

Family Handbook

2025-2026



St. Luke Child Care Center
1608 Blanding Boulevard
(904) 406-9510

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Families,

Welcome to St. Luke Child Care Center. We are delighted that you have chosen a commitment to Catholic Education.

The Family Handbook reflects the policies of St. Luke Child Care Center for the 2025-2026 school year.

Please read this document carefully, sign the agreement in the registration packet, and return the registration packet to the office. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Luke Child Care Center.

On behalf of the staff of St. Luke Child Care Center, thank you for choosing our early learning center and allowing us to become a part of your family.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Roberts".

Amy Roberts

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Section I - ABOUT ST. LUKE CHILD CARE CENTER

1.1 Our Mission, Vision, & Philosophy Statement

Mission Statement:

The Mission of St. Luke Child Care Center is to provide quality child care in an educational setting that fosters the emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth of each child. This faith-based Catholic Child Care Center instills the Biblical values of Faith, Hope, and Charity and welcomes families of all faiths, creeds, and ethnic origins into its program.

Vision Statement:

St. Luke Child Care Center's vision is to foster both a strong spiritual and academic foundation as we practice our Catholic beliefs and model for the children how to become morally responsible and productive citizens in our community.

Philosophy & Belief Statement:

St. Luke Child Care Center's believes...

- *Families are the first and primary educators of their children.
- *We are an extension of our school families and we build on the spiritual and academic foundations initiated by our families.
- *Children are gifts from God and it is our responsibility to show the children the nurturing love of their Creator.
- *We strive to promote learning experiences that encourage the practice of Catholic values and the development of life-long learning skills.

St. Luke Child Care Center is operated as a ministry of the
Diocese of St. Augustine.

Most Rev. Erik Pohlmeier

Eleventh Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine

Deacon Scott J. Conway

Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of St. Augustine

Audra Smith

Director of Early Learning for the Diocese of St. Augustine

Amy Roberts

Director of St. Luke Child Care Center

Father Philip Timlin

Pastor of St. Luke Catholic Church

1.2 Open Door Policy

St. Luke Child Care Center maintains an open-door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the Center.

In situations where there is custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

- ◆ The Center must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court order and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.
- ◆ The Center will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court order will only be made if there are written instructions from the custodial parent/s (joint custody will require both parent signatures).
- ◆ If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the Center then both parents will have equal access to their child.
By law the Center may not deny access to child by parent without a court order.
- ◆ If there is a verbal or physical conflict the Center will contact the police.

Section 2 - ENROLLMENT & FEES

2.1 Enrolling Your Child

Enrolling your child takes a few easy steps!

1. Tour the facility.
2. Complete the Enrollment Packet.
3. We will place your child in the appropriate classroom based on your child's age and individual needs. Remember, in order to enroll in the three-year old program, your child must be completely potty-trained. Also, in order to be eligible for VPK, your child must turn 4 on or before September 1st of the school year!
4. Pay Enrollment Fee. (This fee holds your spot until your start date!)
5. Set up tuition payments. (Tuition is due one-week in advance.)
6. Copy of your child's birth certificate.
7. Shot record (DH680) and Health Record (DH3040) are due within 30 days of enrollment!
8. Finally, we will enter all families into our biometric security system for entry into the building!

Note: We will place families on a waitlist when space in a classroom is not immediately available. We will notify families as soon as space becomes available.

2.2 Tuition

Fees are based on reserved time and not on actual time that a child spends at the Center. There will be no reduction in the basic rate should a child not be in attendance at the Center for the contracted time. Parents will also be billed for all days including holiday, sick, emergency closings, teacher training, vacation days, and quarantines due to COVID exposures. Current tuition rates are posted and are subject to change at any time.

Tuition rates are based on classroom placement, not chronological age. Classroom assignments are determined by multiple factors including the child's developmental readiness, space availability, and Florida Catholic Conference Standards.

2.3 Multiple Child Discounts

St. Luke Child Care Center offers a discount of 10% to families enrolling more than one child. This discount is applied only after the child with the highest tuition base is paid in full. All subsequent children are then eligible for the discount.

2.4 Tuition Express-Automatic Tuition Withdrawal

Weekly tuition is due a week in advance every Monday. This means that the payment given on Monday covers the cost of attendance for the following week. Our payments are taken care of by a software company called Tuition Express.

2.5 Registration and Supply Fees

A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$150.00 (for one child) or \$250 (for families with multiple children) is payable at the time of enrollment each year. The registration fee is not refundable under any circumstances. Registration fees are collected July 1st of each year.

The registration fee is applied towards the fees incurred from Tuition Express as well as the purchase of disposable supplies such as cleaning supplies and paper goods for each classroom.

2.6 Returned Check and Automatic Payment Fees

There is a fee of \$30.00 should any form of payment be returned.

2.7 Late Pick Up Fees

A late fee of \$15.00 for each quarter hour will be assessed for children who are not picked up by closing time of 6:00 P.M. The late fee must be paid in order for the child to return to the Center. Services can be terminated if this continues to be a problem. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that an authorized person is available to pick up the child on time.

If a parent or authorized adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs the staff will attempt to contact the other parent or authorized adult on the pick up list. St. Luke Child Care Center does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child but the staff will contact the police immediately if the Center is not able to contact the other parent or authorized adult to pick up the child.

If a child is not picked up by 7:00 PM and every attempt to reach an authorized adult has failed, St. Luke Child Care Center will be forced to contact the sheriff's office to report child abandonment.

