. The room has sufficient lighting, ventilation, heating and cooling. The room is cleaned daily by janitorial staff after program hours. Garbage is disposed of daily as well. An equipment and toy cleaning schedule is followed to reduce the spread of germs and to sanitize all surfaces using the standard procedures for disinfecting and/or sanitizing. The cleaning schedule is posted in the room and logged when completed. The janitorial staff cleans restrooms and logs completed cleaning procedures. Sleeping mats and student clothing are stored so as to reduce transmission of disease. Mats are cleaned and sanitized weekly.

Procedures for standard precautions are used and include the following:

- Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized.
- Staff use barriers and techniques that minimize contact of mucus membranes or of openings in the skin with potentially infectious body fluids and reduce the spread of infectious disease.
- When spills of body fluids occur, staff clean them up immediately with detergent followed by water rinsing.
- After cleaning, staff sanitize nonporous surfaces by using the procedure described in the Cleaning and Sanitation Table.
- Staff clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning.
- Staff dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is placed in a closed container.

First Aid Kit

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will provide and assure that a clearly labeled first aid kit that is

sufficient to address minor injury or trauma is available and accessible to staff at all times when children are in the center, outdoor play area or on field trips.

Building Safety

The Gehlen Catholic School doors are locked from 8:25 am to 3:20 pm daily. Anyone other than staff members must be “buzzed in” by office staff in order to gain access. Once inside all must sign in with name and time and indicate where he/she will be going within the building. Each must wear a visitor badge while in the building. Prior to leaving, each person must sign out and indicate time of departure.

The staff (on-sight supervisor, early childhood paras) will supervise, monitor, observe and keep within sight and hearing to those individuals who are on school property within the preschool program area when children are present. In the event of a conflict of interest, the principal will be summoned to handle the situation. These procedures will be shared with parents and guardians at the open parent meeting as well as through the preschool program newsletter and handbook upon enrollment.

Smoke/Nicotine Free Facility

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke free Air Act of 2008, Gehlen Catholic School buildings and grounds, vehicles and outdoor play area are tobacco and nicotine free. The use of smoking and tobacco products is prohibited at all times. Non-Smoking signs are posted at each entrance and in each school vehicle. Signs include the telephone number for reporting complaints and the internet address to DPH.

Emergency Procedures: Parent Notifications

Emergency Safety

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool utilizes the Standard Response Protocol and Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan in handling emergencies (fire, tornado/severe weather, bomb threat, intruder) which would require lockout, lockdown, shelter or evacuation.

In the event of an emergency which would impact the preschool (tornado, intruder, evacuation, bomb threat), parents would be officially notified of the status of the situation and location of their child for pick-up via the local radio station (KLEM 1410 AM), and when possible via text caster, email, and through the school’s web page postings at www.gehlencatholic.org.

- 1. Parent Reunification:** If students and staff must evacuate our facility or when parents/guardians are unable to pick up their children, GCPP staff will use the following procedures to reunite children with parents/guardians or an authorized emergency contact as soon as it is safe:

Notifications:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Text message via <i>Remind</i> App to all families by the teacher or paraeducator to inform of evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children.2. Textcaster message to all families via Le Mars Daily Sentinel sent by principal to inform of evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children.
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	<p>3. Email message to all families via teacher or elementary secretary, noting evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children.</p> <p>4. Message notice to KLEM radio by principal or development director, noting evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children.</p>
Delay in reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact:	1. Children will remain with the teacher, para or principal/director until parent/guardian or emergency contact is able to pick up the child.
Release	<p>1. Children released only to parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact.</p> <p>2. Release form signed and dated with date and time by parent/guardian or emergency contact.</p>

2. Evacuation: If students and staff need to evacuate our facility because there is a fire, gas leak, structural damage, etc., GCPP staff will use the following procedures:

