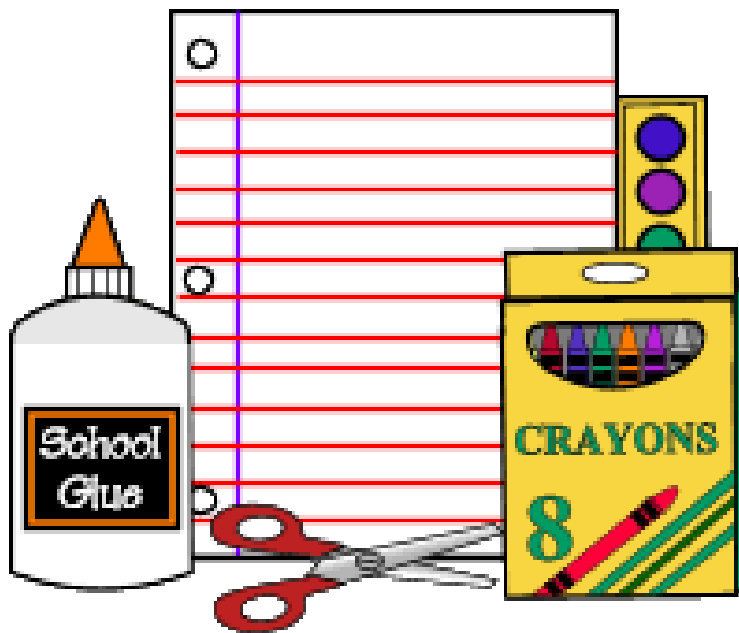


St. Joseph Early Childhood Center of All Saints Parish



Parent/Student Handbook

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center
of All Saints Parish
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Dear Parents,

This handbook contains many, though not all, of the policies that we as a school need to set down in print so that the purposes of our school can be realized. We aim to educate students in an orderly atmosphere that is respectful, safe, and conducive to learning for all. With mutual cooperation of the home, the student, and the school, we have established a peaceful, Christ-like environment that allows everyone to thrive. May this be a year of growth and peace for us all.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON

“Roman Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Boston base not only their educational purposes but all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential equality of all men as rooted in the fatherhood of God, Christ’s love and man’s supernatural destiny.

Thus, with discrimination so repugnant to their nature and mission, Catholic schools in the Archdiocese have not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin or physical well-being in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.”

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph School of All Saints Parish serves students from Nursery through grade eight from Haverhill, Massachusetts, and surrounding areas. We offer a challenging academic program integrated with Catholic values in a safe and welcoming environment. We strive to develop an awareness and concern for the less fortunate through the practice of the Corporal Works of Mercy.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph School of All Saints Parish strives to foster the four-fold dimension of Catholic education: “message, community, worship, and service.”

In order to equip the students with the moral values, knowledge, and skills needed to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the faculty and staff of St. Joseph School of All Saints Parish aim to:

Develop within each student an awareness of one's dignity as a child of God and responsibility to other members of God's family and to the environment.

Strive to maintain academic excellence by challenging each student to work to the best of his/her potential.

Respect the culturally diverse community and to strive to meet the spiritual, academic, and social needs of those served.

Help develop the uniqueness of each student by encouraging independent thinking and responsible learning.

LAWS AFFECTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION

“Students and teachers in non-public schools are not protected by federal constitutional law because private schools are private agencies. When a student enrolls in a Catholic school, that student and/or the parents voluntarily surrender certain constitutional protections while in the Catholic school.”

As excerpted from:

School Handbooks: Some Legal Considerations by Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, Ph.D.

ACTIVITY FEE

A monthly fee of \$6.00 is due on the first Monday of each month. This fee should be paid in **cash** and placed in an envelope marked with your child's name on it.

ATTENDANCE

Parents are responsible for the regular attendance of their children. Frequent absence and/or tardiness may adversely affect a student's academic performance and social development.

Parents are asked to telephone the Early Childhood Center (978-372-0111) when a child is absent. Upon the child's return to school, **a written note stating the reason for the absence is a necessity even if the school was previously called.** The school must record absences.

If you have children at the main school, please drop them off first before coming to the Early Childhood Center. Any child arriving before 8:00 a.m. is charged \$5.00 for Extended Daycare.

School begins at 8:15.

