

**Sts. Joseph and John  
Preschool  
Handbook  
2023-2024**



**12580 Pearl Road  
Strongsville, Ohio 44136  
(440) 238-4877**

Welcome to Sts. Joseph and John Preschool! Thank you for sending your child to our school. We appreciate the trust and confidence you have given Sts. Joseph and John Preschool which strives to develop mind, body, and soul.

Our Handbook includes basic information, policies and procedures of our program. To operate our school effectively, we ask that you read and become familiar with the Handbook. Please take the time to read it carefully and refer to it throughout the year.

We are very proud of our Catholic School. Sts. Joseph and John School is an extension of your role as the primary educator of your child. This being the case, it is essential that you be exemplary in the practice of your faith. Regular attendance at Mass is encouraged, along with participation in school and parish activities.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Our program will place an emphasis on the love and teaching of Jesus. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know. We look forward to working with you and your child as we begin their first stage of Catholic Education. God bless you and your family.

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# Mission Statement

Sts. Joseph and John School  
lives the values and teachings of our  
Catholic faith,  
serves as Jesus served and  
encourages lifelong learning.

The first years of life are of vital importance to a child's growth and development. Foundations are laid which influence the ability of a child to accept himself/herself, relate to others and respond positively to the environment. Family relationships provide a young child with the best model for developing attitudes, values and appropriate behavior. Interactions with other adults and children are extremely important and promote ways for a child to relate to the world around him/her.

Early childhood education provides the transition from home to a school atmosphere. Educational research indicates that these early years are crucial for learning, and in fact, form the basis for all future learning.

A Catholic Preschool program serves to provide a creative learning environment for the young child. Interaction with other children and adults, in an atmosphere of Christian love and concern, promotes the healthy development of each child. Learning experiences and play activities encourage spiritual, intellectual, social and physical growth.

The child should:

1. Develop a positive self-image and acknowledge his/her self-worth.
2. Develop basic social skills.
3. Increase independence.
4. Develop a trust in adults other than his/her parents/guardians.
5. Enjoy being part of a group and accept the need to share and cooperate.
6. Respect the rights of others and defend his/her own rights.
7. Develop the desire to learn.
8. Become aware of the fact that he/she is a child of God and will grow in His love.
9. Attend school on a regular basis.

## **DROP OFF and PICK UP PROCEDURE**

The morning class begins at 8:00am and dismisses at 10:30am. The afternoon class begins at 11:15 am and dismisses at 1:45 pm. Please pull up in front of "Door B" (along Pearl Road) in the driveway heading North (toward the veterinary office). Display your pick up name sign in the window. The classroom teacher(s) will meet your child at your car upon arrival and will bring your child out to your car at the end of class.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

Racial Non-Discrimination Policies:

The Sts. Joseph and John Preschool recruits and admits students of any race, color, gender, or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or ethnic origin in the administration of its education programs.

## REGISTRATION POLICY

Applicants will be accepted in the following order:

1. Siblings of children already enrolled at Sts. Joseph and John School. Furthermore, siblings of St. Joseph and St. John will always be given admission priority.
2. Children of registered and active parishioners of St. Joseph / St. John Neumann Church.\*
3. Alumni - Children of Sts. Joseph and John School Alumni.
4. Children of registered and active parishioners of other Catholic parishes, if space is available. These children and their siblings are NOT guaranteed future admission priority to Sts. Joseph and John School.
5. All others interested in a Catholic Preschool education and willing to participate in the full curriculum of the program. These children and their siblings are NOT guaranteed future admission priority to Sts. Joseph and John School.

\*An active parishioner is one who participates weekly in the Sunday liturgy, contributes regularly to support their parish, and participates in church as well as school functions.

At the time of registration, the following documents are required:

- Birth certificate
- Baptismal certificate
- Record of current physical examination, including immunizations and health forms
- Custody papers, if applicable
- Registration fee

## PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

Preschool classes will begin in September and end in May. Please follow the Preschool calendar for vacations, holidays, conference days, etc.

**If the Strongsville City Schools are closed for inclement weather or an emergency situation, Sts. Joseph and John School and Preschool will also be closed.**

## CURRICULUM

Our Preschool follows the Ohio Department of Education Content Standards, which are aligned with the Diocesan Graded Course of Study.

A good Preschool program promotes the development of mind, body and soul of young children. The curriculum should not be centered on very specific subject areas, but rather it should be developed using a “hands on” approach to learning in general. Multi-sensory activities that enhance the total development of the children are planned in a sequential manner that follows a theme or is part of a unit.

