



St. Mary Child Development Center

Parent Information Handbook

**Academic Year
2017-2018**

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Please Note: Sections highlighted in blue are changes in the most recent update of this handbook.

Parent Information Handbook

(Policies and Procedures)

This parent manual provides valuable information about your child's activities; the Center's philosophy, policies and procedures; and general information about our program. Additional policies may be developed during the course of the year for the benefit of your child. We will email home any changes to this manual as needed. Any questions regarding this manual may be referred to the administration.

Our Mission

To provide high quality Early Childhood Education and child care with a Christian Orthodox influence in a nurturing Christ-Centered environment where values are taught and exemplified.

Program Description & Curriculum

Our program flows from a Christian Orthodox influence in order to teach children God's love by providing opportunities for spiritual, cognitive, physical, social and emotional growth. Our nationally known, theme-based curriculum is built on the philosophy that children learn best through hands-on activities that address the development of the whole child.

Curriculum descriptions and explanations of our programs are available either from teachers or in the office.

Children Eligible for our Program

- **Infant I:** 6 weeks to 12 months
- **Infant II:** 12 months to 24 months
- **Toddlers:** 2 years old by September 1st of current enrollment year
- **Preschool:** 3 years old and fully potty trained by September 1st of current enrollment year. Children who turn 3 during the current school year may be promoted to preschool if teaching staff determines that the child is socially, emotionally and cognitively ready.
- **Pre-K:** 4 years old by September 1st of current enrollment year along with social, emotional and cognitive readiness as recommended by teaching staff.
- **Beginnergarten:** Based on eligibility and/or completion of Pre-K

Children are promoted to the next class level in September at the beginning of an academic school year unless teachers recommend and parents agree to a mid-year move. A child **DOES NOT** automatically move to the next class level at his/her birthday. Promotion is limited by space and staffing availability for any given room. When moves from room to room occur, children are properly transitioned and parents are oriented to the new room by the new teacher. **Promotions will occur Mid-year (January) and end of the Year (June – before summer camp starts). Children will be moved up only if Teachers and Administration feel the child is socially, emotionally, and cognitively ready.**

Our Educators

The teachers at St. Mary's have been carefully selected for their academic training in Early Childhood Education and for their sensitivity to the needs of young children. Assistant teachers are chosen for their ability to guide children's development and to assist in all of their activities. All teachers, assistants and administrators participate in annual professional development and staff trainings as mandated by the *2014 State of Michigan Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers* to ensure that we continue to strive for excellence in the field of Early Childhood Development.

An administrator will be present on the premises of the Center for a minimum of 6 hours each day.

Hours and School Schedules

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM. The calendar for the school year is included in your enrollment folder. However, we reserve the right to close in order to accommodate the church schedule of St. Mark & St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Churches. St. Mary CDC morning program hours are 8:30 AM – 11:45 AM. Lunch hour care is also available as well as afternoon care. Acceptance in any program is subject to available space and staffing, and must be approved by an administrator.

- **The Center is completely closed on**, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Western Christmas, New Year's Day, Western Holy Thursday (when Western & Orthodox Holy Weeks coincide), Western Good Friday, Orthodox Holy Thursday & Good Friday, Memorial Day, and Independence Day. (See yearly calendar for exact dates)
- **The school is not in session but child care is available** for Orthodox Christmas and Epiphany, (when Western & Orthodox Easters do not coincide) and during the School Vacation for Western Christmas (1.5-2 weeks in length).

Holiday Child Care Reservations & Policy

We are happy to provide care for your child(ren) during holiday breaks. Since school is not in session, special arrangements are made to care for children. A survey of parents whose children normally attend child care (from 11:45- 6:00 PM) is taken a month prior to holiday breaks. Based on the needs from that survey, appropriate staffing is arranged in order to maintain the correct adult: child ratios for holiday periods. Please note that *having even one child absent can affect whether additional staff should report for the day*. We ask that *If your plans change and your child will not require care for any of the dates previously reserved, that parents contact the school at 248-619-0530 (DO NOT EMAIL LAST MINUTE CHANGES) as soon as possible so that adjustments in our scheduling can be made*. If your schedule changes or your child is sick on the morning of any of these dates, please call the office as early as possible to let us know. We thank you in advance for helping us in this regard.