Evacuation routes/exits:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exit nearest exterior door with children and emergency supply kit. Walk to St. Francis statue on playground, All Saints Parish, Floyd Valley Healthcare, or Gehlen Catholic school bus (depending upon the nearest, safest location) via the most direct route. If we need to leave the site, we will evacuate to Guardian Angel Preschool, All Saints Parish-St. James site or the Le Mars YMCA. Out of town evacuation to St. Mary's Catholic School-High School Bldg., Remsen, IA. (east) or home of Jeff /Kathy Neary, Merrill.
Evacuating infants/toddlers and others (children and staff) with limited mobility, special needs or chronic medical needs:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exit the nearest exterior door. Use a wheelchair (located in the men's restroom in the office area) or wagon (located in the office area of the preschool) to transport children to evacuation sites or transportation.
	1. Grab cell phone, emergency records, lanyards with student information on and kits (located in the office area of preschool) in pails/wagon.
Notifications:	Teacher or para-educator will notify parents and the principal of the emergency and evacuation site via text message.
Evacuation sites:	<p>Evacuation sites:</p> <p>To the north:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Francis statue on playground, Gehlen Catholic school bus or Floyd Valley Healthcare depending upon the type of emergency <p>To the west: All Saints Parish - St. Joseph Site All Saints Parish-St. James Site</p> <p>To the South or East:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guardian Angel Preschool • YMCA <p>Out of town:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Mary's Catholic School-High School Bldg., Remsen, IA. • Jeff and Kathy Neary's home, Merrill, IA
Transportation to evacuation locations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gehlen Catholic School bus - located to the north of the school building; open back emergency door to access interior. • Gehlen Catholic suburban, or the van keys in hs faculty room in binder marked accordingly • Teacher, paraeducator, principal and/or administrative assistant's vehicle located in the north parking lot.
Additional:	<p>Outside school neighborhood: All Saints Parish - St. James site, or YMCA</p> <p>Out of town:</p> <p>East: St. Mary's Catholic School-High School Bldg., Remsen, IA.</p> <p>South: Jeff & Kathy Neary's home- Merrill</p>

- 3. Shelter-in-Place:** If students and staff need to stay in the safest place inside our facility when there is a weather-related event such as a severe storm/tornado or notified by emergency officials when there is a chemical spill/hazardous gas, etc., GCPP staff will use the following procedures:

Location:	Go to Room 304 (Mrs. Neary's room)
Evacuation routes/exits:	Go to hallway
Evacuating infants/toddlers and others (children and staff) with limited mobility, special needs or chronic medical needs:	Carry/move directly to the safe location
Emergency records/supply kits:	Kit located in the preschool office area and coat room.
Notifications:	<p>Teacher or para-educator text parents of location.</p> <p>Principal or development director notify parents via textcaster.</p>

- 4. Lockdown:** If students and staff need to stay in the safest place inside our facility when there is security issue, such as, a disgruntled person, active shooter, community violence, unstable custody disputes, hostage situation, other physical or verbal threats, etc., GCPP staff will use the following procedures:

Location:	Preschool classroom – shut window blinds
Evacuation routes/exits:	Classroom Door-Emergency Door L.
Evacuating infants/toddlers and others (children and staff) with limited mobility, special needs or chronic medical needs:	Carry or move in wagon to coat room or library
Emergency records/supply kits:	Grab a cell phone, an emergency kit in the preschool office area and coat room.
Notifications:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text message to principal and all families by the teacher or paraeducator to inform of evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children. 2. Textcaster message to all families via Le Mars Daily Sentinel sent by principal to inform of evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children. 3. Email message to all families via Infinite Campus (student information program) by teacher or elementary secretary, noting evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children. 4. Message notice to KLEM radio by principal or development director, noting evacuation location and safe clearance in picking up children.

