



# Saint Joseph

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WEST ST. PAUL, MN

PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026

This Handbook is for the Students and Parents of the preschool of Saint Joseph Catholic School.

Saint Joseph Catholic School may introduce new rules, policies, and procedures, and modify existing ones, at its sole discretion, at any time without advance notice, and reserves the right to interpretation of its policies.

The provisions of this handbook are not intended to and do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between any applicant, student, or parent, and Saint Joseph Catholic School.

**Saint Joseph Catholic School**

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651-457-8550



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# Saint Joseph

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the beginning of a new school year here at Saint Joseph Catholic School! Our preschool is an exciting place to be, where our students encounter a joyful and faithful place to grow. As we begin the year, know that we are excited to welcome your child to school and to provide a nurturing, faith-filled environment for your son or daughter to learn. This year will provide ample opportunities for your child to grow spiritually, physically, socially, and academically. Simply put, it's what we do and we enjoy this great work of education for our youngest learners!

This parent handbook is a good guidebook for all of the daily policies and procedures that govern our preschool. Please be sure to read this handbook and return the signature page on the last page of the handbook. **The signature page must be signed and returned prior to the first day of school, and indicates your understanding of and support for our policies and procedures.** If you have any questions on the policies contained in this handbook, please contact our school office at 651-457-8550 or email me at [kyrickbeil@stjosephwsp.org](mailto:kyrickbeil@stjosephwsp.org).

On behalf of everyone at St Joseph's Preschool, we are very excited to welcome your child and your family into our preschool community!

Sincerely,

Kyle Rickbeil  
Principal  
Saint Joseph Catholic School

# MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

## **The Church of Saint Joseph Mission Statement**

We are a Catholic family of faith united in the joy of encountering Christ's love in Scripture, the Eucharist, and one another and called in the Holy Spirit to bear witness to His love.

## **Saint Joseph Catholic School Mission Statement**

Saint Joseph Catholic School forms joyful disciples of Jesus Christ who pursue academic excellence and cultivate a life of virtue.

## **School Philosophy**

At Saint Joseph Catholic School, students are formed by our Catholic worldview and within a culture of faith to be joyful disciples of Jesus Christ. The teaching and curriculum we select forms students academically, while the credible faith witness of our faculty and staff model discipleship for our students. Our ultimate goal is that each of our graduates leaves the school ready for a life of discipleship, prepared to follow Christ in high school and for the rest of their lives.

Becoming joyful disciples becomes the very heart of our mission. We believe that we are created in the very image and likeness of God, that God loves us, and that God has an amazing plan for our lives. During the school day, we draw closer to God as we worship through reverent prayer, scripture readings, and the Mass. We learn about Christ and the life of discipleship through our worship, religion classes, and the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program. We understand that we are called in the Holy Spirit to bear witness to God's love, and we do so in great joy, aware that we are in the presence of God.

The life of discipleship compels us to academic excellence and excellence in every part of our lives. We realize that we are stewards of the gifts that God has given us, doing our very best to refine our gifts and talents as we pursue excellence. Together, we become a community of learners that seeks what is good, true, and beautiful. Because of this, our teaching challenges students with a comprehensive curriculum enriched with fine arts and co-curricular activities that meets the needs of all of our learners. We also believe excellence is achieved by each student doing their personal best, and we serve a diversity of learners with different gifts and different needs.

The life of discipleship also compels us to cultivate a life of virtue. During the school day, we teach the virtues and model the virtues in practice. We promote what it looks like, sounds like, and feels

like to live the virtues, and our faculty model the virtues for our students. In everything we do, we serve one another and our greater community by treating one another with dignity and respect. Following the example of our patron Saint Joseph, we form people of character, wisdom, and presence, and exemplify Joseph's virtues of joy, fidelity, integrity, charity, and courage. Individually, we practice humility by taking responsibility for our actions and we collectively grow together in virtue as we witness to one another

## **Preschool Philosophy**

The preschool of Saint Joseph Catholic School is committed to excellence in early childhood education and to providing a loving and faith-based program to help your child grow and develop at his or her unique pace. As a Catholic preschool, we will provide a child-focused celebration of faith integrated throughout the day. We encourage both spontaneity and structured activity. We believe play is the work of young children; therefore, our classrooms will be environments that encourage safe and creative play on many different levels.

Our integrated thematic approach utilizes literacy to develop a broad curriculum built around themes that are both relevant and interesting to the preschool child. The child's learning and development will grow out of the engaging thematic opportunities that are designed by the teacher to specifically support developmental goals for the child.

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children, and our preschool is committed to developing a partnership with parents to foster the unique and God-given gifts within each child.

## **Program Goals and Educational Methods**

Our creative and nurturing environment encourages each individual child to:

- Build confidence and pride
- Interact socially and learn cooperatively
- Develop learning skills to support language and cognitive growth; and
- Grow in faith and understanding of God's world around us!

We do this through a developmentally appropriate program that balances structured opportunities and child-initiated activities and choices. Your child will be engaged in thematic units that stimulate curiosity while providing ample opportunities to develop social and early academic skills. The preschool day consists of literacy based activities such as books, poetry and fine motor skills. Expressive arts, music, hands-on math, science exploration, dramatic play, and large motor skills round out our days. A program plan is available for review upon request.

We provide a Catholic learning environment in which we integrate our faith throughout the day with prayers, music, lessons and celebrations. All children, regardless of religion, are welcomed as students

at our preschool.

Most importantly, we seek to make preschool a *delightful* experience, so that a curiosity of learning is fostered in each child.

## Curricular Framework

Saint Joseph Preschool provides a balanced, age-appropriate curriculum based on best practices in early literacy, math, science, social studies, and religion (integrated with social, emotional and physical development), and a professional commitment to meeting the developing skills of preschool children. All curricular areas are represented in daily lessons, monthly themes, and the bi-annual assessments. The teachers and administrators work together to make adaptations to curriculum to meet the needs of families and individual students within reason.

