

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

The Joplin area Catholic School System provides students a strong academic and Catholic faith foundation. Our goal is to teach young people to integrate Christian values into all aspects of life.

We provide students with educational and social skills needed to be active, productive members of the community and Church.

We endeavor to graduate young adults who are effective witnesses to the presence of Christ in the world.

Our goal at St. Mary's Catholic Early Childhood Center is to start your child on the road to a successful life of learning and loving. We see each child as an individual, and take into account individual needs, interests, and development.

We have four primary objectives in our early childhood program -

1. To teach each child that he/she is a unique individual created and loved by God.
2. To help each child develop a love of learning.
3. To teach each child that school is an inviting and happy place.
4. To teach basic academic and socialization skills.

TEACHER CREDENTIALS

St. Mary's early childhood teachers are state certified teachers with several years combined experience.

We keep the student/teacher ratio at 10:1, so a qualified preschool aide will assist in classes over 10.

RELIGION

Through our religion lessons, we emphasize that God has made each one of us special, and that we should love and respect who we are, and who others are. We reinforce this concept by example, and encourage the children to live these values both at school and home.

BASIC SKILLS

Our academic teachings are all age-appropriate. We teach basic kindergarten readiness skills through the use of learning centers. Learning centers are areas of different types of manipulative materials and experiences intended for practice and learning specific skills. Children learn in a natural way - through play, experience and discovery.

Our learning centers also help develop important social skills such as cooperation, listening, following instructions, and respectfulness toward others.

Currently, our readiness standards are consistent with Missouri Early Learners Standards (dese.mo.gov/earlylearningstandards). We are developing more specific standards that incorporate Catholic values, and hope to have these on our website within the 2016-17 school year.

A TYPICAL SCHEDULE MIGHT BE AS FOLLOWS:

8:00-8:40	Children arrive & play in playroom
8:40-9:00	Music Time
9:00-9:30	Group time/story/sharing
9:30-10:00	Outside play
10:00-10:30	Teacher led activity
10:30-10:55	Learning centers
10:55-11:00	Prayer/end of day activities
11:00	Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten dismissal to home or Day Care

DAY CARE SCHEDULE

11:15-11:45	Lunch
11:45-12:30	Outside Play
12:30-12:45	Prepare for rest time
12:45-2:00	Quiet/Rest time
2:00-2:30	Wake up/Snack
2:30-3:00	Free Play
3:00-3:30	Outside play
3:30-6:00	Various planned activities
6:00	Close

SNACKS

Snacks that meet the DESE nutrition guidelines are served during daycare time. Snacks and milk are provided by the school for students enrolled in the daycare program.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We ask that parents volunteer to help us out in many ways. At different times, we may need field trip drivers (with a current drivers license, required MO insurance and a completed Drivers Agreement Form), guest speakers, teacher substitutes, room mothers/fathers to plan school parties, or volunteers to help with a variety of activities. A form will be sent home in which each parent can volunteer to help us out. We hope that each family can help out in some way.

STUDENT IMMUNIZATION

By provisions of State Law, the Division of Health requires certain immunizations. It is unlawful for any child to attend school unless he/she has been immunized and an up-to-date immunization record is presented at time of enrollment as required under the rules and regulations of the Division of Health of the Department of Public Health and Welfare. This information MUST be on file in the school by August 1st.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

A copy of your child's Birth Certificate must be in our office by August 1st. We require the original or a copy of the original state issued (not hospital issued) birth certificate for our records.

Children must be 3 years of age by July 31st for Preschool and 4 years of age by July 31st for Pre-Kindergarten. Children must be completely potty trained. Pull-ups are not allowed.

DAY CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION

CHILD CARE

St. Mary's Preschool offers after school care for early childhood children from 11:00 until 6:00. This program offers a hot lunch, snack, and a fun, safe environment with planned activities.

Early morning care is provided in St. Mary's daycare room 7:30 to 8:00 for those needing care before 8:00. This is offered to children enrolled in day care. Children not enrolled in afternoon day care may attend for a minimum daily fee of \$1.00.