5. Hazard/Incident Specific Events:

Fire, smoke or explosion		
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alarm sounded/alert staff. 2. Evacuate the facility with cell phone, emergency records and kits (located in the office area of preschool) based upon procedures for evacuation. 3. When possible, close all windows and doors and shut off lights. The safety of children is top priority so evaluate the situation to assure evacuation in the shortest time possible. 4. Assess weather conditions outside and observe wind direction; move children and staff upwind of any smoke. 5. Walk to St. Francis statue on playground, All Saints Parish, Floyd Valley Healthcare, or Gehlen Catholic school bus (depending upon the nearest, safest location) via the most direct route. 6. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using the name to face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to another location. 7. Put child identification cards on children with cards against the inside of a shirt. 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Assess weather conditions. Consider moving to one of the other evacuation locations as appropriate. 9. Note: The school is directly connected to the fire department alarm system and will be alerted when alarms go off. Once the fire department arrives, provide needed information as requested. 10. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 11. Follow procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contacts. 12. Re-enter the preschool after emergency officials say it is safe to return. 13. Complete the Child Care Initial Damage Assessment form, if appropriate. 14. Contact DHS child care compliance staff person and Child Care Resource and Referral as appropriate. 	
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Extreme Weather: Thunderstorm/tornado or severe wind	
Steps to take	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the event of a thunderstorm watch, listen to the radio, television and/or the NOAA Weather Radio for updates. Alert staff and cancel all outdoor activities. 2. In the event of a THUNDERSTORM WARNING, alert staff and be ready to go to shelter-in-place evacuation location if weather becomes severe. Unstable weather can change quickly. 3. In the event of a Tornado Watch, listen to the radio, television and/or the NOAA Weather Radio for updates. Alert staff and cancel all outdoor activities. 4. In the event of a THUNDERSTORM WARNING, alert staff and be ready to go to your shelter-in-place evacuation location if weather becomes severe. Unstable weather can change quickly. 5. Using a child attendance roster, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to a different location. 6. Get under sturdy furniture, such as a heavy table if one is available, and hang on with one arm. Cover heads and neck and help cover children. If no furniture is available, cover with mats, pillows, get into a safe stance (low, on haunches or knees with head tucked and covered by arms). 7. Avoid use of electrical equipment. Turn off lights if time permits. 8. Monitor the weather via television or radio. 9. Once the weather event has passed through the area, assess damage to the facility and surrounding areas. 10. Communicate with parents. 11. Move children and staff to safe areas of the facility as directed by administration.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. If found unsafe, evacuate the facility with emergency supply kit(s) based on procedure in the emergency plan. Remember when considering the option to evacuate, it must be safe to transport children based upon weather conditions and damage in the community. 13. Post the notice of relocation on facility entrances. 14. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contacts. 15. Complete the Child Care Initial Damage Assessment form if appropriate. 16. Contact DHS child care compliance person and Child Care Resource and Referral as appropriate.
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Extreme Weather: Heat Wave	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce activity levels in the hottest part of the afternoon. 2. Stay in the coolest available space; air conditioning is best. 3. Eat light foods. 4. Drink lots of water and other fluids even if children say they are not thirsty. 5. Play outside earlier or later in the day, staying indoors between noon and 4:00 p.m. 6. Stay out of the sun. When children are outside, provide shaded areas such as trees, umbrellas, etc..

Extreme Weather: Snowstorms and other winter weather	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to radio, television, on-line weather reports NAOO Weather radio and stay alert to school officials messages in regard to weather. 2. Listen to wind chill to determine if and how long children may play outside. 3. Dress children warmly when playing outside in the cold. Bring children into the facility regularly. 4. Contact parents/guardians to pick up children prior to the weather-related release. School officials will notify parents via text caster, radio, television and webpage notices.

Extreme Weather: Flooding and Flash Flooding	
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Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to radio, television, on-line weather reports NAOO Weather radio and stay alert to school officials messages in regard to weather. 2. Move records and valuable equipment to higher floors. Store chemicals where flood waters cannot reach them and cause contamination. 3. Maintenance staff will shut off water at main so contaminated water does not back up in the facility's water supply. 4. If time and conditions permit, unplug all electrical devices/equipment. 5. Evacuate with the emergency supply kit(s) based on procedures in your emergency plan. 6. Post the notice of relocation on school entrance. 7. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for by using name –to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and each time children and staff are moved to a different location. 8. Put child identification cards on children. 9. Do not try to drive on flooded roads or through flooded areas. 10. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 11. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact.
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Dangerous person or potentially violent situation within the building; violent intruder	
Steps you will take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Office will alert staff via intercom, text message, email chat or in person depending upon the situation. Office or recipient of the threat will call 911. 2. Preschool staff will follow directives of director/principal to move to a safe location as directed by law-enforcement. Preschool staff will evacuate children to the determined location. 3. Staff will attempt to keep intruders away from as many children and staff as possible. If the intruder goes into a room with children, staff will try to draw him/her into the least utilized portion of the room. 4. While engaging the intruder, other staff should evacuate the children if it is safe. If unable to evacuate, move unaffected classrooms to locations farthest from where the intruder is. Try to use routes not visible to the intruder. 5. Do not physically restrain or block the intruder's movements. 6. If the intruder chooses to leave the premises, allow them the freedom to exit. If possible, note the make and model of the intruder's vehicle, license plate and direction the intruder was going.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Once law enforcement arrives, the officers will assume charge of the situation, negotiate and direct movements. If the decision is made to evacuate to either the out-of-neighborhood or out of town evacuation location, follow the procedures in the emergency plan. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact.
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Disgruntled parent	
Steps you will take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Try to guide a parent or other person to a private location or area in school. When possible, staff position oneself closest to the exit. Listen to the concerns voiced by the person without promising anything that doesn't follow school policies or procedures or a court order. If a person becomes agitated, refer to violent intruder emergency procedures.

Impaired parent (unstable, intoxicated, etc.)	
Steps you will take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Offer to call the other parent or another person authorized to pick up the child. If a parent refuses to allow another person to pick up the child, you cannot prevent the parent from taking his/her child. Call 911. Report the vehicle make, model and license plate number. Note: Law enforcement has the authority to take custody of the child if an officer identifies a safety issue. If a person becomes agitated, refer to "violent intruder" emergency procedures.

Hostage Situation	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remain calm and polite. Follow the hostage taker(s) instructions. Do not resist. If it is safe, alert staff and call 911. Once law enforcement arrives, they will assume charge of the situation, negotiate and direct movements. Communicate with parents using procedures in the emergency plan.

	7. . Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact.
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Active Shooter	
Steps to take:	<p>(ALICE)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Alert" when you first become aware of the threat and recognize the signs of danger or get information about the danger from someone else. 2. "Lockdown"- If evacuation is not a safe option, implement lockdown procedures. Doors to the room should be locked, lights out, children and staff away from doors and windows and out of sight. Try to keep everyone quiet as possible and do not open the door. If possible, put items in front of the door to create a semi-secure barrier. 3. "Inform"- Communicate information about the situation in real time to other staff in the building if it is safe to do. Do not use code words for the situation. Instead say "active shooter." Call 911. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher as long as it is safe for you to do so, even if you cannot talk to the dispatcher. Do not hang up. 4. "Counter" – Counter is a strategy of last resort when you are in the same area as the shooter. These are actions that create noise, movement, distance and distraction to potentially reduce the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. 5. Evacuate- When it is safe to do so, evacuate using the procedures in the emergency plan. 6. When law enforcement arrives, they will assume charge of the situation, negotiate and direct movements. 7. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 8. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact.

Bomb Threat	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alert other staff of the threat currently being made. 2. Evacuate the site with emergency supply kit(s) based upon the procedures in the emergency plan. 3. If taking the call with the threatening person, stay on the phone with that person while another calls 911. 4. Keep the caller on the phone as long as possible. The Bomb Threat Information Form provides a list of questions to ask the caller and allows you to document characteristics of the caller and what the caller says.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Communicate with parents using the procedures in your emergency plan. 6. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized emergency contact. 7. Re-enter the building after emergency officials say it is safe to return.
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Utility Failures Electrical power outages	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher or para-educator will notify the school office. 2. Director or office staff will notify the utility company and seek to determine the expected duration of outage. 3. If limited duration is expected, preschool staff will keep children comfortable (winter outerwear if cool) until notified by the director to move/evacuate. 4. If necessary, access emergency lighting in the emergency supply kit. 5. If necessary, the director will determine another location within the school if suitable; if the entire building is facing the issue, the director will determine next steps. 6. If necessary to evacuate the site, follow evacuation procedures in the emergency plan. 7. If school is dismissed due to an outage, notify parents of reunification as noted in the emergency plan.

Utility Failures Gas leak	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher or para-educator will notify the school office. 2. Director or office staff will notify the utility company. 3. Do not turn any electrical switches on or off. Do Not use telephones (landlines or cell phones) or anything that could cause a spark while in the facility. 4. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to a new location. 5. Evacuate the site with emergency supply kit(s) as per evacuation procedures in the emergency plan. 6. If school is dismissed due to an outage, notify parents of reunification as noted in the emergency plan.

Chemical/toxic hazardous- anthrax/spill/waste	
Steps you will take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher or para-educator notifies school office or office will notify preschool/daycare. 2. Teacher moves children to a safe location as determined by the director and depending upon the hazard. 3. Teacher and para-educator will keep children safe and warm and provide water as needed. If necessary to evacuate the site, follow the evacuation procedure in the emergency plan.

Hazardous Material Outside Preschool/Daycare	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If no call from local emergency officials, call 911. 2. Alert staff. 3. Initiate shelter-in-place emergency procedures in emergency plan (if evacuation is not immediate). 4. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to a different location. 5. Shut windows and doors and alert the office to have the air conditioning system turned off. Seal doors and windows in shelter-in-place evacuation areas with plastic sheeting and duct tape as appropriate. 6. Prepare for an out-of-area evacuation in case emergency officials tell you to evacuate the area. 7. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 8. Monitor the facility at regular intervals. 9. Stay in communication with office staff, local emergency officials or monitor the media. 10. When given the all clear, open windows to air out the facility or evacuate if directed to do so by emergency officials. 11. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized contact.