Please note the following policy in regard to changing your child's holiday care schedule with less than 10 days' notice.

Holiday Care Schedule Change Policy

1. ***Parents must respond to holiday care survey a minimum of 20 business days in advance of the 1st day of a holiday break period to have a child included in holiday care class lists.*** *St. Mary student fees have been pre-paid in monthly fees and are non-refundable unless this particular vacation has been approved for a vacation credit. (See Vacation Policy for a description of vacation credit eligibility.)*
2. *St. Mary students may be added to the holiday child care schedule with less than 10 days' notice*
 - a. *If staffing and classroom space allows.*
 - b. ***For an extra \$10 late fee per day of service.***
3. *Out of courtesy to the Center, we ask that parents notify the center as soon as possible if a change in holiday care needs arises.*

Severe Weather School Closure Emergencies

In case of emergency closings due to severe weather, utility failure or other emergencies, St. Mary CDC will announce the closing on all the local Detroit television stations, or on the WXYZ website at www.wxyz.com/schoolclosings.

Parents who have signed up for the **Remind one- way texting service** will receive a text from the school if school and/or child care has closed for the day. Sign up for *Remind* occurs at registration.

If you have not signed up for Remind, contact an administrator, and the sign-up instructions will be sent to you.

Our school name will be listed in one of two ways depending on the extent of the programs closed.

Listings are highlighted below in red.

Green highlighted texts are instructions for daycare parents.

a. St. Mary CDC School:

- i. All Morning School programs are closed, but child care is still open.
- ii. On days when the school is closed, but when the child care is open, **we ask parents of Child Care students to call the school by 8:00 AM** to let us know whether or not to expect their child. This will help us to determine how many staff members need to report for that day.
- iii. Children enrolled in “Child Care” are those students who stay for full days.

b. St. Mary CDC Child Care:

- i. All Programs in the building are completely closed for the day.

Additionally, please note the following in regard to school closures.

- a. When severe weather occurs, we make every effort to keep our child care open for our working parents. When we must close, it is because conditions are unsafe for our staff members and for school families.
- b. In case of an emergency occurring during the day which would result in the Administration's decision to close the Center. Parents or emergency contact will be notified by phone or Remind text to pick children up from the Center.
- c. *Parents agree to have emergency child care plans in place for the occasions when our facility will be closed for the above mentioned types of emergencies*

Admission and Withdrawal Policy

Prior to admission at St. Mary CDC, we ask that your child visit the Center along with you to meet the Director, teacher and tour the center. After visiting, if you wish to enroll the following completed forms and payment must be submitted to the Director:

1. Child Information Card with Child/Family Information
2. Health Appraisal form signed by a licensed physician with activity restrictions noted including an immunization record. This must be renewed annually until age 2 ½. Children ages birth to 2 ½ must have had a physical exam within the preceding 6 months.
3. St. Mary's Child Placement Contract – completed & signed.
4. Long registration form accompanied by a non-refundable (**annual**) registration fee, and material fee.
5. Parent Agreement to provide Food & Food Restrictions Form & Confirmation of Parent Reading Parent Handbook **Parents will be emailed a Parent Handbook when they enroll their child. Updates of the manual will be sent out before school begins each September.**
6. Illness Policy Form
7. Transportation permission (if applicable)
8. Religion Waiver (All children)
9. Field Trip Permission & Release for Web Advertising
10. Permission for Scheduled Field Trips (Preschool & older)
11. Parent Notification of Licensing Notebook Requirement (St. Mary CDC only)
12. *Remind* one-way texting notification sign-up & Tumble Bus permission form

Just as a parent may be concerned about the care a child receives, the child care and teaching staff may have concerns about our ability to meet the needs of a particular child. If a child's behavior demonstrates that his or her needs are not being met, parents or staff may initiate a parent/teacher conference. A child who consistently acts out, or for some reason needs one-on-one care and attention, will necessitate a series of conferences to determine the needs of the child. A student plan of action will be put into place and acted upon by the staff and the parents. During an agreed upon period of time, regular communication will continue between teacher and parents to report on the child's progress. If satisfactory progress is not being made, and if it is indicated that the Center is not the best placement for the child, the Administration has the authority to withdraw the child at that time.

