



ST. LOUIS
— CATHOLIC SCHOOL —

St. Louis Preschool

2020-2021 School Year Preschool Handbook (Includes Modifications/Changes due to COVID-19)

5192 Shady Grove Road
Memphis, Tn 38117
Early Childhood Office Phone: (901) 255-1909
Main School Office Phone: (901)-255-1900
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stlouismemphis.org

St. Louis Catholic School Welcome!!

The faculty, administration, and staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to St. Louis Catholic School. We are so happy that you are a part of our program! We want to take time to assure you that we are committed to the excellence of your child's spiritual, physical, and intellectual growth. Our teachers are all licensed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Regular office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The preschool phone number is 901-255-1909, the school office number is 901-255-1900 and the school fax number is 901-328-9798.

Mission Statement

St. Louis Catholic School is committed to quality education in the spirit of Christ in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Partnering with families and our community, we prepare our students for the future through faith formation and academic excellence.

Policies of St. Louis Preschool

Requirements

A child that is entering the PK program must be 3 years old on or before August 15th. A child that is entering the JK program must be 4 years old on or before August 15th.

All children must be potty trained.

All students are required by state law to have an up to date record on file of their immunizations. A signed doctor's statement is required before a student returns to school when he/she has had a communicable disease.

Distance Learning / On-Campus Learning

The Early Childhood Center will offer distance learning for those who are unsure or uncomfortable with an on campus learning experience. Should a preschool family choose distance learning, they will be choosing that for a full month. For the beginning of school, the choice would include August-September. Should a Kindergarten family choose distance learning, they may choose to return to school after our first nine weeks has ended. The difference between the two stems from grading, assessments, etc. that take place in Kindergarten in the first nine weeks.

If a family chooses on-campus learning and within the month (preschool) or nine weeks (kindergarten) begins to feel uneasy, they may switch to the distance learning method. If necessary, you will make a new choice at the end of the month or nine weeks as to how you wish to continue.

The Early Childhood Center will use Seesaw as our main platform of communication during both distance and on-campus learning. Your classroom teacher will offer helpful training tips for the parents on this app. We will also utilize a private group on facebook- St. Louis Early Childhood Center- that you can join to stay abreast of things happening at school.

Masks

Our Early Childhood Center will ask for all of our children to provide at least four masks. One of these will be worn as they enter our campus and used throughout the day. Three of these will need to go into a labeled Ziplock bag that will be kept in their backpack as extras if needed. The school will provide extras if needed as well.

They will be asked to wear these throughout the day. There will be times when they are in a secure, stable socially distanced environment where they can take a break from the mask. We do understand that this could prove difficult to maintain and will provide many mask breaks throughout the day. We will do our very best to keep their masks on them when it is important to do so.

Safety and Security

The Early Childhood Center will be open from **7:30-8:30** each morning. Only our emergency doors will be utilized and open during this time. To maintain a stable, safe environment for our classroom families, no visitors/parents/volunteers etc. will be allowed into any school building during the day. The Preschool classes' emergency doors will reopen at **2:10** in the afternoon. The Kindergarten classes' emergency doors will reopen for those with siblings in preschool at **2:40**.

Arrival

This year we will offer staggered entry times from 7:30-8:30 in 10 minute increments. You will be offered a sign up to decide which time suits your family best. If the time that works best for you is unavailable, you can let us know and we will do all we can to accommodate your preference.

Drop off of Children

The ECC will be entering through each classroom's emergency door. A classroom teacher will be at the doors to help sign your child in. A temperature check will be completed at the door. If your child is a sibling to an older St. Louis student, they will receive a temperature check in the car with all of the family. Those students will receive a slip showing they have had a check so that they do not have to be scanned an additional time. When waiting for entry into your classroom, parents and children will stand socially distanced with a mask on. We ask that you please only send one adult to drop off each morning.

Dismissal

For Preschool children: The doors will open at 2:10 each day. There will be 10 minute intervals for dismissal from 2:10-2:50. There will be a sign up for these spots in much the same way as our arrival. You will line up outside the emergency doors where you entered and wait for your child. We ask that as soon as you have your child, you make your way to the car remembering our social distancing guidelines.

For Kindergarten children: If you have a sibling in Preschool, you can wait between 2:40-2:50 outside the Kindergarten door where you entered to receive your child. If you do not have a sibling in Preschool, you will need to use the carpool line. Our carpool line will begin moving at 3:00. Children will be socially distanced under the breezeway and wait for their car. We ask that **no parent walk up to the breezeway to get your child.**

For those going to aftercare, they will follow aftercare procedures at the end of the day.

Visitors

Unfortunately, during this time we cannot allow any visitors to enter our building as we are creating a stable, safe environment among our classroom families.

Health and Safety

For the sake of all of our children, if a child becomes ill at school, the parent or guardian will be notified and asked to pick up the child **immediately. A child must be SYMPTOM AND FEVER FREE for 72 hours before returning to school.** This will be a very strict policy this year. If your child is not feeling well, we ask that you please keep them home. As per school policy this year...