2.8 Holidays

The following are paid holidays recognized by the Center. Tuition does not change for weeks that include holidays.

New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, the day after Christmas, Staff Professional Development Day, and St. Luke's Festival.

A Holiday Schedule will be posted on the Parent Bulletin Board.

2.9 Attendance

Because you are paying for your child's spot in our program, full tuition is charged each week whether your child is present or not.

2.10 Vacation

Children are allowed to take one week vacation each year. Tuition will be charged at 50% the normal rate for that week. Written notice is required at least one week prior to the planned vacation. Vacation applies to **full-time students** who have been registered and attending at least one year continuously.

SECTION 3 - ATTENDANCE

3.1 Arrival at St. Luke Child Care Center

St. Luke Child Care Center requires families to walk their children to their classroom and sign them in and out each day.

Please leave your cell phones in your vehicles and give your child your full attention during the transition from home to school.

To help decrease the spread of viruses, please assist your child in washing his/her hands when arriving in the classroom.

Finally, please don't sneak away, but help your child become engaged in the ongoing activities in the classroom. This may require planning a few extra minutes each morning but will greatly benefit your child's transition into the classroom.

3.2 Traffic Pattern

When Annunciation's carline is present, childcare families will need to park in the parking lot adjacent to our center and use the crosswalk instead of parking directly in-front of the center. This plan was developed by our risk management team for the safety of our children and families.

Annunciation carline runs from about 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. each morning and about 2:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. each afternoon. If the Annunciation carline is **not** present, you are welcome to park in front of the center.

When registering, you will be given a "St. Luke Child Care" sign to place on your windshield. This will alert the traffic attendants that you are going to the childcare and **do not** need to get in the Annunciation traffic line. The traffic attendant will allow you to pass through so you may park in the parking lot next to the childcare center.

The gate on campus will remain closed for safety purposes as well. This keeps cars from entering the campus from Old Jennings and keeps our families safe while using the crosswalk.

3.3 Special Requests

Parents must follow the policy for Administering Medication if the child is to receive medication during the day. This should be taken care of during arrival time.

Parents are requested to notify the teacher or Director if there are any special needs or instructions for the child's day. Special requests must be submitted in writing and may include but are not limited to health issues, family situations, alternative pick-up person, early pick up time, or any other issues the Center should be aware of to best meet the individual needs of the child.

3.4 Absences

Parents are REQUIRED to notify St. Luke Child Care Center if a child will not be in attendance that day. This notification will assist us to more effectively maintain appropriate child-staff ratios.

Parents are requested to notify the Center if their child is ill. This notification will assist the Center to track any illnesses that may occur at the Center. Information regarding illnesses will be shared on a need to know basis.

No allowances, credits, refunds, or make-up days shall be made for these absences.

3.5 Summer Enrollment Requirements

To retain your child's spot for fall, your child is required to remain enrolled over the summer months. If your child is enrolled in Pre-K 3 or Pre-K 4, you do have the option to drop down to a part-time slot over the summer and return to a full-time spot in fall. Please note that part-time spots are limited.

If you decide to withdraw your child over the summer, be aware that you risk losing your child's spot for fall as children on our waitlist will be notified as spots become available. Therefore, if your child is not enrolled over the summer months, your spot in fall cannot be guaranteed.

NOTE: Summer Enrollment Exemption--If you are a Clay or Duval County school teacher and you do not work over the summer break, St. Luke Child Care Center offers teachers an exemption to our *Summer Enrollment Requirements* policy. To qualify for this exemption, you must provide the center with a copy of your school ID badge and work the traditional 180-day school year.

Please note that you are responsible for paying tuition over breaks throughout the school year such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring break...even if your child does not attend the center during these breaks. You also will not qualify for a discounted vacation week as you do not attend the center year-round.

3.6 Illnesses

Parents are requested to notify the Center Director if their child has a communicable disease so that parents of children in the classroom/center may be notified. Only information about the communicable disease will be shared. The Center will follow the Center's Confidentiality Policy and Procedures.

The Center conducts a health check on each child upon arrival to the classroom. A child may not be accepted into the Center if staff deems the child is too ill to attend or is contagious.

3.7 Expulsion and/or Withdrawal from St. Luke Child Care Center

The Center reserves the right to terminate childcare services at any time. Child Care services may be terminated for willful destruction of property, if the child poses a threat to the safety and welfare of other children in care, physical or verbal abuse by the parent upon the Center Staff, insufficient funds that are not repaid promptly, refusal to follow Center policies.

Two weeks written notice is required from parents that are withdrawing their child from the Center. Since tuition is due each Monday, withdrawal notices will be accepted on Mondays only. Parents are responsible for any fees if proper notification is not provided.

Any past due balances are due on last day of enrollment. Balances remaining after 30 days will be referred to the Center's collection agency.

In the event that a child is absent for two consecutive weeks, without proper notification to the office, the child will be considered withdrawn from the program and the reserved classroom space will be filled. All tuition and any related charges are due and payable during this two-week period. To re-enroll, normal registration/supply fees will apply. The child will then be considered for enrollment upon space availability.

3.8 Drop-off Policy

It is important that the teachers follow their daily schedules consistently. Children thrive on consistency because they feel safe when they know what to expect. Therefore, please respect each age group's schedules.

Infants: Drop-off can be any time of the day because infants make their own schedules!

One's: Children may not be dropped off during the hours of **10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** During this time, the teachers are feeding the children lunch and getting the children ready for naptime. If a child is dropped off during naptime, it disrupts all of our little sleepers.