Hazardous Material Inside School	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alert staff. 2. Evacuate the building with emergency supply kit(s) based on procedures in the emergency plan.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Do NOT turn any electrical switches on or off. Eliminate all open flames. Do NOT use telephones (landlines or cell phones) or anything that could cause a spark while in the building. 4. Assess weather conditions outside and observe wind direction; move children and staff upwind and uphill from the building. 5. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to a different location. 6. Call the office to alert 911. 7. Put child identification cards on children. 8. Do not try to contain, touch or identify (if unknown) the hazardous material. 9. If a child or staff person has had contact with the hazardous material, wash it off immediately. 10. Once emergency officials arrive, establish contact to provide needed information. 11. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 12. Using child attendance records, verify that all children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff are moved to a different location. 13. Shut windows and doors and alert the office to have the air conditioning system turned off. Seal doors and windows in shelter-in-place evacuation areas with plastic sheeting and duct tape as appropriate. 14. Prepare for an out-of-area evacuation in case emergency officials tell you to evacuate the area. 15. Communicate with parents using the procedures in the emergency plan. 16. Monitor the facility at regular intervals. 17. Stay in communication with office staff, local emergency officials or monitor the media. 18. When given the all clear, open windows to air out the facility or evacuate if directed to do so by emergency officials. 19. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parents or authorized contact.
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Contaminated Water Supply	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be alert to emergency official advisories/notifications when water supply may be contaminated.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Boil water advisory/notice</u>: Use bottled water and follow health department officials' recommendations for boiling and/or disinfection. The Iowa Department of Public Health Environmental Health Response Team has information available at http://www.idph.iowa.gov/ehs/emergency- preparedness 3. Use bottled water. 4. Do not consume from the water supply nor use it in food preparation.
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Water Main Break	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alert director or school office to communicate with the community water department to report the water main break. 2. Access water in the emergency supply kit.

Earthquake	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the shaking, keep calm. Do not leave your location. Remember that most injuries or deaths happen because of falling debris. 2. If inside, stay there. Take cover under tables, desks, or other heavy furniture. Cover one's head and neck and help cover young children. Take cover in interior doorways or narrow hallways. Stay away from windows and watch for falling objects. 3. If outside, stay in the open. Move away from buildings, if possible. Avoid being under trees, near fences, power poles and under overhead wires. 4. After shaking stops, evacuate the facility with emergency supply kit(s) based on the procedure in your emergency plan. 5. Do Not turn any electrical switches on or off. 6. Using child attendance records, verify that all the children and staff are accounted for using name-to-face counting. Repeat at regular intervals and every time children and staff moved to a different location. 7. Put child identification cards on children. 8. Communicate with parents using the procedures in your emergency plan. 9. Be prepared for aftershocks. 10. Wait for official school staff to inspect damage to the facility. Officials will inspect for utility (gas, water, sewer) or electrical shorts. If unsafe, do not reenter the facility.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Follow emergency procedures for reuniting children with parent or authorized emergency contact. 12. Complete the Child Care Initial Damage Assessment form, if appropriate. 13. Contact DHS child care compliance staff person and Child Care Resource and Referral as appropriate.
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Missing, lost or abducted child	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whenever a child is unaccounted for, search the premises. Search each area that a child can potentially hide as well as outdoor areas of the facility. If the facility has or is using a water feature on-site, check there first for the missing child. 2. Double check with other staff in case the child is in another location (e.g. picked up by a parent, visiting the nurse, etc.). 3. If all areas are searched and the child is not found, begin lockdown procedures. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Alert office personnel. b. All exits are locked and monitored by staff. c. No one is let in or out of the facility. 4. Call 911. 5. Be prepared to provide the following information about the child: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Child's name, age, height, weight, date of birth and hair color. b. Child's clothing that he/she was wearing that day along with any other identifying features. c. The time at which the child was last seen. d. If child abduction is suspected, share information if suspicious vehicles and/or persons around the child care facility. 6. Call the child's parents to tell them that the child is missing. 7. While waiting for law enforcement, continue to search for the missing child. Look in every cabinet, chubby, closet and other location where the child might hide. 8. Once law enforcement arrives, provide needed information. 9. Contact DHS child care compliance staff person.

Serious Injury or Illness	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the situation and do not put yourself at risk when trying to rescue an injured child or staff person. 2. Follow first aid procedures. Call 911 when appropriate. 3. For an injured child, call the child's parents. For an injured or ill staff person, call the person's emergency contact.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. If the child must go to the hospital by ambulance, determine who will accompany the child when being transported. 5. If the illness or injury does not require immediate medical attention but requires doctor's care, determine who will transport the child or staff persona to the emergency room, clinic, or hospital. This should follow policies and procedures and per the instruction of the parent to guardian or staff person, based on who is ill or injured. 6. Document treatments and any action that took place based on the illness or injury using The Child Injury/Incident Report Form available on the Health Child Care Iowa website at http://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/Files/HCCi/Incident report form.pdf 7. Contact DHS to report illness or serious injuries that happened in the child care program.
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Child Death	
Steps to take:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you find the child unresponsive, start CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation) and continue until relieved by another adult certified in CPR. 2. Call 911. 3. Calm the other children and move them away from the area. Listen to children's concerns and provide honest, developmentally-appropriate answers. 4. Once an emergency official arrives, provide needed information. 5. As much as possible, leave the area where the child was found undisturbed. Do not clean or tidy anything in the room until investigators tell you that it is okay to do so. 6. Contact the child's parents. 7. Document treatments and any action that took placed based on the illness or injury using The Child Injury/Incident Report Form available on the Health Child Care Iowa website at http://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/Files/HCCI/Incidentreportform.pdf 8. Contact DHS to report illness or serious injuries that happened in the child care program. 9. Consider closing the child care program for the day. 10. Communicate with the other children's parents using procedures in the emergency plan.

- 6. Cyber Security and Back-Up Records:** Provide information about your procedures for protecting electronic records as well as having back-up copies of records.

Protecting computer hardware	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the P drive on the school server and/or Google Cloud to save important documents. 2. Back-up important documents on a flash drive as well. 3. Complete monthly computer “health” practices as directed by the technology director.
Protecting computer software	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete monthly computer “health” practices as directed by the technology director. 2. Use Google cloud to assure data is saved in the cloud.
If computer is destroyed, critical documents are maintained and available	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the P drive and/or Google drive on the school server to save important documents. 2. Back-up important documents on a flash drive.
Back-up records, including a copy of insurance policies, facility plans, bank account records and computer back-ups stored in a secure location (fire/water resistant safe)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Store in a fireproof file in the business office.
Providing continuity if accounting and payroll records are destroyed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documents stored in a fireproof file in business office.

7. Continuity of Operations/Recovery:

Reopening the facility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularly communicate with families to note expected reopening of the facility. 2. Secure all confirmations (fire, water, etc.) before reopening. 3. Provide an open house the evening before reopening to welcome children, staff and parents back and assure safety of the building.
Alternate location for the program:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use All Saints Parish facilities or another classroom for classes if necessary.
Communication systems:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate regularly with families to note the status of the program's next steps and options for parents for daycare (other daycares in town, alternative site for daycare, etc.)
Support networks to cope with trauma:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide counselors locally and from across the diocese to meet student and family needs.

	2. Provide a list of other counselors/therapists available to families and staff.
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Emergency Instructions

Phone numbers and diagrams for fire, tornado and flood are visibly posted in the preschool/daycare room. Fire and tornado drills are completed and documented at least monthly. Records of such drills are maintained for current and previous years.

Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program staff are trained annually in emergency procedures, in transporting children and notifying parents in the event of an emergency. In case of evacuation, school vehicles will be used to transport students to a safe location. If school vehicles are not available, staff will utilize personal vehicles to transport children. Emergency numbers, diagrams and considerations for immobile children are reviewed at that time. Daily the staff checks emerging exits to assure they are unobstructed.

Weapons Policy

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play in the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. No student or adult shall carry, have in his possession, store, keep, leave, or place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon of a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or in vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions."Look-alike" weapons (real or toy) are, in effect, guns, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades, and other similar items, knives, etc. If such items are brought to school, they will be taken to the office and may be picked up by parent or guardian.

Child Protection Policies-Mandatory Reporters

Gehlen Catholic School has a written school board policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state and local laws. All staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" at least every five years and within six months of employment. Additionally, daycare personnel sign a statement indicating they have been informed of responsibilities as mandatory reporters.