## **Components**

**Religion** is an integral part of the Catholic Preschool Program. It is the preparation time for more formal instruction in the years ahead. Religion is the development of a positive self-image in relationship to a loving God. This basis for a deep love of God comes from the examples set by the family and spiritual life of the parish community. A child’s sense of God comes from the warm atmosphere of love and acceptance in the Preschool environment where the child learns about God’s wonderful world. Classroom prayer prepares him/her to participate in the celebrations of the Church.

**Language** is the development of communication skills that enable a child to share his world with others. At the Preschool level, these skills include listening, speaking and thinking. Transferring thoughts into words is the primary skill upon which future language development is based. Learning experiences that promote an understanding of the sense of self, help the child express his/her thoughts and feeling in various ways. An awareness of the five senses will stimulate a child’s curiosity as to the different ways his/her body receives information about life around him/her. Visual discrimination and memory and auditory discrimination and memory are important readiness skills that can be taught through play activities. Listening to and sharing stories, poetry and finger plays enhance the love of language.

**Math Readiness** at the Preschool level involves the development of cognitive skills. Piaget calls the way in which a child perceives the relationship between two objects “logico – math knowledge.” This knowledge comes from an understanding of colors and shapes, quantitative concepts such as size differences, basic counting skills through practical application, classifying, forming sets and recognizing numerals. These concepts are taught through manipulative and play experience.

**Motor Skills** are a vital part of the young child’s development and are crucial to the learning skills he/she will need in the future. The Preschool child learns with his/her body. These motor skills are not to be overlooked in the favor of cognitive skills.

**Gross Motor:** Body coordination, as appropriate to the child’s physical development, is enhanced through large muscle activities of walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping and bike riding. Arm-eye coordination is attained by throwing a large ball or beanbag, catching and aiming at a target. Rhythm and movement provides an outlet of creative expression and the joy of using the body in dance, games and organized play.

**Fine Motor:** Eye-hand coordination is developed through manipulating clay, stringing beads, hammering, pasting, coloring, painting, pouring, lacing and using scissors. Dexterity and strength of the small muscles are developing skills that enhance reading readiness. Use of the natural hand preference is observed and encouraged, although dominance is not always achieved yet. Eye tracking is another fine motor activity that promotes the left-to-right progression skill required for reading readiness.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Sts. Joseph and John Preschool's daily schedule strives to promote mind, body and soul, as well as instill in each child a sense of curiosity, creativity and love for learning. This is done through both quiet and active play, and includes individual, small group and large group activities.

Three Year Olds – The program is held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00am to 10:30am and 11:15am to 1:45pm. The Four Year Olds program is held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 8:00am to 10:30am and 11:15am to 1:45pm.

Arrival – Opening Exercises  
Circle Time  
Exploration Time  
Story Time  
Snack Time  
Religion  
Music/Group Art  
Active Stretch/Outdoor Play  
Dismissal

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Admission**

Children are enrolled in the Preschool program beginning in December preceding the new school year.

All children must be 3 or 4 years of age by August 31st and must be toilet-trained. Children are enrolled in the program based on the Sts. Joseph and John School admission policy.

**ALL MEDICAL INFORMATION FORMS MUST BE TURNED IN PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. NO CHILD WILL BE PERMITTED IN SCHOOL WITHOUT THESE FORMS.**

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is due monthly and paid September through May. Tuition is paid through our FACTS system.

Tuition and Fees for the 2023-2024 school year are as follows:

Registration Fee/Supply Fee \$125.00 registration fee

Tuition	\$140.00 - 3 year olds program/monthly - \$1,400.00 yearly
	\$170.00 - 4 year olds program/monthly - \$1700.00 yearly
	\$55.00 - 4 year olds program w/Enrichment-\$550.00 yearly

### **Classroom Roster**

A roster will be prepared annually for each group of children in the program. This will include the name, address and telephone number of each child and parents/guardians.

This will be prepared only after each parent/guardian has signed a statement indicating whether they desire to be included in the roster. This roster will be available upon request and will be furnished to no other persons but the parents/guardians and school administration.

### **School Orientation and Separation**

We are aware and sensitive to the fact that for young children it is sometimes hard to do new things such as separate from parents. Therefore, we will provide a phasing-in experience to allow for a positive adjustment and beginning school experience.

The first day of school, children will arrive with their parents/guardians at the scheduled time. They will visit the classrooms together, meet with the teacher and participate in some classroom activities. Your positive attitude and support will also help your child to feel comfortable and positive.

### **Separation**

Tips for parents/guardians:

- As the beginning of Preschool approaches, be low-key and matter-of-fact with your child about the first day of school. Over-stimulating the child with lots of exciting talk about school can actually increase his/her anxiety.
- Always say goodbye to your child. Don't sneak away once they are busy with an activity.
- Tell your child, "I'll be back after you play awhile and have a snack, then we will spend some time together."
- Mixed feelings about your child's first day are normal. You may feel like crying even though you are excited about this big step.
- Some children separate easily and barely have the need for a quick hug and "Goodbye".