Stay Home When Appropriate.

- Employees and students who are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19, or recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 should stay home. CDC guidelines on return to school/work will be followed.
- Anyone sick with COVID-19 or exposed to someone who has COVID should follow CDC guidelines on return to school/work.
 - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html

Rest Mats

For our preschoolers, a 2 inch folding foam mat will be provided for each child. The actual mats will be sanitized each day and your child will have his/her own labeled mat. We require our students to use a "Happi-Nappi" mat cover. These can be purchased through the school at a cost of \$18.95. **Please label this mat cover.** These will be sent home each day.

Our kindergarten students will also rest each day. They will need a beach towel or a small blanket that will be sent home each day.

Drinks

Because we will not be using the water fountains or shared pitchers, we ask that you send in one of the following types of cups for the day. If you feel that your child might finish that drink during the day, we are happy to refill or you are welcome to send in two. The links for the cups follow. One is a Thermos brand and the other is a Contigo brand.

Thermos Water Bottle or Contigo Water Bottles

<https://www.thermos.com/kids/kids-water-bottles.html>

<https://www.gocontigo.com/contigo-kids/autospout-water-bottles/>

Snack

The ECC classes will have a snack time every day. Please be sure to provide your child with a **nutritious** snack item each day and a drink. Snack time is a short allotment of time each day, please send a small amount of food for this time frame. **Please send in your “snack” item separately from your lunch.** We also ask that you consider sending both snack and lunch in **easy open containers**.

Lunch

All children in the ECC will eat inside their classrooms. Our preschool lunches need to be sent from home. **Please do not forget to label ALL containers, lunch boxes, etc.** Please try and send lunches and containers that are manageable for your child. “Lunchables” that require assembly are unfortunately not acceptable. They take pride in their independence and this is something we will work to foster throughout the year.

Kindergarten lunch can be purchased through the cafeteria. It will be a boxed lunch option that will include the plate lunch for the day. You are also welcome to send a lunch from home.

Birthdays

During this altered time, we are eliminating birthday treats of any kind. We promise to make your child feel special! We will celebrate him/her at school during the day in a way that does not involve products arriving from home.

Communication to Parents

Your child will be provided with a “Take-Home Folder.” This folder must be returned to school each day in your child’s backpack. Please empty the folder each afternoon; it will contain your child’s work, projects and/or notes from the school office or the ECC. It will also have your child’s “daily conduct form” inside. Please initial this form each day and send it back in with the folder. You can also find general information on our homepage at stlouismemphis.org.

As mentioned previously, we will be using another important form of communication between students and parents, an app called Seesaw.

Tuition

St. Louis has contracted with FACTS Management Company to help us manage our tuition payment program. All families are required to enroll with FACTS to make tuition payments. Tuition can be paid through FACTS over a 10 month period beginning in July 1, 2020 and ending April 1, 2021.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please label **ALL** items belonging to your child. We ask that you please send your child in easy on/off clothing. Tight buttons, rompers that are one piece outfits, and belts make our many trips to the restroom more difficult. While we do not have a uniform, we do require that your child wear “tennis shoe” type shoes. We no longer allow flip flops, jellies, or sandals. Keds, Natives, or other tennis shoes are acceptable. **We ask that you also pack a seasonal change of clothes in a large Ziploc bag inside his/her backpack.** This will help in the case of accidents or spills.

Inclement Weather

The closing of the school due to inclement weather will be decided by the Diocesan School Office and will be announced on all television stations. We will follow the announcement for the parochial schools. You will also receive a phone call/text at your house and/or mobile phone. You can also check our home page, stlouismemphis.org, for information on closings.

Discipline Policies in Preschool

Preschoolers committing serious offenses (i.e. fighting, disrespect toward a teacher or staff member, foul language, biting, spitting) that require immediate consequences may be asked to stay home for a day or more (depending on the severity of the offense.) Students who bite and leave a mark on another child will be sent home for the day.

Parent Conferences and Skills Assessments

A Parent-Teacher Conference will be offered to you in October and again in December. If necessary, individual conferences are arranged whenever the parents or teachers see the need. To insure privacy and confidentiality, no conferences, no matter how short, will take place upon arrival or dismissal with children present.

Two Skills Assessments will be conducted. They will be sent home at the end of the first semester and at the end of the second semester. In addition, a Brigance test is administered mid-year to all of our Preschool students.

Important to Note

This is an ever changing world we are in right now and any and all of these procedures are subject to change. We appreciate your support, suggestions, and concerns during this time. Now, more than ever, we are a team. Please know the communication line is open on our end. We truly value your thoughts. We are going to do absolutely everything we can to keep your children safe, allow them time to laugh and be children, and teach them so that they will continue to grow educationally as well as emotionally. We will comfort them, laugh with them, and teach them that even through crazy times, God is with us. He will guide us and watch over us and He will be a part of our every day.