## Assessments and Evaluation

All children receive both ongoing formal and informal evaluation in order to best support your child's growth and development. The assessments are based on our curricular goals and best practices in early childhood. This allows us to plan cognitive, social, physical, and spiritual goals. The assessments are formally shared with parents twice a year or more. All teachers are trained in the assessment methods.

# PROGRAM DETAILS

## Hours/Days of Operation

The Saint Joseph Preschool will operate several classes in two classrooms, based on age. We are licensed by the State of Minnesota for 49 preschool-aged children.

Half Day Programs	Days Offered	Time	2025-26 Tuition
<b>Terrific 3s</b> (Must be 3 by September 1)	Tuesdays and Thursdays	8:30- 11:00 a.m.	\$1,765/year (\$176.50/month)
<b>Pre-K 4s</b> (Must be 4 by September 1)	Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays	8:30- 11:00 a.m.	\$2,370/year (\$237/month)
<b>Pre-K 4s and 5s</b> (Must be 4½ by September 1)	Mondays-Fridays	12:00- 3:00 p.m.	\$3,555/year (\$355.50/month)

- Lunch Bunch is available for half-day students at a cost of \$315 annually for one day per week, \$630 for two days per week, \$945 for three days per week, \$1260 for four days per week, or \$1,575 for five days per week.

Full Day Program	Days Offered	Time	2025-26 Tuition
<b>Full Day 4s</b> (Must be 4 by September 1)	Mondays-Fridays	8:30- 3:00 p.m.	\$6,845/year (\$684.50/month)

### Before and After Care

Before and after care is offered to full-day and half day participants. Morning care is offered from 7:00 a.m. to 8:15 a.m., while afternoon care is offered each day from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. Please see before and after school care registration for more details and the fee structure.

### Lunch Bunch

Half-day students are invited to extend the fun of preschool by adding an additional hour to their preschool day from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Students may bring their own lunch and drink or purchase the lunch and milk provided by the school district. The extra hour also includes extra outdoor play time, weather permitting. Please contact the school office if you are interested in this option.

### Program Plan

Parents are welcome to review the Saint Joseph Catholic School Preschool Program Plan, upon request. This document outlines areas of the classroom, activity by area, daily schedule, and other information. Please contact your child’s teacher for the program plan.

### Supervision of Children

Our preschool staff includes a lead teacher and aides in each classroom during the school day. We meet and exceed state licensing requirements by ensuring the proper 10:1 ratio of adults to students at all times.

### Emergency Closings

Our preschool will follow Saint Joseph Catholic School in all decisions regarding weather-related closings. Saint Joseph Catholic School normally follows District #197’s closing decisions related to

the weather. If ISD 197 is closed, Saint Joseph Catholic School and Preschool will normally be closed.

Emergency school closings due to inclement or severe weather will be announced on WCCO (www.minnesota.cbslocal.com) or KARE 11 (www.kare11.com). Parents should listen to weather related closure announcements. We will also update the website and email families about school closings or delays as soon as possible. Because other emergencies can happen that cause a school to be delayed, closed, or ended early, it is imperative that all parents provide Saint Joseph Catholic School with current emails, as well as home, cell and work phone numbers on the Emergency Contact Form. It is the parent's responsibility to update these cards if any information changes during the year.

If Saint Joseph Catholic School has a two hour late start, all morning preschool programs (half-day 3s and 4s) and care before school are canceled for the day.

## **Preschool Calendar**

The preschool year begins at the end of August (the week before Labor Day) and ends at the end of May (the week following Memorial Day). We begin the year with individual orientation visits. Parents will be emailed a copy of the Preschool calendar.

The preschool calendar closely follows the Saint Joseph Catholic School calendar, especially as it relates to days off of school. However there are some days that the preschool calendar is not consistent with the school calendar, and these days will be noted in the preschool calendar. Any alterations to the school calendar, such as preschool program start and end dates and other accommodations for preschool programming, will be noted in parent communications and in the program calendar.

**There is no tuition reimbursement for days not in session or for days that the student is not in attendance due to illness, appointments, family activities etc.**

## **Field Trips/Enrichment**

All preschool students will have the opportunity to further their understanding of the world through special enrichment opportunities such as educational programs brought in house, specialists from the school and community, and unique opportunities in our neighborhood that enhance our curriculum.

Additionally, field trips are an important part of programming for the Full Day 4s, Pre-K 4s and Pre-K 4/5s. Such trips may include school bus transportation. Field trips are not included in the tuition, and additional costs will be the responsibility of the parents. Parents will receive advance notice of all field trips. A signed permission slip is required for your child to participate, and will be

sent home in advance of the trip. If you choose not to have your child participate, they will have the day off and should stay at home. There is no tuition reimbursement for this day.

There are times when it is important to have additional adults accompany the preschool students on field trips. We will request help from parents in advance. All chaperones must have a Virtus background check, signed Code of Conduct, and Virtus training completed to be eligible to volunteer for field trips or in the classrooms.

## DAILY PROCEDURES

### Drop-off and Pick-Up

**Safety** is our primary concern, as is a smooth arrival and dismissal for all students. If the procedures change during the school year you will be notified of any adjustments.

**Parking** on the school side of the street is permitted during preschool hours.. The parking lot on the corner of Seminole and Orme is available as well. It is very important to be good neighbors to the residents who live so close to the school. Watch carefully not to block any driveways when parking on the street.

**Drop-off for Morning Classes:** The preschool morning arrival procedure will begin at 8:20 a.m. to support our school start time of 8:30 a.m. Families are asked to pull up to the preschool on Seminole Avenue and drop off their child as quickly and efficiently as possible, as this minimizes homesickness for preschool students. Staff members will be at the sidewalk to assist children to the lobby area where they will be greeted by the preschool staff. If you need more time to drop off your child, please park on the opposite side of the street or park in the parking lot at Seminole and Orme and walk your child to the front door, where our staff members will assist your child from there.