Withdrawal

Parents who are withdrawing a child for any reason must give the administration 4 weeks written notice of this action. This allows us to give accurate notice of available spots to new incoming families, who are on our waiting list and thus keep our enrollment as constant as possible.

Financial Policies: Tuition Payment Information

- Tuition payments are made a minimum of a month in advance August through May based on a 40-week school year. **There are ten 4-week Installments which are due by the 1st of each month**, unless otherwise agreed upon and stated on your child's contract.
- Tuition paid in one or two installments is eligible for a 5% (3% credit) or 3% (no discount-credit) discount respectively. These discounts do not apply to students receiving scholarships, or for summer programs
- **Tuition bills are emailed to families on the 15th of each month and are due in full by the 1st of the following month.** A *3% late fee* will be charged on the balance if the payment is received after the 7th of the month. Interest charges accrue on every unpaid amount until it is paid in full. Minimum late fee charged is \$30.
- Summer camp is 12 weeks. Payments during the summer are due on the 15th of each **month in advance of each session from May through July.**
- A ***\$40.00 late fee*** will be assessed for any returned checks.
- Registration and material-fees are non-refundable, and are paid at the beginning of the school year and before summer sessions.
- Unpaid tuition could result in the dismissal of your child from school.
- Checks are to be made payable to: *St. Mary Child Development Center*. We also accept Visa, MasterCard & Discover. **Cash payments are not accepted.**
- A locked payment box is located to the left of the door as one enters the main office.

Absence Adjustments

There are no tuition adjustments for absences due to school vacations, emergencies, school closings or illnesses. See Hours & School Schedules for scheduled school vacations and school closures. See Vacations for descriptions of family vacations that are eligible for account credit.

Schedule Changes

All schedule changes for **class and bus service** *must be made in writing and given to the Director for approval.*

Please note the following.

- **Temporary switching of days within a week will not be allowed.**
- **Adding days to your child's schedule**, either temporarily or permanently, requires approval by the Director. Approval is based upon availability and staffing for any given day.
 - Temporary changes require a two business day written notice with Director Approval.
 - Permanent changes require a 4 weeks written notice with Director Approval.
- **If a parent or guardian chooses to withdraw their child** from the program, a 4 week written notice is required; otherwise you will be billed for 4 weeks tuition.

Late Pickup

Out of courtesy to our staff, and so that we can maintain proper adult; child ratios, you must pick up your child no later than 11:50 AM for the morning program and 6:00 PM for the all day program. *Late fees are enforced after the first incident.* **Parents who cannot pick up their child at their child's scheduled end of the day need to make alternate arrangements for their child to be picked up on time.**

The Late pick up policy applies to students picked up from the center and those who ride the bus. (Late fees for bussers are calculated from the time the bus returns to the center.)

The fees are as follows

- 0-10 minutes = \$10.00
- 11-30 minutes = \$15.00
- 31-60 minutes = \$30.00
- \$1.00 a minute after 1 hour

Schedule

17-18:

Payment #	Week #	Week of	Payment Due	Amount Due
1	1	4-Sep	1-Aug	Contract amount + extra fees
1	2	11-Sep		
1	3	18-Sep		
1	4	25-Sep		
2	5	2-Oct	1-Sep	Contract amount + extra fees
2	6	9-Oct		
2	7	16-Oct		
2	8	23-Oct		
3	9	30-Oct	1-Oct	Contract amount + extra fees
3	10	6-Nov		
3	11	13-Nov		
3	12	20-Nov		
4	13	27-Nov	1-Nov	Contract amount + extra fees
4	14	4-Dec		
4	15	11-Dec		
4	16	18-Dec		
5	17	25-Dec	1-Dec	Contract amount + extra fees
5	18	1-Jan		
5	19	8-Jan		
5	20	17-Jan		
6	21	23-Jan	1-Jan	Contract amount + extra fees
6	22	29-Jan		
6	23	5-Feb		
6	24	12-Feb		
7	25	19-Feb	1-Feb	Contract amount + extra fees
7	26	26-Feb		
7	27	5-Mar		
7	28	12-Mar		