ASBESTOS

Asbestos was removed in the main building in the summer of 2005. Other asbestos is contained. The school follows the state regulations for periodic inspection and record maintenance.

BACKPACKS

Each child should have a backpack large enough to carry their snack/lunch, folder, extra change of clothes and art smock. Nothing should be dangling from their backpack.

BUSES

Bus transportation is not available for students in Pre-K.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

It is vital that the Early Childhood Center office has up-to-date contact information. Parents are asked to notify the office as soon as possible in the event of such change. Communication and the safety of your child depend on such information.

CHILD ABUSE

Any concerns about child abuse should be reported to school personnel.

CONCERNS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Parents who have concerns about the action of a teacher must first contact the teacher through the office phone or by letter to the teacher. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, a three-way conference among the parent, teacher, and principal may be held. Sometimes the student may be involved in this conference, as well.

Parents who have concerns about school policy or its operation should first contact the principal directly. Going through the proper chain of command is a simple act of respect. Parents and/or guardians who do not agree with and support school policies or do not display a cooperative role in the school-home relationship may be asked to remove their child from the school. The pastor is the final recourse for concerns.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Certain details of a student's record and confidences are considered confidential. Parent conferences should not be discussed within the presence of a child. Gossip and derogatory remarks about the school are not conducive to the respectful and cooperative atmosphere desired. All persons, school personnel, and parents need to refrain from expressing their frustrations and gripes to other members of the school community. ***We all have a stake in the reputation of the school.*** When a problem arises, please speak to

the appropriate person involved. Student information should be expressed only to those who have a need to know.

Students have the right to confide in teachers without fear of personal information being spread to others; however, any information that involves the safety of self or others is not a matter that can be held in confidence. In this case, the teacher is by law duty-bound to protect the people involved.

DISCIPLINE

Children are encouraged and expected to show respect and concern for others, to express themselves in a positive way, and to show self-control. Those that are consistently unable to exhibit self-control, or that cause harm to others, are separated from other children and disciplined (examples-cannot participate in an activity, timeout, etc.). Parents are contacted and a parent/teacher conference is scheduled.

DISMISSAL

At the end of the school day, morning session or full day session, parents come into the building to pick up children from the Pre-K classroom.

Please do not park in the fire lanes or block other cars in the parking lot. Never park in front of the garage doors.

DRESS CODE

The Early Childhood Center does not have a specific dress code. However, we do stress the need for you to send your children in comfortable clothing that **they** are able to manage on their own. **All** children's belongings **must** be labeled with their name.

We do encourage the purchase of one St. Joseph uniform shirt for special days.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency forms are handed out at open house. These forms **must** be filled out and returned before or on the child's first day of school. Emergency forms should be accurate and up-to-date. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any changes. The following information must be kept on file:

- Parents'/guardians' names
- Address
- Cell Phones
- Home and work phone number
- Emergency phone number and names of relatives or friends
- Physician's name and phone number
- Medical alert information

If necessary, a note specifying that a child may not be picked up by a certain person must be submitted to the office for the student's file, accompanied by documentation.

EXTENDED CARE

Extended Daycare is available before and after school for those who need it. Forms must be filled out before your child can attend. The cost of Extended Daycare is \$6.00 per hour which is billed on a weekly basis.

FIELD TRIPS

A field trip is an educational experience outside the school setting. Only the official field trip permission form is accepted for parent permission; a note is not sufficient. A copy of the field trip permission slip is available when a trip is planned. Parents are given sufficient notice so the cost can be met.

FIRE DRILLS/EVACUATION DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted as often as necessary to insure that students and staff understand their escape route and are familiar with the procedures. Children are prepared ahead of time for these drills. We understand that this can be stressful for some young children.

FUNDRAISERS

There are occasional fundraisers for the Early Childhood Center and the main school. The required T-Shirt Fundraiser is mandatory. All Pre-K and Nursery parents receive information about all fundraisers, as participation benefits the whole school. Any contribution would be greatly appreciated.

HEALTH CARE

The nurse makes periodic visits to the Early Childhood Center.

All students must have on file a current immunization record as required by Massachusetts' laws. Health records should have up-to-date emergency information, as well. Changes in a child's health must be reported to the school.

A student with a communicable disease who is still contagious should not be in school. Children must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.