- Delayed reactions occur sometimes when, after an apparently easy separation, the child realizes that this is a regular routine. He/she may balk at going to school, but try to handle it in a firm, positive manner. Letting him/her stay home will only prolong the problem.
- Often a child will adjust by the third day of the week at school, say Wednesday or Friday class, but after four days at home will be reluctant to come back the next week. This will eventually work itself out when the child becomes accustomed to the routine.

### **School Safety**

To provide a safe environment for all of our students, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. Doors will not be propped open. This breaches school security for all students and staff members.
2. If you arrive at a time other than those times listed, please park in the front parking area, and enter the building through the main school entrance, Door "A", and "buzz in" for entrance. This procedure is enforced for all students attending Sts. Joseph and John School. You will be asked to sign our visitor log in the school office and wear a Visitor Badge.
3. If someone else is picking up your child, permission by the parents/guardians must be given to the teacher in writing.

### **What to Bring to School**

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing. Tennis shoes are recommended. For safety reasons, no dangling earrings are permitted. Send your child to school with the following items:

- School book bag (to be supplied by the school prior to the first day of school).
- A daily snack, juice box/water and napkin packed in a **paper bag**. This makes for easy clean up and disposal.

### **What Not to Bring to School**

- It is not necessary to send a change of clothing. We will provide clothing if necessary.
- Please do not let your child bring in any toys from home unless it is designated a Show-And-Tell day.
- Lunch boxes
- Winter boots

**Snacks:** Each student will be responsible for bringing their own snack and drink to school every day. Snacks should be brought in a brown lunch bag marked with the child's name. Please try to send nutritious snacks (fruits and vegetables) rather than candy, etc. If your child has any allergies, please be sure to notify us through the medical form.

### **Absences**



When your child is absent from school, the parent/guardian must phone in the absence to the Sts. Joseph and John School Office at (440) 238-4877, ext. 15.

If a child is picked up early from school, the request must be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All Preschool staff members are alert to potential hazards. No child is ever left alone or unsupervised. Children will be greeted at the car by the teacher or aide and turned over to the parents/guardians at the end of the school day.

The school nurse/and or health aide will be available if needed throughout the school day. The school nurse, health aide and our preschool staff are trained in first aid, CPR and communicable diseases. In case of illness, a child will be removed from the classroom. The aide will walk the child to the clinic. If the parents/guardians are needed, you will be called. Please make prior arrangements to have someone care for your child if he/she becomes ill at school.

In case of an emergency, the parents/guardians will be called and asked to come to the school. If it is a serious accident, 911 will be called. We will take your child to the nearest hospital. The Principal, Preschool Director, or a staff member will accompany your child and take your signed permission slip. You will be called immediately and asked to meet us at the hospital.

Medical Emergency Release Forms for each child are kept on file. These forms have the pediatricians' telephone number, emergency telephone numbers, a list of the child's allergies, ongoing medication, previous hospitalizations and permission to obtain emergency care.

The teacher and the classroom aide are sensitive to the child's behavior and actions. They will observe the children for any health problems and refer them to our nurse who will notify you.

Please do not send a child to school unless his/her temperature has been normal for a minimum of 24 hours. Also, do not send a child with a cold, stomachache, vomiting, diarrhea, runny nose or earache.

## **Medication Policies and Procedures**

Prior to administering any medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement, the preschool shall:

Secure the written instructions of a licensed physician or licensed dentist as appropriate for the administration of any medication, food supplement, modified diet, or fluoride supplement.

Each time medication is administered, a written record or log including dosage, date and time shall be made. The record or log shall be kept on file for one year.

Forms will be kept on file for one year. We have regular fire, tornado and lock down drills. Fire safety is part of our curriculum.

Hand washing before meals and after restroom breaks are stressed. The teacher and the aide always wash their hands before handling food.

Please notify us of any changes in your place of employment or residence. We must have a working emergency number at all times.

### **Management of Communicable Diseases**

(B) The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

(1) The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

(2) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately **isolated** and **discharged** to his parent or guardian:

- (a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period);
- (b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- (c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
- (d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
- (e) Conjunctivitis;
- (f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
- (g) Untreated infected skin patch(es);
- (h) Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool;
- (i) Stiff neck; or
- (j) Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation;
- (k) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;
- (l) Vomiting.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately **isolated** from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for communicable disease symptoms listed in paragraph (B) (2) of this rule as well as the following:

- (a) Unusual spots or rashes;
- (b) Elevated temperature.