8	29	19-Mar	1-Mar	Contract amount + extra fees
8	30	26-Mar		
8	31	2-Apr		
8	32	9-Apr		
9	33	16-Apr	1-Apr	Contract amount + extra fees
9	34	23-Apr		
9	35	30-Apr		
9	36	7-May		
10	37	14-May	1-May	Contract amount + extra fees
10	38	21-May		
10	39	28-May		
10	40	4-Jun		

***Extra Fees include** field trips and special event fees- billed monthly.

Arrival/Departure Policy

Referenced in Staff Manual

During Arrival and Departure, parents are to park their car in a *parking space* and walk their child into the building. **Parents should not park at the curb.** Parking at the curb area will only be allowed for buses. For the safety of our children, and for the convenience of everyone, please follow this rule. ***It is imperative that ALL St. Mary parents sign their child in upon arrival at the school and sign them out upon departure.*** (Bus drivers or assistants sign-in the students who ride the bus.) After entering the building, parents of St. Mary children must always accompany their child to the child’s classroom where they will be received by a staff member. Doors will open at 8:30 AM for children to enter the classrooms. Parents must remain with their child until the classroom doors are opened by the teachers.

No child will be released to a parent unless they come in to the center. Only those persons listed in writing on the child’s information card will be allowed to pick up that child. **If someone other than a parent is to pick a child up, parents should notify the teacher or administration of this change in writing in advance.** If we do not have prior written notification of a pick-up change, we will not release your child and the parent will be responsible for late fees. Let the alternate pick up person know that they will be asked to show picture identification such as a driver’s license if they are unfamiliar with the staff.

For your child’s safety, please be sure you

- Do not allow your child to go to the parking lot unaccompanied.
- Do not allow your child to run up and down the halls.
- Tell the teacher when you are leaving your child in their care, and when you are leaving the Center with your child.
- Do not leave unattended children in car while you walk into the building.

Reporting Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the center by phone by 8:00 AM the date of the absence. Please leave a message if there is no answer.

The office phone number is 248-619-0530.

St. Mary Child Development Center

Daily Morning Schedule of Events

In order to keep families informed and up to date on our daily procedures, please read and follow the “Daily Schedule of Events” that happen on a regular basis. Our Center has children with various types of allergies and needs. It is our responsibility to keep all children safe and support our staff in their care.

7:00 am – 8:00 am – Full day students arrive. If students need to eat breakfast sent from home, please do the following. **Breakfast must be cut into bite size pieces and already cooked in a container labeled “Breakfast.” Parents are responsible to set their child in the chair at the table and place the breakfast dish on the table before leaving the classroom.** The staff on duty will monitor the child’s meal time. Any students arriving at 8:00 am or later are expected to have already had their breakfast before arriving to school. **Breakfast is not served after 8:00 am.**

8:00 am – 8:15 am – Staff clean up following breakfast. Any students arriving 8:00 am or later are expected to have already had their breakfast before arriving to school. **Breakfast is not served after 8:00 am.** It is “Free Choice Time” for students.

8:15 am – Lead teachers gather their students from the Daycare Room to go to their proper classroom.

8:15 am – 8:30 am – All students are in proper classroom ready to begin “Curriculum Time” with their teacher.

Morning Arrival Time Note: Students need to enter the class room ready for the day. It is the responsibility of the parents dropping off the child to change the child’s boots into school shoes, remove child’s snow pants, and coat to be placed in the cubby. Additionally if your child has a lunch box, it should be **labeled with the child’s first and last name, the current date and placed in the desired spot according to the classroom teacher’s direction.** The blue school bag issued at time of enrollment is to accompany the student daily. Check with your child’s classroom teacher to know if the blue bag is stored in the student’s cubby or classroom. Place the blue school bag in its proper place before leaving the Center.