Two's and Three's: Our preschool program begins at 9:00 a.m. Please bring your child to school by 9:00 so he or she is present during this academic portion of the day.

3.9 Attendance Policy for VPK

Children must arrive in the VPK classroom no later than 9:00 a.m. daily and may enter the classroom as early as 8:45 a.m. Children must participate in VPK activities until 12:00 p.m. daily.

Children who arrive late or leave early will be counted as absent on the VPK attendance form. Parents must call the Center if the child is going to be late or absent. If a child is absent for 5 consecutive instructional days he or she may be dismissed from the VPK program.

Absences and tardiness may be excused under "extraordinary circumstances" if appropriate documentation is provided. These include:

- a) Hospitalization of the child, his parents or guardian (must provide a doctor's note).
- b) Illness of the student, his parent or guardian that requires the ill person to remain at home (must provide a doctor's note).
- c) Death of a member of the student's, parents' or guardians' immediate family (obituary or death certificate required).
- d) Court ordered visitation (court documents must be provided).
- e) Parent or guardian's military deployment (military documentation must be provided).

Parents must complete and sign an attendance verification form EACH month. These forms will be distributed on the last instructional day of each month and must be signed and returned to the office the same day.

Children who do not meet attendance requirements will lose VPK funding. The child may be allowed to remain in the classroom but will be required to pay full tuition.

3.10 Pick-up Policy

The parent or authorized adult is responsible for supervision of the child once the child has been signed out of the Center and must walk their child to the car.

Parents are requested to handle any Center business (payment, conferences with director, etc) prior to checking the child out of the Center.

3.11 Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Pick Up

Only authorized persons listed on the Authorized Persons for Pick Up form are permitted to have access to your child and to remove your child from the Center. The following procedures apply:

- ◆ It is the responsibility of the registering parent to notify the Center in writing of all persons authorized to pick up their child from the Center.
- ◆ Parents are required to complete the Authorized Persons for Pick Up and Emergency Form at time of enrollment. Only persons listed on this form will be permitted to remove the child from the Center.
- ◆ Persons on the authorized list but who are unfamiliar to the staff will be required to show proof of identification with a picture I.D., such as a driver's license.
- ◆ Changes/updates to the Pick-Up list must be made on the original registration form located in the office.
- ◆ Individuals must be at least **18 years** of age in order to sign a child in or out of the Center.
- ◆ In an emergency, the Center will contact the parents first. If the Center is unable to reach the parents, the staff will call the persons on the listed form until someone is reached.

3.12 Moving Up Classes

Children will be moved up from one age group to the next on the first of the month following their birthday **when space is available**. Tuition rates will be adjusted for your child only after your child moves to the next age group.

We will slowly transition your child to his or her new classroom a week before moving up. Your child will spend a little time each day in his or her new classroom in order to ensure a smooth full-time transition.

Please Note: If a child cannot be moved up to the next age group because space is not available, the child will remain in his or her current classroom and will be charged the assigned tuition rate for that classroom. Tuition rates will be adjusted when your child is moved up to the next age group. The reason tuition is adjusted after your child moves up to the next age group is because of the teacher to student ratio that is required in each classroom. Essentially, families pay a higher tuition rate in the younger classrooms because there the teacher to student ratio is lower. We will do our best to move your child up as quickly as possible. However, please remember we can only move a child when space is available.

SECTION 4 - PARENT INVOLVEMENT

4.1 Parent Volunteers

St. Luke Child Care Center has an Open-Door policy with all parents of enrolled children.

All volunteers are required to be background screened prior to volunteering in the classroom. Volunteers should check in at the front desk before proceeding to the classroom.

The Discipline Policy (see 5.15 & 5.16), Standards of Conduct (see 5.17), and Visitor Policies (see 5.18) will always apply to all volunteers.

Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.

Parents may be asked to help with certain tasks such as cutting out items for the classrooms, sharing information about their job or hobby or culture, chaperoning on field trips, donating items, and reading to a group of children.

4.2 Take Home Activities

Although St. Luke Child Care Center does not assign “homework” for preschoolers, we do send home suggested activities to enhance the learning taking place in the classroom.

4.3 Parent-Teacher Conferences

All parents/family are invited to attend scheduled formal parent/teacher conferences to review child's progress and needs and set goals for the child. Conferences will be scheduled two times throughout the year for infants, toddlers, and preschool children. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed or as requested by parent or teacher.

4.4 Parent Surveys

St. Luke Child Care Center is interested in your feedback. Anonymous parent surveys will be distributed at least once per year. Your responses will ensure we are meeting the needs of our families.

4.5 Parent Bill of Rights

We believe that parents have rights and that their concerns are reasonable and important.

A Healthy Learning Environment

- Parents have the right to know that their child will be safe at school, both physically and emotionally.
- Parents have the right to know that all children will be treated fairly regardless of race, creed, national origin, economic status, gender, or age and that each child will be treated as an individual.
- Parents have the right to know that the staff is experienced and trained in child development.
- Parents have the right to know that any negative or cruel behavior among students or between students and staff will not be tolerated.

Clear, Courteous Communication

- Parents have the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the staff.
- Parents have the right to participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's school progress and welfare.
- Parents have the right to visit schools and classes.
- Parents have the right to know that they can approach a staff member with a concern and that the staff member will listen carefully and will do everything possible to address the issue

Information on School Policies

- Parents have the right to information on academic requirements of the school program.
- Parents have the right to inspect their child's record and respond to any statement.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal school policies.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal administrative decisions.