Asthma inhalers and epi-pens are the only medications staff can supervise. A written physician's order is necessary. A student on antibiotics can take them before and after school.

Medical forms must be filled out and kept on file with the nurse.

MEDIA

The pastor is the spokesperson for the school, though he may designate the principal. In the pastor's absence, the principal is automatically the spokesperson. At no time should a student, school employee, or parent speak to the media about school business without prior discussion with the principal. This is especially important in the event of a school emergency.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

In the absence of a court order signed by a judge, the school can provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding their child. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. The school therefore cannot comply with requests otherwise. Information can be sent to the non-custodial parent upon request.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Nursery–Pre-K Parent-Teacher conferences are not regularly scheduled. If parent or teacher feel a conference is needed, a brief note or phone call stating the desire to meet is necessary. Conferences should always be held by appointment so that the teacher can gather the proper documents and thoughts needed for a productive conference.

PRAYER

Students and staff share certain spiritual and religious experiences; they are at the heart of the school's mission. A Catholic school is not merely an alternative setting to the public school! While the sacraments are only appropriate for properly educated Catholics, all students are expected to participate in the spiritual life of the school. Classroom prayer is held every day. These times help students and staff to develop their relationship with God.

PROMOTION

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of the academic, physical, social and emotional growth of a student, and his/her attendance. Parents can assume their child is promoted unless the alternative of retention has been discussed during the year. The principal and parents are always involved in retention discussions.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are sent home in February and at the end of the year for both Nursery and Pre-K students.

READINESS

Children must be toilet trained and fully independent in their bathroom skills.

REGISTRATION FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

If financial obligations are in arrears, registration for the next school year is questionable. Discussions are held so that a fair and just action is taken.

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is recognized as a form of sex discrimination and thus a violation of the laws that prohibit sex discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, may constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, a hostile, or offensive working or educational environment

SHOW-N-TELL

Toys are not allowed in school except on scheduled show-n-tell days. Those children that attend our full day program may also keep a stuffed animal or blanket in their backpack for rest time.

SNACK/LUNCH

We do not supply snack or lunch for children. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a nutritious snack and drink for their child each morning. Children that stay all day must also bring a cold lunch. Please be sure to send a separate drink for morning snack and lunch. Soda and glass bottles or containers are not allowed in school.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are maintained in the Early Childhood Center office which follows them to the main school. These records contain a student's educational history as well as family information.

If a student is transferring to another school, parents must request an Authorization for Release of Student Records form from the main office. This must be signed before records can be sent. Records cannot be carried by the parent to other schools.

SUPPLIES

All children must have a complete change of clothes and an art smock in their backpack at all times in case of accidents, and to protect clothing from messy art projects.

UNWRITTEN REGULATIONS

The school or the principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Not every situation can be anticipated in advance. This document may be amended throughout this year, or in the future.

VOLUNTEERS

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center of All Saints Parish welcomes volunteers. Parental involvement has been shown by research to enhance student achievement. It is important for volunteers to know that their actions reflect on the school and that their efforts are always under the director's authority. The principal/director is responsible for all school programs and business and, therefore, must be informed of everything before it occurs rather than afterward. All volunteers must fill out a CORI Form and attend a "Protecting God's Children" class.

Parent help is needed, requested, and appreciated.

WEATHER

If Haverhill has cancelled school, St. Joseph School is cancelled as well. Extended Daycare is also cancelled for the day. Please listen to WBZ radio AM station 1030 or watch the Boston television stations 4, 5, 7, and 32 for no school announcements. Calls to the office regarding the weather on no school days are not answered or returned. ***There is NO MORNING Extended Daycare on delayed openings. Do not drop your child off before 10:00 a.m. if there is a 2 hour delay.*** There is no one on duty at this time.

WITHDRAWALS (see STUDENT RECORDS)

I have read and understand the Early Childhood Parent Handbook.

Child/ren(s) Name:

Please check all that apply:

_____ I give St. Joseph School of All Saints Parish permission to have my child photographed and placed in the local newspaper.

_____ I give St. Joseph School of All Saints Parish permission to photograph my child and have photos displayed on the school website. (Photos are usually taken in groups, and no child's name is placed on the website.)

Parent Name (Please Print):

Parent Signature:

Date:
