

Parents' Post

The Early Learning Program of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church

September 2018

From the Director

I want to take a moment to welcome you ALL to ELP! Whether you are a returning family, have had children in our program in the past, or you are brand new, we want you to know that you are now a part of our ELP Family! The Early Learning Program is a ministry of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church, and they also love your children and your families and cannot wait to meet you!

It is such a joy to meet your children and see the excitement and anticipation on their faces as they come in to meet their teachers and friends! We know for many, this is their first time being away from home Mom and Dad. It is an honor to know that you have entrusted us with caring and providing for your child and we all take this very seriously.

As we begin this year please know that we are here for you. Please let me, Chantal, or your teachers know if we can help you in any way. If you need parenting advice, have emotional concerns, or developmental questions about your child we are here to support you. We want to have a strong home connection with you and your child because we know that this is what is best for your child.

September is full of new beginnings, especially if you have older children in the home! It can be full of joyful anticipation, but it can also be a stressful time in the family as we gather the schedules and think of the busy days and evenings that are ahead. Before you know it, we will be decorating a Christmas tree and asking ourselves where did the time go? So on that note, remember that these days with your little one are very precious and won't last forever. As a busy mom myself with a freshman in college, a 16 year old learning to drive, and a kindergartener, I can certainly identify with your struggles as a parent. Don't forget to enjoy *THIS* season of your child's life; the good, the hard, and the seemingly mundane tasks. Don't forget to put the busyness aside often and to intentionally recognize the simple joyous times with your children. At ELP, we are passionate about preserving childhood. We love your children and can't wait to help them discover God's world through age appropriate and developmental experiences. The to do lists can wait and tomorrow will take care of itself. Enjoy today with your child and all that this season in life has to offer! (And don't be afraid to get a little messy in the meantime too!)

Cindy

Mark Your Calendar

September 4 *Gradual Entry begins-Welcome!*

1st week September *Tuition Due*

September 10 *Carline begins*

September 13 9:15 AM *New Parent Meeting—Charles Hendricks Bldg.*

September 12 & 14 *Science Fun Begins*

September 14 *Room Mom/PVO Meeting*

September 18-21 *Friends & Fun Begins*

September 24 *Monday Moms begins*

September 25, 26, 27 *Sensory Days (check the backpacks or website for your class time)*

September Bible Verse:

***I Am Wonderfully
Made
Psalm 139:14***

**September Friends & Fun
Reservation Calendar Due
by September 13 and
October Friends & Fun
Due by September 27**

New Parent Info

You are invited to join us for a morning informational meeting. This meeting will be especially helpful to you if you are new to ELP!

The ELP Informational Meeting will be at 9:15 AM on Sept. 12 in the Charles Hendricks Education Bldg. The meeting will last about 45 minutes and will review ELP's philosophies, policies, and procedures as well as a curriculum overview.



Gradual Entry

Please remember that we have a gradual entry schedule for toddlers – PreK during the first week! Please check with your teacher to get your class schedule.

All children are individuals and some need more time for separation. Gradual entry is an important process of our school. It allows children an opportunity to gradually separate from their parents and gain the trust of their new teachers. This is a requirement of NAEYC Accredited programs because it is developmentally appropriate for young children. We will work with you and your child in any way we can to make this an easy transition for everyone. Please keep us informed as to anything we can do to help you and your child with this transition into preschool. We are here for you.

Pick Up Procedures

Please be patient with us when dismissing your children. Until everyone on our staff is familiar with the faces of people picking up your children, we will ask for photo IDs. We know this is an inconvenience for you, but it is for the safety of your child. So please bear with us.

If someone other than yourself or your designated car-pooler is picking up your child, you must send a note with your child and tell the driver to bring an ID. Thank you for your patience and understanding.



ELP is on Facebook!

Check it out for updates and info

Request to be a friend of:
*The Early Learning Program of
The Woodlands Community
Presbyterian Church*

VIP's are very important

VIP's are the Very Important Person of the day in our classrooms. In addition to being the helper and featured student of the day, they will be in charge of bringing a snack to share with their classmates. ELP is asking that we limit the VIP snack to fruit and vegetable choices or milk products such as yogurt, cheese sticks, cheese spread and crackers, etc.