SECTION 5 - HEALTH & SAFETY

5.1 Child Abuse and Neglect

St. Luke Child Care Center has the responsibility for the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse and neglect (sexual, physical, emotional). Under Florida Law, cases of possible child abuse and neglect are reported immediately to the Department of Children and Families. The abuse hotline is 1-800-96-ABUSE.

5.2 Confidentiality of Records

The Center maintains the policy of that all records of children and families are confidential.

5.3 Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather

If the threat of a natural disaster such as hurricane, tornado, flooding, etc., is imminent, we will follow the Diocese of St. Augustine, office of Superintendent, for closure guidance. Once the storm passes and is out of the area, we will assess the Center for damage and re-open as soon as possible. You will be notified by both email and Class Dojo of school closures and re-openings.

The following steps must be confirmed before opening the Center:

- ◆ The Center must have power and any physical damage must be repaired.
- ◆ There must be available staff in the Center to provide appropriate and required staff to child ratio.

Parents are responsible for child care tuition even in the event that the Center is closed due to natural disaster.

5.4 Child Health Services

St. Luke Child Care Center is required by the Department of Children and Families to have on file for each child a Physical and an Immunization Record.

You have thirty (30) days after enrollment to bring in the original forms:

Physical Examination – Form 3040 and Immunization – Form 680

PLEASE NOTE: Immunization Exemptions will not be accepted at St. Luke Child Care Center. However, please understand that because families have thirty days to submit their child's immunizations records, some children may not be current on their immunizations.

5.5 Screenings

Screening is a process to determine whether or not a child has any developmental concerns that may require further evaluation and follow-up. Screenings conducted at the Center may include vision, hearing, speech/language, nutrition, dental, and overall development.

Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings. At home activities may be recommended based on the results of the screenings. If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians. Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

5.6 Child Health Emergency-Incident & Accident Reports

We take all pre-cautions to insure the safety of your child while under our care. However, in the event that a child is hurt at our Center, the following procedures will be followed:

- ◆ An accident report will be filled out by the child's teacher and depending on the type of injury, the parent may be called.
- ◆ The parent will be asked to review the accident form and provide a signature. A copy will be given to the parent. This serves as documentation that parents were informed of the accident/incident and any necessary follow-up.

It is very important that you make sure that your child's teacher is aware of changes in phone numbers or emergency contact persons. Please keep this information up to date.

5.7 Biting Policy

PROCEDURES FOR BITING INCIDENTS:

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our Center:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we do not bite our friends! Biting hurts!"
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water. Ice will be applied to reduce swelling.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. Appropriate forms will be filled out (Incident/Accident Reports).

STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE BITING INCIDENTS:

Strategies implemented to minimize biting in the child care setting are:

- Shadow the biter so that he is always near the providers or within arm's reach.
- Provide lots of language such as "Gentle Touches" and "We use our teeth for food."
- Observe the biter to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.)
- Provide frozen teething rings for those who need something to chew on.
- Encourage child to take a pacifier if he or she uses one.

TERMINATION FROM CARE DUE TO BITING INCIDENTS:

We understand that biting in young children is common in early childhood development. However, it is our responsibility to ensure the health and safety of every child in our care. With that understanding, if your child bites, you will be contacted to pick up your child if the following incidents occur:

- If your child bites another child causing a break in his/her skin.
- If your child has bitten another child leaving a mark or a bruise more than once in a day.
- If your child has bitten another child leaving a mark or a bruise more than once in a week. (In addition to picking up your child, a meeting with the director and teacher will be scheduled to form an action plan.)
- Upon returning, if a child continues to bite, the child may be withdrawn from the early learning center.

NOTE: The number of biting incidents AND the circumstances surrounding the bite are both taken into consideration when making a decision to terminate a child from care due to biting incidents.

Tuition Policy: There will be no reduction in the basic tuition rate, which remains the same regardless of attendance, holidays, emergency closings, and student behavior.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The names of children involved in the biting incident will not be shared between families.

5.8 Medication Administration

All medication administered by the Center Staff must be authorized by the child's parent or guardian and/or doctor by first completing an Authorization to Medicate form. All medicines must be in the original container. Expired medications will not be administered.

There are two required forms for Medication Administration.

1. One form is for over-the counter medications
2. One form is for prescription medications.

Over-the counter Medications:

For over-the-counter medications, the medicine must be in the original container and list directions for administering the medication. NOTE: If the medication says, "ask a doctor" we cannot administer the medication without a doctor's note.

Prescription Medications:

For prescription medications, the medicine must be in the original container. Before being able to administer prescription medications, both the parent and the doctor must fully complete the Prescription Medication Form. If the doctor has not completed the form, we will not be able to administer the medication.

Staff will inform parent/guardian immediately of any noticed side effects or changes in behavior.

Parents are strongly encouraged to give all medications at home. If this is the case, please notify your child's teacher so that any behavioral changes and/or allergic reactions may be noted.

Medication will be stored in a locked secure area inaccessible to children.

NO MEDICATION MAY BE PLACED IN THE CHILD'S CUBBY/BOOKBAG OR LEFT UNATTENDED IN THE CLASSROOM.

5.9 Conditions of Short Term Exclusion

A child will be placed on short-term exclusion, which may include non-admittance, when the illness and/or injury is contagious and/or poses a significant health and/or safety risk to other children and staff.