**Drop-off for Afternoon Classes:** Our afternoon drop-off procedure will begin at 11:55 a.m. Please park in the front of the preschool on Seminole Avenue and walk your child to the preschool door. A staff member will be at the preschool entrance to greet the children and assist children in taking off coats, hanging backpacks, and walking into the classroom.

**Upon Entering the Classroom:** All staff and students will thoroughly wash hands when arriving in the classroom and throughout the day.

**Pick-up for Morning Classes:** The children will be dismissed from the classroom teacher at the front of the building -- this might be from the playground, the grassy area, or the main preschool doors. The children will be ready to go home with their belongings at the 11:00 a.m. dismissal time.

**Pick-Up for Afternoon Classes:** The children will be dismissed from the classroom teacher at the

front of the building -- this might be from the playground, the grassy area, or the main preschool doors. The children will be ready to go home with their belongings at 3:00 p.m. dismissal. Older siblings of students attending Saint Joseph's preschool will be dismissed to the front of the building on Seminole Avenue to meet their families at 3:10 p.m.

**Authorized Pickups:** All adults who are authorized by you to pick up your child, including carpool arrangements, must be noted on the **alternate pickup/carpool authorization form**.

- Note: anyone other than those authorized to pick up your child from school must have a **written authorization** from the parent before we release the child to that adult. If a staff member is unfamiliar with a pick-up person, **please know that a driver's license will be checked to ensure the safety of your child**.

**Late Fees:** A staff member will stay with the child until they have been picked up. If a child is not picked up, their family will be contacted. Families that are regularly late to pick-up will be charged a fee of \$10 per each 5-minute segment the staff is required to supervise their child beyond 5 minutes past pickup.

## Security

Our preschool doors will be locked approximately ten minutes after class begins and will remain locked throughout our class time. If you arrive after that window of time, please check in at the main school office. If you need to pick up your child early, you will need to go to the main school office. Please inform your child's teacher of your early pick-up plans ahead of time.

**Visitor Policy:** The doors to the preschool will be locked ten minutes after the start of class and remain locked during class. Parents requiring entry during the preschool day must check in at the school office by entering the main school doors off Seminole Avenue. All visitors will receive a visitor's badge. The school office will alert the preschool staff of the visitor.

## Attendance

If your child will miss class for any reason, please call the preschool by 8:15 a.m. for the morning session or 11:45 p.m. for the afternoon session and leave a message on the **preschool attendance hotline** (651-789-8300, Press 1). If your child will miss three or more days in a row, please notify your child's teacher in writing. If your child's absence is due to illness, please notify us of symptoms and details so that appropriate communications can occur if the illness is communicable or contagious.

## School Supplies

A list of school supplies will be emailed in August. Every family is expected to contribute.

- **PreK 4s:** Bring supplies to Preschool at orientation
- **Full-Day 4s:** Bring supplies to Preschool at orientation.
- **Terrific 3s:** Bring supplies in the middle of November.
- **PreK 4/5s:** Bring supplies at the beginning of February.

See Preschool calendars for exact dates

## Meals and Snacks

Any snack which our preschool provides to children complies with nutritional requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service. Snacks are provided once for the half-day students and twice for the full-day students. Additionally, the full-day students and students in the Lunch Bunch program will have lunches provided by the family or by the school district. We ask that families adhere to the snack guidelines for information on snacks to be shared, as well as lunches from home. Staff are seated with your children during meal and snack times. Information regarding a child's allergy or special dietary needs must be provided at the start of the school year, preferably in the form of an Allergy Plan from your child's Pediatrician or Allergist.

Water will be provided at snack times, as well as at intervals throughout the day as needed. The full-day children are asked to bring a labeled water bottle from home each day with their lunches. Water for the half-day students will be provided in single service cups.

Each family will be responsible to provide snacks for the class several times a year on a rotating basis. You will be assigned a date on the teacher's monthly calendar. Please bring the number of snacks written on your snack calendar for your child's class. Also, please include any plastic utensils needed for your snack. We do have a small refrigerator on-site for dairy products.

Preschool licensing requires us to serve two of the four food groups: fruit/vegetables, meat/meat alternate, grains/breads, and milk/dairy. Please keep this in mind when sending snacks to school. Suggestions for snacks will be distributed at the beginning of the year along with any known allergies in the class. Grapes, raisins, and regular popcorn will not be served in preschool for any age group. Carrots and pretzels are not served to Terrific 3s. Snacks must be store-bought. **Please do not send sugary snacks.**

Saint Joseph School is a multi-function facility and a "nut aware" school. Therefore, we are not a "nut free" zone. However, we do not serve snacks that include nut ingredients. Snacks which list peanut or nut ingredients on the nutrition label will not be served during snack time. Your attention to the nutritional labels and your support is appreciated.

## Sharing

Each teacher will communicate sharing (show and tell) options for their classroom. Sharing time will include “showing and telling” about the special item which your child wants to share.

## Birthday Celebrations

We love to recognize your child, especially on her/his special day (Summer birthdays will be celebrated on a predetermined date selected by the teacher). Your child will be assigned to bring a snack on the class day closest to their birthday without overlapping another child’s birthday. Please choose healthy, store-purchased snacks – again, **please do not send sugary snacks**. Birthday treats can be something special such as fruit, yogurt, or *puff* popcorn (**no regular popcorn, please**).

On their day, the child can invite a special birthday guest to class to read a book of their choosing. If an adult cannot attend, the family is encouraged to select a favorite book and send it with their child for the teacher to read. Please make arrangements with the teacher.

No birthday party invitations will be distributed at school unless every child in the class receives an invitation.

## What to Wear

Since Preschool is an active learning environment with many hands-on activities, the children’s clothing should be comfortable and washable. **Play clothes are best**. Saint Joseph Catholic School is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing.

**Daily outdoor play** is an important part of your child’s day at preschool. The children should be prepared to play outdoors year-round, weather permitting. During cold weather seasons, students are required to come each day with a warm coat, hat, mittens, boots and snow pants. Children cannot wear boots in the classroom, so please send a separate pair of shoes in the winter. Preschool children and staff will not go outside when the heat index is over 100 degrees or when the windchill is below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Teachers will use their best judgment to limit or restrict outdoor time.