If a child has more than a runny or stuffy nose, he/she should not come to school. Please follow these guidelines when your child is ill.

- Please keep your child home 24 hours after the break of a fever.
- If your child is sick during the night or before school, please keep him/her home.
- If you suspect strep throat and have a culture taken, please do not send your child to school until you receive the negative result of the culture.

The child will be isolated in the nurse's office until the parent arrives. Children may return to school after symptoms are gone or with a note from the doctor, depending upon the illness. Please inform us if your child becomes ill with a contagious illness. Notes will be sent home with the other children to warn parents of contact and incubation of communicable diseases.

#### **List of the Most Common Communicable Diseases**

**Chicken Pox** – Fever, rash appears in the form of small pimples which, in a day, fill up a clear fluid. The incubation period is between 14-21 days. Isolation period of at least 7 days.

**Measles (Rubella)** – Cold in head, feverishness, watery eyes, sneezing. Blotchy red rash appears on forehead, face and body. The incubation period is between 7-14 days. Isolation period of at least 5 days from time rash appears.

**German Measles (Rubella –3 day measles)** – Mild measles symptoms (blotchy, fine red rash on face and abdomen). Swollen glands, particularly in back of neck. The incubation period is between 14-21 days. Communicable for 48 hours after rash appears.

**Mumps** – Fever, swelling on side of face and jaws as glands become swollen and tender. The incubation period is between 12-26 days. Isolation period until swelling of glands has disappeared and patient has recovered.

**Scarlet Fever and Streptococcal Sore Throat** – Fever, headache, sore throat, vomiting. A fine rash appears with scarlet fever. The incubation period is 2-5 days. Isolation is required for 48 hours after start of antibiotic treatment. May be re-admitted to school upon written statement that the child has been treated. The name of the physician should be included.

**Impetigo** – Blister-like lesions that later develop into crusted pus-like sores that are irregular in outline. Incubation is 2-5 days, occasionally longer. Impetigo is communicable from the onset of symptoms until sores are healed. Child will be excluded from school until adequately treated and sores are no longer draining.

**Conjunctivitis** – Redness and swelling of the membranes on one or both eyes with burning or itching, sensitivity to light, and a discharge. Immediate medical treatment. Exclusion from school until clinical recovery. Communicable during course of infection and until discharges from infected mucous membranes cease.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Sts. Joseph and John Preschool curriculum is designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences for the child, and positive interactions between adults and children.

The goal of our Preschool Program is to help each child develop a feeling of positive self-worth and confidence. Therefore, discipline will be approached from the realization that children need to learn self-control and to be able to internalize rules of behavior. Clear rules of behavior and clear directions for compliance shall be established at the beginning of the year. Positive feedback will be given to the child for following the classroom rules.

The rules of the Preschool will be for safety, general health and social interaction. A comfortable atmosphere and consistent daily schedule will provide each child with a sense of security and confidence. Each child's individual rights shall be respected at all times.

The following list specifies the strategies for discipline and guidance:

- Clear, consistent, and reasonable limits will be set, and then followed through with enforcing these limits.
- The rules and direction for guidance will be done in a positive way.
- The child's positive behavior will be emphasized.
- The uncooperative child shall be directed to another activity.
- When a child's negative behavior shall involve frequent hitting, pushing, biting, or harm to himself/herself or other children, or to equipment, the child shall be removed from the scene for a "time out".
- Parents/guardians will be informed of inappropriate behavior.

If a child continues to have difficulty, the teacher/director will initiate observation times and conferences with parents. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the class and the child is unable to learn self-control after three weeks, a written communication will be sent home. If, after six weeks of assistance by the teacher and parent/guardian there is no improvement, you will be asked to withdraw the child.

## **PARENT INVOLVMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

Book bags should be checked daily for communications and projects. Newsletters and calendars will be added, along with other updates, on our Little Vikings Google Site. Website links will be mailed and provided at a later date.

The Preschool will also use the REMIND app to send texts and RenWeb Family Portal to send emails.

Telephone conferences or parent/teacher conferences will be held two times a year. Progress reports will be distributed two times a year also.

## **3301-37-10 BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT/DISCIPLINE**

(A) A preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.

(B) The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for review as well as distributed to parents. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation and praise for appropriate behavior.

(C) The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

1. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
3. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
5. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
9. Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

10. The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

(D) The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the center's written discipline policy.

(E) All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the center's discipline policy for review upon employment.

If you desire further information regarding the programming in the Sts. Joseph and John Preschool, the State Department of Education, Early Childhood Department can be called at (614) 466-0224. If you wish to obtain a compliance report or file a complaint, please contact the school office.

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