Other Frequently Asked Questions...

1. Will hugs and comforting be allowed from faculty/staff to children?

Yes! While we will do our best to keep socially distanced as much as possible, there are times when a little one just needs a hug. We are going to do all we can to create a stable "family" environment in the classroom that will make those comforting hugs safe for the babies.

2. Will we have circle time and centers? How will "learning through play" be utilized?

Yes! We will have both in a modified way. "Learning through play" will be our trickiest thing to tackle. Circle time will still be here, just in a new spread out way- no circle. But the skills/songs taught will still be there. Centers are a different thing. The kids will still be able to laugh with each other and play. They will just have a new way of doing this. Right now, our main focus is the safety of the children. We are steadily researching and finding new unique ways to keep our babies active, safe, learning, and most importantly happy.

3. Will the ECC teachers have on clear masks so the students can see their expressions, etc?

We are researching masks for our teachers that will not only provide protection, but will allow the children to see our smiles. We understand and agree that this is a super important thing for us to do.

4. Will they still be able to get their "sillies" out throughout the day?

Yes! For sure we will get our sillies out. We will be able to dance, be silly, and move all while maintaining distance between each other. This is something that will have to be taught. And this will be a time when a mask is a necessity.

5. I have heard they will have lap desks instead of tables and chairs. Is this true?

Right now, our main goal is creating enough space in a classroom that provides an acceptable amount of room to socially distance. Setting up our rooms to maintain this leads to removing tables from the classrooms. Every room will have a few tables/chairs and other important furniture. We are lucky to have fairly large rooms that will provide us with some additional space. Every child will have a lap desk that will be their spot for lunch, snack, and whole group work. They will each have carpet underneath them during these times. The lap desks not only provide space, they provide a safer way to keep germs to ourselves as they will have the same specific desk each day. There will also be times that within a classroom, children are grouped to be either at a table/chair setting for an activity, going outside to get fresh air, and other activities. A picture of the lap desk is below.



Dear Parents,

A strong foundation in early education is the basis for learning. Our preschool focuses on making learning exciting and fun for our students.

Our mathematics series that will be used is **Everyday Mathematics**. Our curriculum helps to “enhance student achievement and create life-long mathematical thinkers.” It incorporates music, songs, dramatic play, and many hands-on manipulatives.

We will be engaging in a **STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) curriculum that will advance our skills in these areas. This will include a thematic unit each quarter for all of our classes. It will also include our “Cardinal Crops” garden that all students (PK-8th grade) will have a hand in creating and maintaining.

Our language arts curriculum is one that will be considered a “Balanced Literacy” method. This is a blend of “whole language” (thematic) and “phonics” instruction. Together these two approaches will provide our pre-emergent readers with a strong stepping stone into their next school year. We will use **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum** and **Frog Street Press** as well. Phonemic awareness is the ability to understand that spoken words are made up of individual sounds called phonemes, and it’s one of the best early predictors for reading success. Heggerty helps us teach and reinforce this daily. Frog Street’s Alphabet Collection, Sing and Read CDs, and their Literacy Program Cards provide engaging and interactive learning that both motivate and educate.

Our religion curriculum will follow the **God Made the World** Series and will touch on all the ways we are made special by God and all the things that He has made special for us. We pray daily in the morning, at noon, and before snack and lunch. We will visit the church and have visits from Father Keith, Sister Yosefa, and the other priests at St. Louis Church. We will also have a short daily devotional.

We are required by the Tennessee Department of Education to include a Personal Safety Curriculum. **The Talking About Touching Program** is the program we will be using. This teaches children skills that will help keep them safe from dangerous or abusive situations. Children will learn how to ask for help when they need it. This program is available to you if you are interested in reviewing it.

We offer **Library** with Chris Payne, **MusikTime** with Cheri Wooster, and **Physical Education** with Margaret Schauwecker. Technology time is provided through **Computer Explorers**. This program consists of hands-on STEM activities. We also incorporate the use of Ipad, computers, and SmartBoards on a daily basis. The JK (5day) and the PK (5day) classes will participate in **Spanish** with Annie Cervetti. The JK (5 day) classes will participate in **YogaKids** with Helen Anne DiMeglio. The PK (5day) class will attend yoga for our second semester.

Each day your child will bring home a take-home folder that will tell of his/her daily conduct and any other special news of the day. Your child’s daily learning objectives will be displayed outside of your child’s classroom each day. Each month you will receive a calendar and a newsletter from your child’s teacher which will further detail each objective, event, and developmental goal for that month. Finally, you will receive a skills and objectives assessment twice a year. These will be given out in the middle and end of the year. All of these together will give you a very clear picture of what your child is working to achieve during their time with us and how they are doing at obtaining these goals.

Sincerely,
Kendall Lucchesi
Preschool Director

Teddi Niedzwiedz
Principal