**Footwear:** Clogs, Crocs, flip-flops, and sandals have proven to be unsafe. Please send your child in tennis shoes or other **closed-toe shoes** to provide support and make walking, running, and climbing safer and more fun.

**All clothing should be clearly labeled with your family’s last name.**

**Accidents:** We encourage families to have an extra change of clothes in the bottom of your school

bag as backup if needed. Please put these items in a Ziplock bag in your child's backpack. If your child has an accident, we will send the soiled clothing home in the bag as well.

## **Personal Belongings**

Children should not bring toys, electronics or other personal items to school except for sharing days. Saint Joseph Catholic School is not responsible for lost or broken items brought from home.

# **REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT**

## **Admission and Registration Policy**

Our preschool provides a faith-based, kindergarten readiness program for children ages 3, 4, or 5. We are a ministry of the Church of Saint Joseph and part of Saint Joseph Catholic School and enjoy the support of both the school and parish.

Once registration opens, enrollment continues until the programs reach capacity. Our age of admission into each program is dependent upon the age of the child on September 1 of the year they join the school.

**All preschoolers must be toilet-trained and meet age eligibility.** Saint Joseph Catholic School welcomes all children, however, some physical, emotional, behavioral or learning needs require additional consideration. Children with serious physical, emotional, behavioral or learning concerns may not be able to be serviced by our preschool staff. Parents should consult with the principal regarding concerns or correct age placement prior to registering.

**Class Size:** Saint Joseph Catholic School is a Minnesota State licensed facility and has a capacity of twenty children per classroom. It is the policy of our preschool to maintain a minimum number of students in each class in order to support a developmentally appropriate learning environment.

Our preschool is self-supporting and relies on tuition as revenue to operate. Therefore:

- Each preschool classroom and program must have a minimum number and no more than twenty students to be properly staffed and financially viable.
- The Lunch Bunch program must have at least four students and not more than twenty
- The principal will work with families regarding program eligibility and availability. All preschool programs meet state licensing requirements.

**Registration Process:** Registration takes place in the winter after the budget has been approved and tuition has been set for the following school year. Preschool registration begins during the

registration information sessions and remains open until classes are filled.

The following registration materials must be completed:

- Registration form
- Non-refundable registration fee of \$75 per child
- Student's preschool screening (shared when completed)

Our preschool program is directly affiliated with Saint Joseph Catholic School (K-8), and both are educational ministries of the Church of Saint Joseph. This admissions policy gives priority to families with students in the K-8 program and active parishioners at the Church of Saint Joseph.

Parishioner status is demonstrated by the following:

- Completion of a registration card on file at the parish
- Regular worship at the Church of Saint Joseph and contributions to Sunday offerings
- Generous commitment and faithful honoring of time and talent
- Persons shall not be registered parishioners at other parishes

Classroom openings will be filled by the following criteria for those registrations received by the priority deadline:

1. Families with children already enrolled at our preschool
2. Parishioners with children already enrolled at Saint Joseph Catholic School
3. Parishioners who were registered by December 31 of the year prior to enrollment
4. New parishioners who have moved into the parish from another Catholic parish and who demonstrate they are active parishioners
5. Non-parishioners with children in Saint Joseph Catholic School
6. Non-parishioners

Waiting Pool: Once all openings are filled, subsequent applications will be placed in the waiting pool. Families will be contacted as openings occur.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Each year, tuition is established for the subsequent school year by the principal in consultation with the Pastor, School Advisory Council, and Parish Finance Council. Tuition is pro-rated as a monthly fee, but can be paid in one payment in August. If a monthly option is chosen, the ten tuition payments are scheduled for August through May. Billing options will be offered through TADS. TADS may have separate fees for credit card use. In addition, fees for special programs such as Lunch Bunch are also covered under this policy.

There is no tuition or fee reimbursement for days the program is not in session due to scheduled

holidays and weather-related closings or for days that the student is absent due to illness, travel or other reasons.

### **Delinquent Tuition and Fees**

Families are responsible to keep current with all tuition and fee obligations. All applicable policies regarding tuition, late fees, and penalties are identified within the TADS tuition agreements. Families with delinquent tuition accounts, including fines and fees, will not be permitted to register for the subsequent school year, and may be asked to find an alternative preschool option for their children at any time throughout the year.

### **Withdrawal from Program**

Each child is enrolled for an entire school year, or the balance of the year at the time of enrollment. Withdrawal from the Saint Joseph Catholic School and/or the Lunch Bunch programs requires a one month notification in writing so that the preschool can coordinate with families in the wait pool. Full tuition and fees must be paid through the notification period.

### **Required Information about Learning or Medical Needs**

Parents/legal guardians have the responsibility to inform the preschool prior to enrollment, or as soon as the evaluation process has begun, when their child has any special medical condition, dietary restrictions, special needs or allergies to ensure that Saint Joseph Preschool is able to reasonably accommodate the child's needs within the structure of the preschool.

Parents/legal guardians must also inform and provide documentation regarding special services. If the child has an ISP (individual Service Plan) and/or an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), or is in the process of a professional evaluation, the parents/legal guardians must also meet with the preschool prior to enrollment in order to determine the most appropriate plan to meet the child's needs.

# **BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Our Code of Conduct**

At Saint Joseph Preschool, we believe all students, parents, and staff should maintain a code of conduct that reflects Gospel values, cooperation, responsibility, self-esteem and respect within a safe

and stimulating environment.