No person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. Gehlen Catholic staff serving in a caretaking role with children is mandatory reporters of child abuse. Iowa Code requires any director or employee of a licensed child care center to report to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours when, in the course of working with a child, the director or employee has reason to believe that the child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse or neglect. The first oral report must be followed within 48 hours with a written report to the Department of Human Services.

Gehlen Catholic School does not tolerate employees' physically or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations.

Parents should also be made aware that there is a time-limited prohibition from involvement with child care when a founded child abuse is determined to be physical abuse and when there is a conviction for a controlled substance offense under Iowa Code Chapter 124. In these circumstances individuals are prohibited from involvement with child care for five years from the date of the conviction or founded child abuse report. After five years the department assesses the circumstances of the incident and the person to determine whether or not the person can work in a child care center. This same review process is used for other types of criminal convictions or found abuse. In addition, parents should be informed that Department staff will notify them if a found abuse (confirmed and placed on the Registry) ever occurs in the center. When the Department conducts the child abuse record check on a staff person who has a founded child abuse report for an abuse that occurred in the center, the child care consultant is required to notify parents in writing of the incident. Law requires the notification to parents. The notice sent to parents does NOT identify the name of the perpetrator or the child, or the specific circumstances of the abuse. The letter indicates to parents that:

- ♥ A founded child abuse has been confirmed on a staff member at the center.
- ♥ The staff person has a right to appeal the decision.
- ♥ The Department will evaluate the staff member for continued employment.
- ♥ The center or the Department has taken other corrective action, if applicable.

When the Department must send out a letter to parents, the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program will cooperate with the Department upon request of the consultant by immediately providing the names and addresses of the parents or guardians of the children served. The school will inform parents that a found abuse has occurred, that corrective action has been taken to remedy the situation or prevent reoccurrence, and that they will be receiving additional correspondence from the Department regarding this matter. If a staff person leaves the center following an investigation that results in a found determination, the Department is still required to notify the parents that a found abuse occurred. If a staff person leaves employment and is later rehired, a new record check must be completed.

A sex offender who has been convicted of an offense against a minor and required to register with the sex offender registry, shall not be present on the premises without written permission of the director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child to and from the preschool program.

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the Gehlen Catholic School premises. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

All directors, supervisors, personnel and volunteers shall be free of the use of illegal drugs and shall not be under the influence of alcohol or any prescription or non-prescription drug that could impair their ability to function.

Radon & Carbon Monoxide Detector

Radon testing has been completed and a radon mitigation system was installed several years ago. It is active and monitored continuously. Radon testing is completed with standards meeting acceptable levels annually or in accordance with the law.

The classroom is equipped with a carbon monoxide detector.

Safe Environment Requirements: Employees and Volunteers

It is the policy of the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program and the Diocese of Sioux City to require all employees and regular volunteers (those who spend more than one hour or more per month in the school setting, who are alone with groups of children, or who transport children) to comply with the Safe Environment policies of the Diocese. Before being employed, transporting or volunteering, each individual must complete a background check and read and sign an acknowledgement of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People: A Policy of the Diocese of Sioux City/Code of Ethical Standards for All Those Ministering on Behalf of the Church. Within 90 days of the first day of service, volunteers and employees must complete a one-time educational training known as *Virtus* ("Protecting God's Children") before continuing to serve in the Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program or its activities. Additionally employees and volunteers must complete monthly on-line Safe Environment trainings. To register for these requirements, volunteers/employees may go to www.virtusonline.com or contact the schools' Safe Environment Coordinator by calling 712-546-4181.

All licensed teachers are, per state law, fingerprinted prior to issuance of their teaching license. In addition, all employees serving in the daycare who are included in meeting the required child/staff ratio, have direct responsibility for a child/children or have access to a child or children when no other staff is present, must undergo a record check process. Iowa record checks are completed at a minimum of every 2 years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs. Criminal and child abuse record checks are required on staff, substitutes, and volunteers used to meet ratio requirements. National criminal history checks are completed every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs. Parents should be informed that individuals are prohibited from involvement with child care when they have the following convictions or founded abuse reports:

- ♥ Founded child or dependent abuse that was determined to be sexual abuse.
- ♥ Placement on the sex offender registry.
- ♥ Felony child endangerment or neglect or abandonment of a dependent person.
- ♥ Felony domestic abuse.
- ♥ Felony crime against a child including but not limited to sexual exploitation of a minor.
- ♥ Forcible felony.

In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. If a volunteer works more than forty (40) hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old.