Our school is sensitive to children's allergies and feel that it will eliminate the stress among parents to prepare a snack for ALL children. It is also a great way to encourage healthy nutrition.

Encourage your child to select his favorite fruit or vegetables and dip. Remember that your child will enjoy sharing with his friends.

Thank you for your cooperation and Have FUN!!!!

Tuition Reminder

Please remember that **September tuition is due the first week of school.** Tuition is due the first week of each month after the first week there is a \$10 late fee that will incur after the first week. Please place your tuition in our ELP mailbox in the school hallway, or it may be pinned to the outside of your child's backpack or handed to a car line teacher.

You may combine tuition and friends & fun on the same check but please make a notation on the bottom of your check indicating how many Friends and Fun Days your child will be attending.

If you have any questions or concerns about your ELP account, please call me or stop by the office. Thank you for your cooperation.

Randall's Shopping



Please link your ELP Neighbor to Neighbor bar code to your Randall's card.

At Randalls you need to ask them to link your card to the "Good Neighbor Number **6484**", then every-time you use your Randalls card we will earn credit.

Thank you for your support and Happy Shopping!

Car-line news

The car line will begin on Monday, September 10. The car-line drop-off will be under the Porte-cache, outside of the sanctuary and the parking lot by the education building will be designated for walk-ins.

Please remember...

- Drive slowly through the parking lot at all times to ensure safety.
- Use your carline file folders in your front windshield. You received this folder at your visitation, it has your child's name written on it already. Simply place this folder on the side of the car that your child is on and teachers will be able to bring your child to you more quickly and keep the line moving.
- Stay in your vehicle. Staff is required to buckle your child into their car seats. For safety, your child's car seat should be in the back seat
- No cell phones at all while in car line, please.

The left lane is designated for PM students to be dropped off at Noon.

Please be patient with a slow moving car line, making sure every child is properly secured in a car seat just takes time. Remember you always have the option to walk your child in or pick her/him up at the classroom door.



Volunteers Needed

Sarah Parker, our Parent Volunteer Coordinator, will host a very important meeting for Room Moms on September 14. Please watch backpacks and emails for a notice if your class is still in need of a Room Mom. Please email her at: ssnyder888@gmail.com if you are interested in this volunteer position!

Helpful Hints

Comfortable clothing—Parents – please send your child to school in comfortable “play” clothes and closed toe shoes. We are very active and creative at school and clothing will likely get dirty. We want your child to feel at ease and free to explore and play with others. (It’s not too late to request an ELP t shirt for your child if you did not receive one at visitations)

Label everything—Please be sure to LABEL EVERYTHING – backpack, lunch box, clothes, blanket, etc., with your child’s name. This will help our day run more smoothly and will ensure that the proper items are returned to home. (Please use your new ELP tags you received.)

Change of clothing—Please send a complete change of clothes with your child every-day. (shoes, socks and underwear too). Everyone has an occasional accident or a paint spill sometimes, and we offer wet sensory play daily. Your child will feel much more comfortable if he/she has can play freely and change if needed.



HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"When God formed my heart, He added a pocket A place for His word See? I can zip it and lock it.

It's written in Psalms 119, verse 11.

I'm to hold God's word tight until the day I'm in heaven."

I have hidden Your word in my heart so that I might not sin against You.' Psalms 119:11. When King David wrote this psalm, he wasn't saying he was hiding God's word to keep it secret. What he meant was that as he studied scripture, the words were absorbed into his soul and became part of who he was. As he committed verses to memory, they became a natural part of his thoughts. David knew the secret to 'walking the walk' was that if God's teachings were in his heart and in his head, then no matter where he was or what his circumstances, he would be armed with God's wisdom.

This is one of the reasons why ELP has school-wide, monthly Bible memory verses for the children to learn. The one that we begin with each September is "I am wonderfully made" Psalms 139:14. Every chapel after practicing the verse several times, we all say it once more into our hands and then place the words in our 'heart pockets' so that we can always carry God's word with us just like King David.