Classroom rules and expectations will be clearly communicated to parents and students. In general, behavior expectations include:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for property
- Following directions

As part of classroom management, the staff will employ the following behavior guidance strategies:

- Providing a positive model of acceptable behavior
- Tailoring guidance to the developmental level of children
- Eye contact
- Instruction of problem solving skills
- Teaching acceptable alternatives to problem behavior to reduce conflict
- Verbal redirection
- Redirection of children and groups away from problematic behavior toward constructive activity
- Providing immediate, natural, and logical consequences
- Protecting the safety of children and staff persons
- Removal from situation with which the child is having difficulty

## **Discipline and Behavior Guidance**

All children and adults are created in the image and likeness of God, and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Saint Joseph Catholic School believes that children build their self-esteem and character through positive guidance coupled with support to learn appropriate behaviors to deal with conflict and challenging situations. We promote a positive atmosphere through clear and consistent expectations and an atmosphere of peace and cooperation. Our Code of Conduct is the foundation of our behavior guidance.

Preschool students are expected to follow classroom rules and expectations and behave in a considerate and safe manner toward preschool staff and other students. When behavior becomes inappropriate or disruptive, the teacher will:

1. Redirect the child, spelling out student choices and consequences.
2. Take the child aside and/or direct them to a quiet activity of the teacher's choice.
3. Separate the child from the group to a supervised area. When this occurs, the parent will be notified.
4. If necessary, ask the parents to bring the child home for the remainder of the day

## **Restraining a Child**

A child may be physically restrained by a staff person when it is necessary to protect the child or others from harm. A child may only be restrained by being held by a staff person. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying, are strictly forbidden.

## **Persistent Unacceptable Behavior**

Some behaviors are always unacceptable within our preschool program. These behaviors include biting, cursing, punching, kicking, hitting, choking, or other actions that may pose a threat to another child or adult. Such behaviors will be immediately stopped by a staff member. If the attempts to correct the behavior are unsuccessful, the child may be separated from the group until he/she is ready to return. Such separations will be communicated to the parents/guardians.

For students who continually demonstrate any of the above behaviors, the following steps will be used to work with the child and the family to correct their behavior

- Staff will observe and record behavior patterns over two weeks
- A conference will be scheduled with the parents, teacher, and principal to establish a plan to modify the behavior. Based on the behaviors, the conference may be required before the child returns to class.
- If the unacceptable behavior continues after the plan has been put in place, the program has the right to require an evaluation and recommendations from a professional. The recommendations will be reviewed by the parents and staff
- If no behavioral changes occur, the program reserves the right to terminate the enrollment
- If the parents are unwilling to participate in the steps listed above, the program reserves the right to terminate the enrollment.

Based on the principal's professional judgment, a child may be dismissed from the program if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The child poses a threat to self, other children, or staff.
- The child's behavior is difficult to manage in a group, impeding group progress.
- The child or parents use abusive or threatening language toward children or staff.

If a situation occurs that jeopardizes the immediate welfare of children or staff, the principal reserves the right to dismiss the child immediately.

## **Prohibited Actions**

Saint Joseph School staff will never use corporal punishment to discipline children. Additionally,

staff will never subject a child to emotional stress or threaten to withhold food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as punishment for unacceptable behavior. Preschool staff will not separate a child from the group, except within the rule requirements for separation. Children will not be punished for lapses in toilet training.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our goal is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment for the children and staff in our preschool program. Our preschool will have access to the school nurse on duty for consultation and emergency care. Should a child become sick during the preschool session, the child will be separated from the class in a supervised area while parents are called for pick-up. If the child is injured and it is deemed necessary, the student will remain stationary and the school nurse and/or the appropriate medical personnel will be contacted immediately. If the child is severely ill or injured, staff will call 911.

### Required Paperwork

Each student must have a completed Health Care Summary within 30 days of enrollment and Child Care Immunization Record on file at the time of enrollment, per licensing regulations. In addition, the following forms are required by the first day of preschool:

- Family Information/Emergency Form
- Alternate Pickup/Carpool Authorization
- Consent to Share Health Information
- Parent Handbook Signage Page.

These forms are provided by the preschool. Please note, **the Health Care Summary must be signed by your health care provider.** If you have any questions or concerns specific to your child, please call the school office at 651-457-8550.

### Change of Contact Information

It is the parent's responsibility to notify Saint Joseph Preschool immediately of any change in name, address, telephone numbers and change of emergency contact information.

### Toileting

Children must be fully potty trained to attend Saint Joseph Catholic School. It is understood that accidents will occur occasionally, but if a consistent pattern of accidents occurs (three or more

accidents in a two-week time frame) the parent will be notified and asked to remove the child from attending preschool for two weeks or more until the accidents stop.

Saint Joseph Preschool is not licensed to care for children who are not toilet trained. Therefore, children may not wear pull-ups or diapers. Girls and boys should have some experience using a public toilet and must be able to wipe themselves and pull up their pants/shorts/skirts independently. Children are allowed to use the toilet any time they need to during the day, but they must be able to communicate their needs to the teachers.

It is understood that young children will have accidents which is why we ask every child to have a change of clothing in their backpack. However, if it becomes obvious that a child is not completely toilet trained, parents will be required to keep their child at home until toilet training is complete. If a child does not appear to be trained, the principal or teacher will contact the parents. If the child does not show progress toward toileting success, the child may not be able to continue in the program.

## **Medication**

In rare cases in which medication is necessary during the day, it will be administered by the school nurse. Medication will only be administered if it is prescribed by the physician with signed instructions, if the school has permission from the parents to administer medication, and it is provided in the original container. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with the school nurse and update the teacher as necessary. Do not send medicines with your child to keep in their backpack for self-medications such as cough drops and inhalers. These medicines will not be allowed unless supervised by the nurse.

## **Allergies/Food Intolerance**

Allergies present serious health concerns and are managed by our school nurse, the preschool staff, and the child's medical practitioner. All known allergies should be noted in the Health Information Form prior to attendance at preschool, or shared once parents are aware.

Food allergies have an additional level of concern for students eating at school. Please select snacks that are healthy, nut-free, and store-purchased snacks. **Please do not send sugary snacks.**

## **Food Allergy Policy**

Our preschool is sensitive to the needs of children with food allergies. Saint Joseph Catholic School and preschool facilities are designated as a "nut aware environment". Our preschool will work with families to minimize health risks for our students within the limits of our facility, staff responsibility, and educational programming.