8:30 am – 11:45 am – Classroom teacher instructs students in a developmentally appropriate curriculum. **Arriving on time, no later than 8:30 am, is important.** It allows your child to get the full benefit of the educational curriculum for the day. It is more challenging for a child to join a group already in session when you arrive after 8:30 am. Additionally, it interrupts the program, the classroom teacher, and other students. Teachers are not available during arrival time for discussions. The teacher is busy with the students and the classroom. If you need to inform the classroom teacher of certain news, please have a written note to give her or the office. Emailing teachers is an option; however teachers don’t read emails during school time. Call the school directly for an immediate need. A morning snack is provided by the Center. If a child has allergies, we request that parents send in the child’s snack in coordination with the teacher. All classrooms have an assigned outdoor recess time. Students need to dress properly for the weather of the day. We go outside in weather that is warmer than 25 degrees with the wind chill. If students do not have appropriate outdoor attire, this holds the entire classroom from going outdoors to enjoy the fresh air. **Please label all of your student’s belongings with first and last name.**

11:45 am – Half day students go home either by bus or parent pick up.

11:45 am – 6:00 pm – Schedule on back

Daily Afternoon Schedule OF Events

11:45 – 1:00 pm – Full day students have a bathroom break, eat lunch brought from home, and have “Free Choice Time” which may include outdoor recess weather permitting.

1:00 pm – 3:30 pm – Nap time for all students. Parents of Toddlers- Preschool students are required to provide a crib size sheet for the cot, a travel size pillow, and a small personal size blanket. Parents of Infant II students are required to provide a porta crib size sheet, small blanket, and if desired, a small travel size pillow. Parents of Infant I students are assigned two Pack & Play sheets that are required for crib safety. According to State of Michigan Licensing, students in Infant I are required to have a sleep sack only, not a blanket.

3:30 – 4:00 pm – Students wake up, have a bathroom break, and eat a snack provided from home.

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm – Students continue with curriculum support activities planned by the Lead Teacher to reinforce the morning classroom lessons. Weather permitting students are offered a chance at outdoor play time if the weather is 25 degrees with the wind chill factor. Each student must have the proper outdoor clothing on a daily basis. At pick up time, please take home your child's lunchbox, snow pants, boots, coat, blue bag and all belongings. Our school is also a Church building and may host various activities in the evenings. **It is preferable that you don't leave your student's belongings at the Center overnight and on weekends.** Please label your child's belongings with first and last name. St. Mary Child Development Center is not responsible for lost items.

Thank you for helping to ensure the safety of all students in our care, first and foremost your child.

Nutrition and Food Service

Toddlers, Preschoolers, Pre-Kindergarteners and Begingergarteners who attend St. Mary will receive a snack mid-morning provided by the center. In cases where children have severe food allergies, parents will be required to provide all food for their child. Nutrition education goes on throughout the year as children and staff will discuss foods during meals and special food projects and learn about health and what different foods do to help bodies grow. Children with special dietary needs will be accommodated at the parent's request. A monthly snack menu for classes will be posted near the classroom for the parents to preview.

Please DO NOT send soda pop for your child except on very special occasions such as field trips.

Occasional treats from home to celebrate a birthday or holidays are welcome. Special ethnic foods from home are very welcome as a snack or meal. (Please discuss any of these circumstances with the teacher to get permission to send a treat.) Please try to send low sugar treats with no red food color. Please do not send candy or gum to the center

Meals & Labeling Foods & Beverages

Breakfast- This is the most important meal of the day. Students who arrive at school after 8:15 AM should not expect to eat/finish breakfast brought from home. To ensure your child is performing at his/her optimal make sure your child is well fed as the brain requires a lot of energy.