DAY CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD FEES

Families belonging to St. Mary's, St. Peter's or Sacred Heart Parishes are expected to participate in the stewardship program. There are as many varied fees for day care and preschool as there are sessions available.

A Fee Schedule will be added in the near future.

DAY CARE FEES

Day care tuition is \$11.00 per day for those staying 11:00-3:30 and \$16.00 per day for those staying 11:00-6:00. This must be paid for each day your child is enrolled, even though he/she may be absent. Day care and early childhood payments should be paid in advance and made out to JACS at the beginning of each month/week. Students may be enrolled in daycare anywhere from one to five days a week, in whatever combination works best for their family. Once a family picks the days they will be enrolled, they are locked in place. (Ex. A child is enrolled in Monday/Tuesday or two days, the child will be expected on Monday and Tuesday. Families cannot arrive any two days during the week.) Any changes in schedule must be logged in the office.

Because our costs remain the same whether or not your child attends the session in which he/she enrolled, you are responsible for paying for your child's care even if he/she is absent due to sickness or vacation.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

In case of withdrawal from Early Childhood or Day Care, the school must be given two weeks notice. If notice is not given, two weeks additional tuition or day care fees will be charged.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Our early childhood is a very busy place! During the times children are coming to and leaving from school there is much activity. For your child's safety, please walk your child to the classroom when arriving and make sure we know he/she has arrived. When school is out, your child will be dismissed from the front doors. Any child not picked up by 11:10 will be escorted to the school office. Please be prompt in bringing and picking up your child.

OUTSIDE PLAY

A part of each day is spent outside. Children should come to school with appropriate outerwear for the season. All children who attend school should be able to participate in all activities, including recess. Because of our small staff we cannot allow a child to stay in for recess.

ILLNESS

Keep your child home if he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours. Your child may be sent home if he/she appears to have symptoms of illness during the day. In such cases parents or guardians will be notified and the child will be kept in a quiet area until he/she can be picked up.

We will not administer medication to children unless it is a doctor's prescription and accompanied by written parent permission. Aspirin cannot be administered by school personnel under any circumstances.

INJURIES

Unfortunately, accidents do happen, and scrapes and bruises are common with young children. It is our policy to treat minor injuries with ice, soap and water, a disinfectant, and band-aids. At this time we will also fill out an accident report stating the time, date, nature of injury and treatment. If additional medical treatment is needed, parents will be notified immediately. In an emergency, if parents cannot be reached, medical attention will be obtained.

DISCIPLINE

We are blessed with wonderful, loving children, so discipline rarely needs to be used. We understand the temperament, curiosity, and the need of expression each child has. If, however, some type of discipline is needed, a child will be instructed leave the situation after a few attempts of verbal correction. This could be sitting alone or finding other friends to interact with. A teacher will explain to the child why they have been asked to leave the situation so the child understands why the action was not appropriate for the situation.

Parents will not always be advised if their child has been disciplined. We feel behaviors at school should be dealt with only at school when possible. Parents may be involved when unacceptable behaviors continue after our efforts to correct behavior at school fail continuously.

DRESS

We ask that your child's clothing be comfortable, washable, sturdy, and labeled. Please do not send your child to school in dress clothes (i.e. - party or church type.) Not only is this uncomfortable for your little one, it can also inhibit his/her participation in activities and play. We would also like for your child to have a complete set of clothing at school, all items labeled. Shoes should have closed toes and heels. Tennis Shoes are encouraged to be worn. No boots, sandals or Crocs.

VISITORS

We love to have visitors! If you have a special talent, interest, or occupation that you would like to share with the children - we'd love to have you visit our class.

Thank you for choosing St. Mary's for your child's early childhood/day care. We are confident that we will provide a loving, enjoyable environment for your child.

For further information, please call St. Mary's Elementary School at 417-623-1465.

Pam Black – Preschool
April Englebert – Pre-Kindergarten