## Allergy Documentation

In order to best ensure that a child with allergies does not ingest food that provides a health risk, all children with a food allergy are required to have a Food Allergy Plan for preschool. This standardized form is available from the preschool and must be signed by the medical provider. All Food Allergy Plans will include a photo of the child. These plans are posted in the classroom, and filed in both the master file as well as the Health & Safety Review Manual.

Parents are responsible for notifying the child's teacher regarding food or other allergies and/or diet restrictions upon the child's enrollment. The school must obtain documentation of any known allergy from a child's parent or guardian before admitting their child for care. Upon receiving this documentation, the school's principal and school operations manager will be responsible for carrying out the individual child care program plan review and assure that the plan is followed. All staff will review this plan.

A child's allergy information will be available at all times on site. A child's food allergy information will be readily available to a staff person in the area where food is prepared and served to the child.

## Food Allergy Procedures

1. A school nurse is on duty at Saint Joseph Catholic School and annually reviews all Food Allergy Plans. In addition, the nurse will be immediately contacted in a situation when a food allergy reaction is suspected. The preschool staff is trained in allergy risks as well as EpiPen use. In the event of an allergic reaction, Saint Joseph Catholic School will contact the child's parent or guardian as soon as possible in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. Saint Joseph Catholic School will call emergency medical services when an EpiPen is administered to a child in preschool.
2. In an effort to minimize allergen exposure, children will wash hands upon entering the classroom, after any bathroom visit, prior to snack time, and after snack time if the teacher has allergen concerns about the snack served to classmates.
3. Any medications required for implementation of the Food Allergy Plan, such as EpiPens, Benadryl or other medicines must be provided by the family, in the original container. Prescribed medication such as an EpiPen must be provided in a container that has the child's label on it. In addition, there should be two Epi Pens provided. Allergy medications are kept in a specially marked box in the child's classroom on the upper shelf of the teacher cabinets. All medications must be current and not expired. If we use an EpiPen in an emergency, the school will call 911.
4. If a child has a Food Allergy Plan, as prescribed by their physician, that child will only be

served snacks from his/her private supply of approved snacks that are provided by the parent. These snacks are provided by parents and marked with the child's name. The teacher will not serve other snacks brought in by other preschool families, even if they seemingly would not pose a health risk. The only exception is any special celebrations throughout the year such as our Thanksgiving Feast or Tea Party. In these circumstances, parents will be contacted by the classroom teacher and discuss approved foods for the event. Parents may continue to provide snacks from home during special themed celebration days.

5. While teachers are expected to use common sense, they are not responsible for reading product labels to ensure nut products or other allergens are not served to the children in the class. Teachers are responsible for supervising up to 20 preschool age children, and cannot guarantee proper screening for individual snacks.
6. All families receive a suggested snack list in August, which outlines many non-nut snacks. In addition, when a child with food allergies is in a class, the classroom teacher re-distributes this list within the first week of class, or as soon as the school is notified that food allergies exist. When providing snacks, we do not serve peanuts, trail mix, or peanut butter to minimize environmental exposure. To minimize the seriousness of ingestion of allergens, we believe our procedural commitment to serving a child with food allergies only allergy-safe snacks from the child's own snack supply provided by parents is the safest and most reliable procedure for the child. If deemed necessary by the school nurse, age-appropriate resources will be shared with the children, such as videos or books, to further educate the child's peers on food allergies. Parents will be alerted when this further training is provided to the preschool children.
7. If the child's allergy risk demands different procedures than outlined above, the parent, teacher, principal, and school nurse will meet to determine what accommodations could be made within the limits of the facility, staff responsibility and educational programming. The principal will review these recommendations prior to implementation. If procedures are labor intensive or the staff is unable to accommodate, the child may need to withdraw from the program.

## **Naps and Rest**

Children who are enrolled in Saint Joseph **Full-Day** program will participate in quiet activities each afternoon, but a formal naptime will not be required. Parents will be consulted on the nap or rest pattern(s) of their children, and our preschool will do our best to follow parent wishes for naps or rest in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families nap/rest policy.

Naps or rest will be provided in a quiet area that is supervised by preschool staff and physically separated from any children who are engaged in activity that may disrupt a napping or resting child.

Cots will be placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each cot. Cots are placed directly on the floor. A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes will not be required to remain on their cot. Cots are cleaned thoroughly after each use.

A cot-sized blanket will need to be supplied by each family for their child. The blanket must be washed weekly or when soiled or wet. Your child's blanket will be sent home each Friday and will need to be returned on Monday morning

## **Children who Become Sick or Injured During Program Hours**

Preschool staff will likely be the first to respond to any illness, injury or health emergency. In addition, a school nurse is available for consultation or assistance when needed.

If a child feels ill during the day, the teacher will evaluate the child and remove him/her from direct contact with the group, under staff supervision. Parents will be notified by the teacher or the main school office in case of illness or injury and may be asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.

## **First Aid**

Pediatric CPR and First Aid Training is provided to all preschool staff members within their first 90 days of working with children and are required to maintain certifications. Additionally, all staff will receive training on abusive head trauma (shaken baby syndrome) each year. Staff will also know the location of emergency numbers, emergency contacts, and Family Emergency Cards. Emergency procedures will be followed as necessary. Saint Joseph Catholic School retains the right to contact local paramedics and/or use ambulance transportation as deemed necessary.

Each classroom has a fully equipped first aid kit in the classroom. When treating injuries, the following guidelines are in place:

- Every abrasion must be washed with soap and water and a bandage should be applied
- In the case of bleeding, compresses should be applied until the bleeding stops. Teachers and aides will wear protective gloves.
- Bites must be washed with soap and water and an ice pack should be applied. If a bite breaks the skin, the principal and parents should be notified immediately.
- In case of serious injuries, such as a deep cut or an injury that is causing a child to be uncomfortable for a long period of time, parents should be contacted so they can bring their child to their primary physician.
- If a child stops breathing or sustains an injury such as a serious head injury such as a serious head injury or broken bone, staff should contact 911. Parents should then be called.