Lunch- Those children who will be staying for lunch are required to bring the following: A lunch in a brown bag or other lunch box that is labeled with your child's first and last name and the date the lunch was prepared. The food, beverage and eating utensils must be wrapped or contained in disposable packaging. Parents will sign a food restrictions notice as well as an agreement stating that the Center does not provide food for lunch..

LABELING OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES PROVIDED BY PARENTS

1. Breast milk, formula, milk, or other beverages provided in a same-day supply shall be furnished daily in clean, sanitary, ready-to-feed bottles or beverage containers. These containers must be covered and labeled with the child's first and last name, the date, **and the contents**.
2. Any food or beverages furnished in a same-day supply shall be returned to the parent at the end of the day or discarded. These should be labeled with the child's first and last name, the date, **and the contents**.
3. Milk and other beverages may be furnished in a multi-day supply in an unopened commercial container. These must be labeled with the date of opening and the first and last name of the child for whom it is intended and shall be returned to the parent or discarded 7 days after opening.

Lunchbox Labeling

Lunch boxes MUST be labeled with the child's first and last name and the current date on the outside of the lunch box. The individual items in the lunch box do not need to be labeled. St. Mary CDC supplies each lunch student with a tag for labelling. We ask parents to update the date on the label daily.

Meal Routine

Staff members supervise and assist children during lunch time and snack times as needed. Teachers and assistants give reminders to the children as necessary of the following basic rules.

1. Eat main course first
2. Do not trade items from lunch or snacks
3. Stay seated with classmates until lunch is over
4. Eat food instead of playing with it or talking (excessively) with their friends.

Food Hazard Warning

The State of Michigan Licensing Rules and Regulations for quality Day Care Centers stipulate that certain foods are considered choking hazards and are unsafe for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, Pre-kindergarten and Begingergarten students. **The following foods are not allowed to be served to these children unless cut into tiny bite size portions.** Whole or large portions of food may be unsafe and a choking hazard to young children. Please review this list. If it is your intention to continue to send any of the following foods in your child's lunch, please cut them into **tiny bite size portions to avoid a potential choking hazard.** It is our desire to ensure that your child eats a healthy lunch that is both safe and nutritious.

These foods are not allowed to be served in large whole uncut portions:

Whole hot dogs or hot dogs cut into large, round chunks. Hot dogs should be cut into thin rounds then each round cut into quarters that are tiny one bite size portions to avoid a potential choking hazard.

Grapes should always be seedless and never left whole. Each grape is to be cut into quarters that are tiny one bite size portion to avoid a potential choking hazard.

Meat such as chicken, beef, pork, lamb, etc. should be properly cooked. All meat should not be left whole on the bone in large portions. Large chunks are difficult to swallow whole. All meat should be cut into tiny one bite size portions to avoid a potential choking hazard.

Raw vegetables such as carrots, cucumbers, celery, peppers, etc. should not be served in large chunks. Raw vegetables should be sliced into thin slices then diced into smaller tiny one bite size portions to avoid a potential choking hazard.

Popcorn is **never** to be served to children of this young age. The dry portion of the kernel even if popped is a choking hazard and may become lodged in the throat.

Please keep the above mentioned choking hazard foods in mind while preparing your child's lunch in the future. Providing quality care for your child is always our goal as we strive to do our best for the safety and health of your child.

Medication Policy

(Also referenced in Staff Manual)

- Only medication prescribed by the doctor will be given to a child. Medication must be in the container from the pharmacy with the doctor's name and prescription number on it, and include dosage directions. No over the counter medication will be given for fever, coughing, etc. unless accompanied by written permission from the doctor.
- **If a child needs to receive medication at the Center, the parent will be required to fill out a permission form.** (Available in the office)
- An administrator or classroom teacher or assistant will give the medication according to the instructions of the physician. Documentation will be made of when medication was given.
- The Center will not honor any instructions from a parent which contradict the instructions of the physician (for prescription drugs) or the instructions on the label (for over the counter drugs).