Moms and Dads, you have to know that my own heart is filled with joy as I watch your children grow in God's word throughout the year. When I see the excited anticipation in these impressionable faces as they walk in to chapel each week, my life just doesn't get any more rewarding than this. They get it...the children truly get it! THIS is what the bible was talking about when it says in 2 John 1:4, "It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us." September through May, we'll be exploring the Old Testament through the New Testament, Jesus's birth through His Resurrection, and the planting seeds of our Father's truth through the ripening of the fruit of the Spirit.

It's going to be a year of growing...physically, emotionally, and spiritually for your child and I am delighted to be a part of it.

New MONDAY'S MOMS Group!!!

All moms are welcome and we want you there! Rain or shine, feeling refreshed and ready, or frazzled in yoga pants!

We are beginning to offer a new fellowship time for our mommas at ELP! WCPC has graciously offered to help lead, support, and provide free childcare for your little ones so that YOU can come! Adult friendships and walking together is a vital part of mothering. We were all created with a need for community and fellowship, and there is no better time than now! I promise you will treasure this time together! **Begins Sep. 24 at 9:15 in Narthex. Check flyer from your visitations or hallway for more info!**

Family Connection

Your children will be exploring the “All About Me” theme at ELP during the month of September. If you are looking for ways to extend the preschool experience at home, look at newborn pictures and last year’s videos together and talk about how they have grown and developed. Maybe this is a perfect time to print those photos from your phone and make a collage for the refrigerator! Guaranteed that will have your child’s full attention and you will quickly see how special he/she feels. This is also how we make that memory continue!

Children at this age are naturally egocentric and their confidence and security is nourished through personal experiences in the home with their family. Spend time focusing on their growth and successes and cherish their milestones together!



JUNK OF THE MONTH COLLECTION!

Our teachers are so creative and resourceful and repurpose all sorts of “junk.” During the month of **September** we are specifically collecting: **Styrofoam 12 pack egg cartons and old toothbrushes.** Drop these items off in the office please. (We also have a recycle bin outside of the Penguin class for other random recycled items you may donate!)

What is “Developmentally Appropriate Practice?”

You probably have noticed that our classroom has a lot of bustle and noise, that children are up doing things, talking, playing and exploring. Such a classroom environment differs from the old grade-school images of a teacher doing a lot of talking at a blackboard while children sit and listen quietly at their desks.

Research and experience tell us that to be effective with young children, teaching practices need to be “developmentally appropriate.” What this means is simply that educators need to think first about what young children are like and then create an environment and experiences that are in tune with children’s characteristics.

Early childhood, after all, is a time of life quite different from adulthood, and even from the later school years. Children 3-6 learn far better through direct interactive experiences than through just listening to someone talk. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration. And the younger children are, the more what they learn needs to be relevant and interesting on the day they learn it, not just in the context of some future learning.

Based on such knowledge about what children of this age are like, we design our program to fit them. It works a lot better than trying to redesign children!

A developmentally appropriate program like ours is age appropriate. But that’s not all. To make the program a good place for every child, we gear our classroom environment and activities to this community and the families involved. We’re eager to learn as much as we can about each child’s family, cultural background, past experience, and current circumstances. With this knowledge we work to create a program that fits the children and the families we serve.

Sep. 2016 ELP Parent Post: Rita Van Sickle

Promoting Independence With Three’s and Four’s

“Expect it” – confused as to why he will do it for the teacher and not at home? This is typical, but have you ever wondered why? It might just be because.....

At school we allow and sometimes expect children to do for themselves (or at least try it first). It is natural for us all to try to live up to other’s expectations and this applies to children as well. Having the simple “try, you can do it” spirit and accepting accidents and failed attempts, builds confidence! Preschoolers definitely need a lot of parental help, but preschool aged children are typically able to do more for themselves than we give them credit for (or give them time to try).