Staff Development

Staff Orientation

Staff members, regularly employed, once hired are provided an orientation prior to their work in the preschool/daycare as required by school/diocesan policy. Orientation includes, but is not limited to, a review of the preschool/daycare handbook and school and preschool/daycare policies, procedures, practices and employee expectations. In addition, regularly employed staff members complete the Staff Orientation Program which is part of the QRS. This is completed and submitted within four to six months of employment. Daycare staff members also complete "Essentials of Daycare."

Professional Development

Each regularly employed staff member meets with the director to annually set goals for improving education and skills related to preschool/daycare best practices. Staff members are required to comply with training and in-service expectations for QRS, QPPS and DHS as prescribed by each. Goals and course work are reviewed annually to determine progress and establish future staff development plans.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The Gehlen Catholic Preschool Program implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) and is a participant in the Quality Rating System (QRS) of the Department of Human Resources (DHS). The preschool program receives a rating and certifications through the Department of Education and the DHS. Review and inspections are completed according to the requirements of these two entities. Additionally, a parent survey is provided at least annually each school year to collect parents' feedback on positive/negative aspects of the program. Each year a self-evaluation is completed by the classroom teachers and administrators, as well. Information gathered from all of these sources is used to continue to enhance the quality of the program and the services provided to children and families.

If requested by the Department of Human Services, Gehlen Catholic will assist in conducting an additional annual survey of parents served in Gehlen Catholic's daycare/extended preschool program. The purpose of the survey is to increase parents' understanding of developmentally appropriate and safe practices, solicit statewide information regarding parental satisfaction with the quality of the care provided to children and to obtain the parents' perspective regarding Gehlen Catholic Daycare compliance with licensing requirements.

RESOURCES

Northwest AEA Resources 940 Lincoln St. SW Le Mars, IA 51031

Early Childhood Consultant: Brenda Jenkins bjenkins@nwaea.org
800-352-9040x6122 Fax: 712-222-6108

Early Childhood Special Education: Gina West gwest@nwaea.org
712-222-6339 Fax: 712-222-6115

Early Childhood Special Education: Sue Moran smoran@nwaea.org
800-352-9040x3121 Fax: 712-222-6108

Occupational Therapy: Robin McLey rmcleyley@nwaea.org
712-222-6156 Fax: 712-222-6108

Speech Therapist: Judith McCarty: jmccarty@nwaea.org
712-222-6156 Fax: 712-546-5104

English as a Second Language: Sherri Anderson: sanderson@nwaea.org
800-352-9040x3205 Fax: 712-222-6108

Mid Sioux Opportunity: Sue Sitzmann, Child Care Consultant: ssitzmann@midsioux.org
712-786-2001

Department of Human Services: Jana Drew, Child Care Licensing Consultant: jdrew@dhs.state.ia.us
712-255-2913x2083

Other Child Service Resources

Family Medical Doctor

Plains Area Mental Health Center
180 10th St. SE Suite 201
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-546-4624

Catholic Charities
1601 Military Road
Sioux City, IA
712-252 4547

Associates for Psychiatric Services
600 4th St. Suite 501
Sioux City, IA
712-234-0220

Dean and Associates

3549 Southern Hills Drive Suite A
Sioux City, IA
712-277-3200

Plymouth County Human Services Department
192nd Ave. SW
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-546-8877

Plymouth County Public Health Nurse-Floyd Valley Hospital
Hwy 3 East
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-546-3335

Iowa State University Extension - Plymouth County
12st ST. SE
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-546-7835

Department of Human Services
Jana Drew
822 Douglas St., 2nd Floor
Sioux City, IA 51101-1024
712-255-2913x2083

Mid Sioux Opportunity Child Care Consultant
Kim Schroeder
Remsen, IA 51050
712-539-9582

CURRENT STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Mrs. Andrea Loutsch, PreK-6 Principal & Daycare Director
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Mrs. Linda Coulter, PreK-6 Administrative Assistant
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Rev. Bruce Lawler, School President
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Mrs. Alison Bickford, Preschool Teacher/Daycare On-Site Supervisor

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Mrs. Marie Schreiner, Preschool Teacher/Daycare On-Site Supervisor

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mschreiner@gehlencatholic.org

Mrs. Kerri Hoffman, Early Childhood Para Educator/Interim Daycare On-Site Supervisor

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khoffman@gehlencatholic.org

Mrs. Mandy Weiland, School Nurse

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