5.10 Notification of Illness

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inform staff if their child becomes ill from a communicable disease and of any other health/safety concerns.

If a child appears to have a communicable disease, teaching staff should isolate the child away from the other children and immediately contact the child's parent/guardian.

Children will not be allowed to return to the Center until all symptoms have ceased for a **minimum of 24 hours**. Depending upon the condition, children may not be allowed to return to the Center without a physicians' authorization. Parents/Guardians will be asked to immediately pick up their children if the following signs, symptoms, or conditions are present:

NOTE: Child MUST be picked up within 30 minutes of being notified by staff.

- ◆ Fever, sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion. Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100.4.
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Severe coughing - child gets red or blue in the face or to make a high pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- ◆ Eye discharge - thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye
- ◆ Difficult or rapid breathing
- ◆ Ear Discharge
- ◆ Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- ◆ Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool and yellowish skin or eyes.
- ◆ Head Lice (including nits)
- ◆ Conditions that commonly require parameters from a physician detailing when a child may return include, but not be limited, chickenpox, strep throat, scabies, impetigo, meningitis, and Hepatitis A.
- ◆ Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than staff can provide without jeopardizing the health and safety of the other children.
- ◆ Any other unusual signs, symptoms, or conditions.

5.11 Dress Code

We request that children arrive at school in comfortable, easy to launder clothing. While we make every effort to protect their clothing, children can experience accidental spills during planned activities. Please label all clothing items with the child's first and last name.

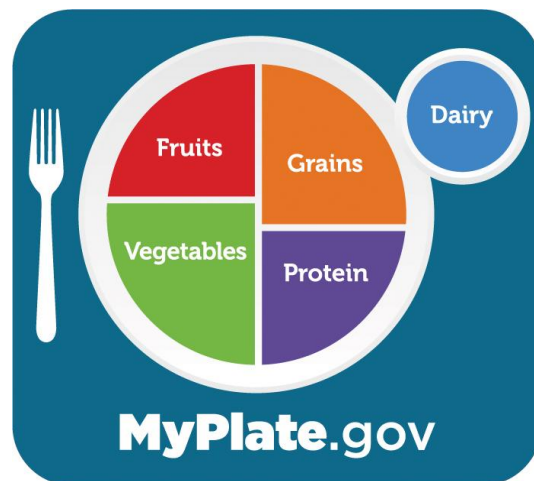
For the safety of the children, we do not allow flip flops in the classroom or during outdoor activities. Necklaces are also not permissible to wear while at school. If your child wears dresses or skirts, please be sure shorts are worn under the dress or skirt.

In case of accidents, we request every child keep two changes of clothes at the Center. Label each item with the child's first and last name and place the items in a sealed bag in your child's backpack.

5.12 Meals

A morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided for all children. We do not participate in the USDA Food Program; however, our lunches do follow the USDA My Plate guidelines and consist of 4 food groups.

Safe food handling is ensured in our kitchen as all food is stored and cooked to recommended temperatures. Our kitchen crew always wears proper gloves and hair nets. All dishes are properly cleaned and sanitized after each use.



In order to ensure the health and safety of all children, food items, purchased or from home, may not be brought into the classroom to be eaten, with the exception of special classroom events. This will help up prevent children with allergies from being exposed to foods which could be harmful.

5.13 Dietary Restrictions and Allergies

Please discuss any special dietary needs for your child with the director. Modest accommodations will be made for children with food allergies or who require specific menu items for cultural reasons. **Please Note: We are a Peanut/Tree Nut Free Facility.**

5.14 Discipline Rationale

Discipline is the effective management of children's behavior with the goal of self-disciplined children. The management technique to be used in any particular situation will be based upon consideration of the particular situation and the individual child. All staff, volunteers, and parents will use the positive guidance methods listed below:

5.15 Discipline Procedures

1. Plan ahead to prevent behavior problems. Anticipate problems that may occur and provide intervention or directions in advance. (Ex: Limit number of children in Centers. Have activities prepared so children do not have to wait.)
2. Establish clear and simple rules that are age-appropriate. Consistent reminders help reinforce limits. Rules should be stated in a positive way. (Ex: If a child is running, say, "Please use your walking feet. Running feet are for outside", instead of "Don't run!")
3. Be a model for the desired behavior. Treat all children with respect and politeness. (Ex: The teacher has a leaky paint container in her hand. She needs to get to the sink. She asks the children who are in line at the sink if she could please use the sink out of turn, rather than simply cutting in front of the children. They agree, and she remembers to thank them.)
4. Help children to learn problem-solving skills. Give them the language they need to communicate feelings and needs to others appropriately. Work with them to come up with solutions to conflicts.
5. Give hugs and caring. The key to discipline is establishing a nurturing relationship with each child. Children need to know they are accepted and loved no matter how they behave.
6. Reinforce positive behavior. Remember to focus on the specific behavior you wish to see repeated. (Ex: "Jessie, you have worked so hard to put all the blocks neatly on the shelf. Fantastic job!")
7. Overlook small annoyances. Sometimes when a behavior is overlooked, not reinforced by attention, it disappears. Unless the behavior is aggressive and someone is in danger of getting hurt, the teacher/caregiver might be wise to let the children work out the problem on their own.
8. Offer positive alternatives to a negative behavior. If a child's behavior is unacceptable, suggest alternative choices. (Ex: If a child is throwing blocks, the teacher intervenes by telling the child that blocks are for building. If the child wishes to throw something, he/she can throw a bean bag, or a ball.)
9. Re-direct or divert the child. Substitute an appropriate activity for the unacceptable one. Some behaviors that are inappropriate are temporary, or situation specific. In these cases it is best to alter the environment by redirecting the child to another activity. (Ex: Two children who are good

friends have begun to get irritated with each other. Intervene before things get out of hand by engaging them in a new activity.)