Next time your child needs a snack opened, needs to get dressed, or makes a spill that needs cleaning up, try confidently “expecting” that this is something that he can do for himself! Sure, there are times when we are rushed and can’t allow for these practice attempts, but remember to intentionally “promote independence” and let him try it on his own!

ALL EARS!

ELP is so proud and excited to be hosting ALL EARS! on our campus for the fifth year.

All Ears! is a non profit organization passionate about and dedicated to empowering families of deaf and hard of hearing children to develop listening, spoken language and literacy skills.

Long time ELP parent, Shelley Mathay, a Teacher of the Deaf, LSLS Cert. AVT and speech pathology assistant, will be heading this program. Bob Hutchins has recently joined the team and is now serving as an All Ears! executive Director as well. Teaching alongside Shelley are Early Childhood teachers, Suzanne Kellenbeck, Meleesa Halling, and teachers’ assistant Gabby Kelley.

All Ears! will be meeting on our campus all week and some of the All Ears! children and teachers will be joining our classrooms! We are so happy to have them returning to our ELP Family.



Meet our Chapel Teacher



My name is **Melinda Keels** but your children know me as Ms. Melinda, the chapel teacher. This marks the beginning of my eighth year as the church lady although I've been at this precious school, filling many different roles since 1995. Important things you should know about me are that I am an Aggie (TAMU class of 1984, WHOOP!!!), mom to Colin, 26 and Gracie, 22 (both products of ELP!) an active member of The Woodlands United Methodist Church, a volunteer advocate with the Pregnancy Assistance Center North, and most recently the author of 6 Christian children's books, which I will be sharing with your children throughout the year. Educating and sharing the word of God with children and their families is His calling for my life; a challenge I accept with joy and exuberance! I welcome you to contact me through the school if you want to share joys and frustrations about parenthood or if you simply need a hug or a prayer. You can also grab me any time you see me at ELP. I don't promise to have all the answers or even the one you're hoping for, but I do promise to listen to you with a compassionate heart, an open, non-judgemental mind, and a willingness to help you seek God's will. This is going to be an amazing year of growth for your child -- socially, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually -- and I am honored to be a witness to God's extraordinary work in progress.

Meet our Developmental Specialist



Hi, my name is **Ann Adkinson**. I am the ELP's Developmental Specialist teacher. My goal is to help ensure that different learning styles and individual strengths are encouraged for optimal success of all students. I retired from Klein ISD where I taught 31 years including 21 years in Early Childhood and Pre-K. I have been married 34 years to my husband Doug. We have two grown children and one beautiful granddaughter in San Antonio. I feel very blessed to begin my job at ELP in such a wonderful facility and great staff.

Meet our Playground Teachers



My name is **Corky Janisch**, and I am delighted to be one of your playground teachers this year! I will be on the playground Thursdays and Fridays. This is my sixteenth year at ELP. I will also be teaching the Cardinal class again this year MTW. I taught 3 year old's for four years, and before that I was with four year old's. My husband, Steve, and I have been married for 35 years and we have four children. My oldest son, Chris, and his wife, Whitney, have given me four adorable grandchildren, John, Annie and twins Teddy and Will. They live in Austin where Chris practices law. My second son, Bryan, recently moved back to The Woodlands from Austin. He has given me a delightful grandchild, Hayden. Matt, my third son, lives in Dallas working in business finance. My daughter, Kelsey, recently moved to California after graduating from U.T. I studied Engineering and Mathematics at the University of Florida.



Hi! My name is **Breanne Ward** and I am excited about being the playground teacher this year! This will be my third year teaching at ELP! I have worked as a Friends & Fun teacher the past two years, last spring I worked as a long term sub on the playground. I loved it so much I'm back for more! We will have tons of fun, while extending the learning experiences occurring in your child's classroom this year! After 9 years of moving around the country, we've been settled in The Woodlands for the past 4 years. My husband, Drew and I have three children, Kennedy is 9, Eli is 6, and Kate is 3. My kids love being apart of the ELP family! We love being outdoors (playing lots of soccer) and we are always looking for new adventures! It's going to be a great year!

September