## Handling and Disposal of Bodily Fluids

Surfaces that come in contact with infectious body fluids must be cleaned and disinfected.

Blood-contaminated material must be disposed of in a plastic bag with a secure tie, and sharp items used for a child with special care needs must be disposed of in a “sharps container”, which is stored out of the reach of children.

## Sick Child Restriction/ Notification

Parents must notify the preschool within 24 hours when their child has contracted an infectious disease. This includes, but is not limited to strep throat, chicken pox, scabies, fifth’s disease, conjunctivitis (pink eye), influenza, head lice, and Covid..

In order to maintain a healthy environment for all children and staff, please follow this illness policy. Children may not attend class or extended care if they are not feeling well or exhibiting symptoms of an ongoing illness including the following:

- Harsh or persistent cough, sore throat
- Yellow or green discharge from nose
- Pink eye-students can return after first treatment or cleared by physician
- Rash-students should not return to school until they are checked by a physician
- Fever -students must be fever-free for 24 hours, unmedicated, before returning
- Vomiting- students should not return to school until 24 hours after final vomiting.
- Head lice -students may return to school but need to ensure there are no nits or live lice

## Communicable Disease Reporting

All families will be notified of an outbreak or exposure to an infectious or communicable disease through communication that is sent home. Students whose health would be adversely impacted because of compromised immune status or because they are choosing not to be immunized will be advised to remain out of school.

## Emergency Procedures

Saint Joseph Catholic School will conduct the required number of lockdown, fire and severe weather drills at regular intervals throughout the school year. All students, staff and visitors are required to participate in the drills when present in the building.

## Important Phone Numbers

The following phone numbers are posted in each classroom.

Police and Fire	911
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
Health Department	651-554-6100
Child Protection Services	651-554-6000
Department of Children, Youth, and Families, State Licensing	651-431-6015

## **Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting Policy**

**Minnesota State Law mandates reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect. Teachers, staff and administration of Saint Joseph Catholic School are mandatory reporters, and are required to report if they have knowledge of, or reasonable cause to believe, that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect.**

All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Children, Youth and Families Central Intake Line at 651-539-8222. Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county services agency (Dakota County 651-554-6000) or local law enforcement agencies (WSP Police 651-552-4200).

Due to the health and safety of the children, an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment by a staff person will immediately trigger proper notification to authorities; plus, an internal review to evaluate whether related policies and procedures were followed; if the policies and procedures were adequate; if there is need for additional staff training; if the reported event is similar to past events, and if there is a need for corrective action by the preschool to protect the health and safety of children. The internal review will be documented and provided to the state commissioner upon request. Based on the results of the internal review, the preschool will develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan. The principal is the primary person who will ensure the internal review and corrective action plan are completed. If the principal is suspected of involvement, the pastor will be responsible for the internal review and corrective action plan.

All preschool parents will receive a copy of the mandated reporting policy at the time of enrollment. The policy is available to families at any time [at this link](#).

## **Children with Special Needs**

Saint Joseph Catholic School strives to meet the needs of all children. Parents must discuss any language barrier or special physical, medical, emotional, or learning needs with the principal prior to registration.

Every attempt will be made to support a child with special needs. In the best interest of the child as well as the effective management of the overall preschool program, several criteria will determine if

a child can be appropriately served in our preschool program. These criteria include the needs of the class as a whole and the availability of appropriate staff to effectively meet the child's special needs. If the student's needs exceed the capacity of the preschool staff, parents will be notified so that alternate arrangements can be made.

### **Family Community Resources**

The preschool staff will work with all families to provide a resource listing for Early Childhood Screening. Saint Joseph Catholic School works closely with ISD 197 to assist families in completing screenings. Many schools require screening results for kindergarten registration, including Saint Joseph Catholic School.

### **Pets**

Recognizing the special needs of students and faculty/staff who suffer from asthma, allergies and related respiratory conditions, Saint Joseph School and Preschool restricts the presence of fur or feather-bearing animals in classrooms. Because we recognize that animals can enhance many science and discovery themes, presentations made by groups such as Dodge Nature Center, Minnesota Zoo, or Como Zoo are exempt from this policy with the principal's approval. Parents will be notified if animals will be present for learning opportunities.

A classroom pet can be appropriate for preschool classrooms. Any classroom pet must be a non-fur and non-feather bearing animal and be approved by the principal.

### **Tobacco-Free Environment**

Saint Joseph Catholic School buildings are in compliance with the 1975 Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act, and are designated as tobacco-free buildings.

# **COMMUNICATION AND PARENT INFORMATION**

### **Public Relations/Photography**

All families will be given a Photography/Video Release Form at the beginning of the year that gives permission for the child's image to be used on the website, presentations, displays and in printed publications. The child's name is never used. Only those children with a signed release form will have their picture used. Children will never be an occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity without written parental permission.

## Communication

Communication between home and school is critical to the success of your child's preschool experience. While we have formal communication systems in place, please know that you are encouraged to contact either teachers or the main office with questions or comments at any time. A contact list is included at the back of this handbook.

*\*If parents require a translator, please see the Principal to make appropriate arrangements.*

**Newsletters:** A monthly newsletter from the teacher will highlight programming, calendars, reminders and other news.

**Website:** Many forms and newsletters will be posted on the Saint Joseph School website ([school.sjwsp.org](http://school.sjwsp.org)).

**School Bags:** Teachers will send home projects and notes through the weekly folders, provided by Saint Joseph Preschool. Please check backpacks each day after preschool.

**Email:** When necessary and appropriate, teachers and the principal are encouraged to use email as an efficient and immediate way to communicate. Please note that staff rarely check emails during the school day so that they can be present to the needs of the children in the room, but will reply to emails within 24 hours. Please keep email addresses up to date with the teacher or Preschool office.

**School Directory:** As a service to our school and preschool families, a full school directory is distributed each fall to all Saint Joseph Catholic School families.

**Class List:** A classroom list of students and family contact information will be distributed at the beginning of each school year, including phone numbers and email addresses.