10. Help children see behavioral consequences. Since young children are self-centered, it is hard for them to see beyond their own needs. Help them to move from thinking only of themselves, to thinking of others by analyzing the consequences of their actions. Discuss their behavior in a non-judgmental way and encourage them to think about its impact on people, objects and events.
11. Provide renewal time. When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for a period of no more than 2 minutes. The teachers stay with the child to discuss what happened and to help the child regain composure.
12. Implement Behavior Intervention Policy when necessary.

5.16 Discipline Guidelines

1. Time out. There will NOT be any identified space, or chair, reserved for “time out”. Children are not to be isolated indefinitely due to behavior problems. Time out may be used only if stipulated in an individual child’s behavior plan by a licensed mental health consultant.
2. Harsh Handling/Physical Punishment. The harsh handling of infants or use of physical force with children is prohibited. This includes shaking an infant or child, pulling a child by the arm, grabbing children by the arm/shoulders/neck, hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.
3. Threatening. Children will not be threatened with physical punishment, or with a phone call to parents.
4. Ridiculing or Degrading. There will be no name-calling, belittling, or comparison to other children.
5. Withholding of meals, snacks, or water. Children will not be denied food, water or any other basic need as a means of discipline.
6. Denying a rest. Children will not be denied rest as a means of discipline.

NOTE: In the event that a child is exhibiting **extreme challenging behavior**, follow the Behavior Intervention Procedures:

- ◆ Provide renewal time.
- ◆ When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for no more than 2 minutes. The teacher is to stay with the child in the classroom to discuss what happened and the help the child regain composure.
- ◆ If necessary, the child may be removed from the classroom if two staff members are available to remain with the child at all times.
- ◆ If the child is unable to regain control within 30 minutes, the parents or authorized persons may be contacted to pick up the child.

♦ NOTE: We have a zero-tolerance policy for any child who hits a teacher or uses inappropriate language. A child will receive one warning and if the behavior occurs again, the child's enrollment will be terminated.

5.17 Standards of Conduct

St. Luke Child Care Center has guidelines of acceptable conduct that all parents, volunteers, and visitors must abide by while on premises. It is expected that all parties will follow these guidelines and sign this form. We strive to provide a safe learning environment for you and the children. All parents, volunteers, and visitors must...

- ♦ Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family. Refrain from stereotyping on basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.
- ♦ Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- ♦ Refrain from the use of any threatening physical contact or verbal abuse towards individuals connected with the program, other parents or volunteers.
- ♦ Refrain from smoking on the premises and during all Center or parent activities. St. Luke Child Care Center adheres to a **"Smoke Free Environment."** (This includes e-cigarettes and vaping)
- ♦ Refrain from illegal activities while on the premises or in attendance at Center activities. St. Luke Child Care Center prohibits theft, firearms, alcohol, explosives and illegal substances on the premises and during all Center or parent activities.
- ♦ Refrain from harassment. Any cause of disharmony of any kind will not be tolerated.

5.18 Volunteer & Visitor Policy

All volunteers and visitors shall check-in at the front office and obtain permission for the visitation.

To be eligible to volunteer in the classroom, volunteers must complete a Level 2 Background screening through the AHCA Clearinghouse as well as attend the Diocese's Protecting God's Children class.

Visitation by a non-enrolled child unaccompanied by his/her parent(s) or legal guardian is prohibited unless prior approval has been granted by the Center Director.

Only persons with legal authority to do so (such as Department of Children & Families personnel or law enforcement) shall be allowed to question a child on the property without the consent of the child's parents or legal guardian.

Because staff, children, and parents should always feel that the school and work environment is safe and not hostile, all visitors to the property shall comply with all policies while on property and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is not disruptive, threatening or abusive.

- ◆ Any parent, volunteer or visitor who is disruptive, threatening or abusive will be asked to relocate to a location in the facility where children are not present and where the matter can be discussed and resolved in a professional manner.
- ◆ If the person refuses to relocate or continues to act in an inappropriate manner, the person will be asked to leave the premises. If the person refuses to leave, staff will notify appropriate law enforcement personnel. Should the person subsequently return to the property and again act in a manner that is disruptive, threatening or abusive or if the initial incident is so extreme that the teachers are concerned about the person returning to the facility, the person shall be informed in writing that he/she may be prohibited from returning to property.
- ◆ Any person who believes that he/she has wrongfully been asked to not return to the property, must first leave the property as requested, but may subsequently appeal the decision in writing to the Center Director.
- ◆ A final decision will be made and the person will be notified in writing that he/she may not return to the property except under expressed conditions.
- ◆ Notwithstanding the above, Center personnel shall always have the authority to notify appropriate law enforcement personnel should any person to property violate criminal statutes.

5.19 Emergency Preparedness and Procedures

Our Emergency Procedure Crisis Plan is posted in each classroom. This plan outlines the center's procedures for serious injuries, missing children, intruders, lock downs, bomb threats, fire, and severe weather.

In addition to annual staff training on emergency preparedness, monthly drills are practiced including an annual lock down drill and severe weather drill.

Should an event occur that requires our center to either lock down or evacuate, all parents will be notified of the event through our Class Dojo App. Our designated evacuation location is currently the Parish Hall that is located at 1606 Blanding Blvd.