## Orientation

Our Preschool year begins with an orientation visit to the classroom. Information regarding orientation is communicated in August.

## Conferences

Preschool Conferences are held in the Fall and Winter and will be noted on the Preschool calendar. In-person Fall conferences are designed to establish a partnership between home and school and speak about adjustments at the beginning of the school year. Some preliminary assessments will have occurred prior to this conference. Spring conferences are optional and will focus on formal and

informal assessments of each child's growth. Depending upon the program, students will be assessed for cognitive, social/emotional, language, and motor development prior to these conferences. A written assessment of the child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development will be shared with parents at Fall and Spring Conferences.

Either parents or teachers can request additional conferences as the need arises. Because instructional time belongs to the children, please do not conference with the teacher without an appointment.

### **Non-custodial Parent Rights**

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to access and receive copies of school records and other information, to attend conferences and be informed about their child's welfare, progress and status. Saint Joseph Catholic School is not required to provide separate conferences for non-custodial parents.

### **Grievance Procedures**

A timely and open line of communication is highly valued at Saint Joseph Catholic School. In addition, grievances must be addressed respectfully and effectively. Parents and/or guardians use the following procedure for bringing grievances forward for discussion/resolution:

1. If there is an issue or concern related to a classroom situation, address it first with your child's teacher. An appointment should be set up that does not interfere with the care and supervision of children. If this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, please contact the principal.
2. If the issue or concern is related to policy or administration, address the issue or concern with the principal. If this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, please contact the pastor.
3. The Pastor will be involved in grievance resolution after earlier attempts have not been successful.

# **GOVERNANCE**

### **Administrative Structure**

The Code of Canon Law states that the pastor is the shepherd of the parish and carries out the duties of teaching, governing and sanctifying. Therefore, the pastor is the chief administrator of the parish and school and represents the parish in all juridical matters.

The principal works in tandem with the pastor and is his designee in the leadership and management of the school and its programs. The principal is the executive officer and chief financial officer of the school. The principal has final authority and responsibility for all preschool and school programs and personnel.

### **School Advisory Council**

The School Advisory Council acts in an advisory capacity to the pastor and the principal in matters involving policy, budget, goals and long-range planning for the school and preschool. Monthly meetings are open to parents and parishioners.

## **VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

### **Volunteers**

Parent volunteers enrich the preschool experience. We welcome parents to share their time, talents, hobbies, and careers in the classroom. Please talk to your teacher if you have an idea to incorporate into the curriculum planning. In addition, parents may volunteer to support special classroom programs, activities, or field trips.

As mentioned, in order to be eligible to volunteer in any capacity in the preschool or school program, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis requires all volunteers to submit a background check (at the school's expense), sign a Code of Conduct, and be trained through the Archdiocesan Virtus program. Information will be provided in the registration packets.

### **Visitors**

Parents of enrolled students may visit during hours of operation per Minnesota Statute, 245A, subdivision 15. If you are coming to the Preschool after normal drop off times, please check in with the school office, as the preschool doors will be locked during the program hours.

Families will be notified in advance of special opportunities for parents or other special visitors to join our classroom for birthdays and other celebrations, as well as volunteer opportunities

## **LICENSING**

Our preschool program is licensed by the State of Minnesota. If there are questions or concerns about our preschool program and its licensing status, contact the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Licensing at 651-431-6015. Our preschool is licensed to

provide a preschool program designed for children ages 3, 4, and 5. Classroom capacity, as determined by licensing, is 20 students with a student/staff ratio of 10:1. When two preschool classrooms are in operation, the total student capacity is 40.

## CONTACT US

ADMINISTRATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Kyle Rickbeil, Principal	651-457-8550	<a href="mailto:kyrickbeil@stjosephwsp.org">kyrickbeil@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Fr. Luke Marquard, Pastor	651-457-2781	<a href="mailto:fr.marquard@churchofstjoseph.org">fr.marquard@churchofstjoseph.org</a>
Lisa Wrobel, School Operations Manager	651-457-8550	<a href="mailto:liwrobel@stjosephwsp.org">liwrobel@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Patrick Menke, Parish Administrator	651-457-2781	<a href="mailto:patrick.menke@churchofsstjoseph.oeg">patrick.menke@churchofsstjoseph.oeg</a>

LEAD TEACHERS	PHONE	EMAIL
Kirsten Abbott	651-789-8300	<a href="mailto:kiabbott@stjosephwsp.org">kiabbott@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Peg Dierberger	651-789-8300	<a href="mailto:pedierberger@stjosephwsp.org">pedierberger@stjosephwsp.org</a>

ASSISTANT TEACHERS	PHONE	EMAIL
Theresa Dierberger (aftercare)		
Maria Flores		<a href="mailto:maflores@stjosephwsp.org">maflores@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Danielle Goossens		<a href="mailto:dagoossens@stjosephwsp.org">dagoossens@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Tammy Hingst		<a href="mailto:tahingst@stjosephwsp.org">tahingst@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Betsy Joyce		<a href="mailto:bejoyce@stjosephwsp.org">bejoyce@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Madelyne Mernin		<a href="mailto:mamernin@stjosephwsp.org">mamernin@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Julie Smith		<a href="mailto:jusmith@stjosephwsp.org">jusmith@stjosephwsp.org</a>
Virginia Stoffel		<a href="mailto:vistoffel@stjosephwsp.org">vistoffel@stjosephwsp.org</a>



# Saint Joseph

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

### 2025-2026

The Parent Handbook is also located on the school’s website ([school.sjwsp.org](http://school.sjwsp.org)). Please take the time to read it, and sign this acknowledgement form and return it prior to the first day of class

#### For Parents and Guardians

*Please sign that you have read and agree to the following:*

*I have read, understand, and agree to follow the 2025-26 Saint Joseph Catholic School Preschool Handbook.*

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**Parent/Guardian Name (Print)**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature**

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**Date**

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**Parent/Guardian Name (Print)**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature**

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**Date**