5.20 Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) & Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) **Identifying and Responding to Signs of SBS/AHT:**

1. Recognizing Symptoms:
 - Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including: irritability and/or high-pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.
2. Responding:
 - If SBS/AHT is suspected, staff will:
 - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AGT and inform the director.
 - Call the parents/guardian.
 - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.
3. Reporting:
 - Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care will be reported to the Florida's Abuse Hotline (1-800-96-ABUSE).

Prevention strategies in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child:

Staff first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
- Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy.
- Turn on music or white noise.

In addition, the facility:

- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

5.21 Head Lice Policy

St. Luke Child Care Center has a "No Lice, No Nit" Lice Policy. Children with Lice and Nits will not be able to attend child care until proper treatment has been applied. Upon returning to school, please bring the box top from the treatment you chose to use on your child.

Your child will be checked during drop-off for the next 10 days to ensure treatment was successful. If any lice or nits are found, your child will not be admitted to his or her classroom.

When a child is sent home with head lice, St. Luke Child Care Center will:

1. Notify all families that a child from the classroom was sent home with head lice.
2. Thoroughly clean the classroom. This includes washing all bedding in hot water, washing all dress-up clothes, stuffed animals, soft toys, etc. in hot water, and treating carpets, couches, chairs with proper lice treatments.
3. Check all children in the classroom to ensure there has not been a lice outbreak.

NOTE: It is expensive to continuously treat a classroom for lice. If your child is sent home with lice multiple times, you will incur the expenses of treating the classroom. **The 3rd time your child is sent home with lice, you will be charged a \$25 cleaning fee to help with the cleaning of the classroom.**

SECTION 6 - CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

6.1 Curriculum

All teachers will use the *Nemours Bright Starts* curriculum to plan specific activities that promote school readiness. The curriculum will be based on helping children to attain positive school readiness outcomes.

Other approved curriculum resource books will be used to supplement the curriculum.

6.2 Naps and Quiet Time

Naps are important for the growth and development of all children. Infants sleep "on-demand" and according to their own schedule. For all other age groups, our daily schedules incorporate a balance of active and quiet play, including a rest period. During this time, children are encouraged to rest, but not required to sleep. Children who do not sleep are allowed to read a book or engage in a quiet activity after a period of rest, while still respecting the quiet time so others can nap.

6.3 Potty Training Policy

St. Luke Child Care Center does not begin potty-training children until the child is at least 2 years old. We will begin potty training when the child shows signs that he or she is ready to start potty training, and the family is able to support and continue the potty-training efforts at home.

Here are some signs that your child may be ready to start potty training:

1. Your child shows an interest in learning to use the potty and wanting to be more independent.
2. Your child can understand and verbalize words about using the potty.
3. Your child can make the connection between having the urge to use the bathroom and going to use the potty.
4. Your child can follow simple instructions and likes to copy your behavior, including bathroom habits.
5. Your child can keep his diaper dry for at least two hours.
6. Your child can get on the potty, stay on the potty long enough to use the potty, and get off the potty.
7. Your child can pull down his own diapers, training pants, or underwear.

6.4 Bathroom Policy in the 3 and 4 Year Old Classrooms

In order for your child to move to the 3's, he or she must be fully potty trained. This means your child...

- Consistently recognizes when he/she needs to go to the bathroom.
- Has the ability to wait to use the toilet.
- Can pull down pants and sit on the toilet without assistance.
- Uses the toilet paper correctly and independently. (No flushable wipes)
- Pulls up pants with no assistance.

Please note that our pre-k 3- and 4-year-old classrooms are not set up to deal with bathroom accidents in a sanitary manner. If your child has an accident that requires adult assistance, you will be called to pick up your child from school. Teachers and staff are unable to assist with accidents that require more than a clothing change.

6.5 Toys from Home

To prevent special toys from being lost or broken, we ask that toys not be sent to school with your child. On certain days throughout the year, we allow children to bring personal items and/or toys to share during a special part of the day's activities. Your child's teacher will inform you about these "Show-N-Tell" days.

6.6 Field Trips

St. Luke Child Care does not take the children on field trips off of our campus. However, all "nature walks" are considered a field trip. Therefore, we have an on-going, nature walk field trip form for all families to sign. Our "nature walks" consist of stroller rides for the infants and toddlers and walking to the parish hall or church for our preschoolers.

6.7 Assessment

Each child will have a portfolio which includes a sampling of the child's progress. Depending on the age of the child, these samples may include Ages and Stages Questionnaires, literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, dictation, writing samples, pictures, anecdotal notes, photos, etc. Portfolios for infants and toddlers may also include copies of daily notes, growth charts, and other developmental checklists. Portfolios, including screening and assessment results and individualized goals, are to be shared with parents twice per academic year during scheduled parent conferences.

6.8 Transitioning Children from Class to Class

If it becomes necessary during the year to move a child up to the next class, St. Luke Child Care Center will strive to make as smooth a transition as possible for the child, the parents, and the teachers. Parents will be informed both verbally and in writing. The child will transition slowly over the course of a few days.

6.9 Transitioning from Pre-K to Kindergarten

In May or June of each year, St. Luke Child Care Center will provide activities to aid in the smooth transition of preschool children to kindergarten. These activities may include one or more of the following: the distribution of kindergarten registration and transition packets, a graduation ceremony, a visit to a nearby elementary school, and a mini-workshop for parents.

SECTION 7- SUPPLY LISTS AND HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

7.1 Classroom Supply Lists

Infants

Premade bottles (bottles & caps labeled)

Baby jar food (unopened & labeled)

Diapers and wipes

Pacifiers (labeled)

2 changes of clothes

4 boxes of tissues

4 containers of Lysol wipes

3 Snap-on bibs

1" Clearview white binder (for portfolio)

1 package of page protectors (for portfolio)

Black Sharpie Marker

**Wish List: white or multi-colored card stock, thermal laminating pouches

One's

Fitted crib sheet, blanket, & small pillow

Large Ziplock Bag (to store nap supplies)

Diapers, Wipes, Diaper Cream

2 changes of clothes

4 boxes of tissues

4 containers of Lysol wipes

1" Clearview white binder (for portfolio)

1 package of sheet protectors (for portfolio)

1 plastic folder

1 bottle of Elmer's white glue

**Wish List: white or multi-colored card stock, thermal laminating pouches

Two's

Fitted crib sheet, blanket, & small pillow

Large Ziplock Bag (to store nap supplies)

Diapers and Wipes (labeled)

2 changes of clothes

3 boxes of tissues

3 containers of Lysol wipes

2 boxes of chubby crayons

4 cans of Play-doh

1" Clearview black binder (for portfolio)

1 package of sheet protectors (for portfolio)

Water Bottle (labeled with name)

**Wish List: white or multi-colored card stock, thermal laminating pouches

Three's

Fitted crib sheet, blanket, & small pillow

Large Ziplock Bag (to store nap supplies)

1 backpack with a change of clothes

3 boxes of tissues

3 containers of Lysol wipes

1 pack of baby wipes

2 boxes of Crayola crayons

1 box of Crayola washable markers

3 large glue sticks

2 cans of Play-doh

1 plastic folder for "Friday Folders"

1" Clearview white binder (for portfolio)

1 package of page protectors (for portfolio)

Water Bottle (labeled with name)

*Wish List: white or multi-colored card stock, thermal laminating pouches, stickers

VPK Wish List

Fitted crib sheet, blanket, & small pillow

Large Ziplock Bag (to store nap supplies)

1 backpack with a change of clothes

2 boxes of tissues

3 containers of Lysol wipes

2 boxes of Crayola crayons

1 box Crayola washable markers

1 box of colored pencils

6 large glue sticks

2 cans of Play-doh

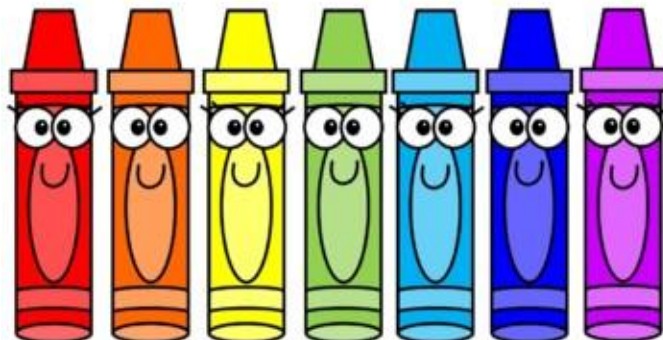
2 plastic folders with prongs

1.5" Clearview white binder (for portfolio)

50 Sheet protectors (for portfolio)

Water Bottle (labeled with name)

*Wish List: white or multi-colored card stock, thermal laminating pouches



7.2 St. Luke Holiday Schedule

Holiday Schedule (2025-2026)

Friday, July 4, 2025	Independence Day Holiday
Monday, September 1, 2025	Labor Day Holiday
Friday, October 24, 2025	Closed for St. Luke Festival
Tuesday, November 11, 2025	Veterans Day Holiday
Wednesday, November 26, 2025	<u>Closing at 1:00 p.m. for Thanksgiving Eve</u>
Thursday, November 27, 2025	Thanksgiving Holiday
Friday, November 28, 2025	Thanksgiving Holiday
Wednesday, December 24, 2025	Christmas Holiday
Thursday, December 25, 2025	Christmas Holiday
Friday, December 26, 2025	Christmas Holiday
Wednesday, December 31, 2025	<u>Closing at 1:00 p.m. for New Year's Eve</u>
Thursday, January 1, 2026	New Year's Holiday
Friday, January 2, 2026	Closed for Professional Development Day
Monday, January 19, 2026	Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday
Monday, February 16, 2026	Presidents Day Holiday
Friday, April 3, 2026	Good Friday Holiday
Monday, May 25, 2026	Memorial Day Holiday

NOTE: This Schedule is for all Full-Time & VPK Wrap-Around Children

7.3 VPK Holiday Schedule

VPK School Schedule (2025-2026)

Monday, August 11	First Day of School
Monday, September 1	Labor Day, Student Holiday
Monday, October 13	Columbus Day, Student Holiday
Friday, October 24	St. Luke Festival, Student Holiday
Tuesday, November 11	Veterans' Day, Student Holiday
Monday, Nov 24 – Friday, Nov 28	Thanksgiving Break
Monday, Dec 22 – Friday, Jan 2	Christmas Break
Monday, January 19	MLK Day, Student Holiday
Monday, February 16	Presidents' Day, Student Holiday
Mon, March 16 – Fri, March 20	Spring Break
Friday, April 3	Good Friday, Student Holiday
Monday, May 25	Memorial Day, Student Holiday
Wednesday, May 27	Last Day of School

NOTE: Dates are subject to change as Clay County may change the 2025-2026 school calendar.