Illness Policy

(Also referenced in Staff Manual)

It is the responsibility of the parent to keep their child home and to promptly notify the school when the child exhibits any of the following symptoms. If parents exhibit a blatant or repeated disregard for these health and wellness guidelines, their child may not be welcomed back to school.

It is the policy of the Center to temporarily exclude children from care or staff from work who may be infectious or who demonstrate physical symptoms that require continual one-to-one care.

Guidelines for excluding sick children, volunteers or staff:

1. Fever over 100 degrees
2. Vomiting or diarrhea
3. Eye discharge (conjunctivitis is extremely contagious)
4. Excessive cough and/or nasal discharge (green or yellow in color)
5. Any unidentified or contagious rash

6. Lice
7. Unusual fatigue
8. Any communicable disease

A child, volunteer or staff member who has a contagious disease must stay home from school. Please inform the center when your child has a contagious disease and keep the school posted on his/her condition. The most common contagious illnesses among children are strep throat, pinworm, ringworm, viral infections, ear and gland infections, measles, mumps, chicken pox and scarlet fever.

A notice is sent home whenever a parent reports that their child has been diagnosed with a highly contagious communicable disease such as these noted above. This alerts parents to watch for the symptoms of these highly contagious illnesses. We ask that parents keep their children home if any of the listed symptoms are displayed by their child in order to help prevent the spread of these illnesses to other children and staff. Please note that notices do not contain the name of the child who has the illness.

When a child, volunteer or staff member may return to the Center:

1. The child's temperature has been below 100 degrees **for 24 hours without fever reducers such as Tylenol, aspirin or Advil.**
2. The child has been diagnosed as having bacterial infection and has been on an **antibiotic for 24 hours.**
3. It has been **24 hours since the last episode** of vomiting or diarrhea.
4. The nasal discharge is **not thick, yellow or green.**
5. Eyes are no longer discharging, or the condition has been treated with an **antibiotic for 24 hours.**
6. **Lice have been successfully treated.**
7. The rash has subsided or the physician has determined that the rash is **not contagious.**
8. The school reserves the right to determine when a child may return to school if the child has a highly communicable disease.

Please call the Center by 8 AM and let us know if your child will not be in attendance on a scheduled day. Also, please report to the office the nature of your child's illness.

If your child becomes ill or has an accident or incident while at the center, the staff will:

1. Appropriately care for and if needed isolate the child either in an unoccupied room or in the office with supervision by a staff member.
2. Call the parent and inform him/her of the problem and let the child talk to the parent, if necessary.
3. Care for the child until a parent or parent designee arrives to take the child home.
4. Staff members complete the appropriate illness and/or incident form and present it to the adult who picks up the child.

Parents need to have an alternate plan of action for child care to cover these situations.

Parent or designated alternate driver will be required to pick the child up within one hour of notification of child's illness or injury.

The child care center staff will do everything possible to prevent the spread of childhood illness in the Center. However, even with these precautions in place, we cannot guarantee that contagious illnesses or diseases will be completely contained or will not be spread to other children. Parents must recognize that, while in care, it is possible that the child may be exposed to a contagious illness or disease. Our precautions will include:

1. Not allowing sick children to be in care at the center.
2. Hand washing procedures in place for staff and children upon entering the Center, before and after eating, before and after using the bathroom, and before and after outdoor play.
3. Disinfecting tables prior to eating.
4. Disinfecting changing and toileting areas regularly.
5. Washing and disinfecting toys that are mouthed by children.

Emergency Medical Care

Parent gives permission to St. Mary to call 911 in the event of a serious emergency. Any costs or charges incurred for 911 emergencies are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Allergies

Please inform the teacher of any allergies or ongoing medical conditions your child has. This is particularly important in the case of food allergies. Allergies and food restrictions are posted in the classrooms for staff reference. [While there are no specific center-wide restrictions on food that can be brought in, there may be specific food items prohibited in certain classroom if there is a child in that classroom with severe allergies. Teachers will post notices in the room if this is the case. Parents will also be notified which food items their child should NOT bring in that classroom.](#)

What to Bring to the Center

All children's belongings, including clothing, should be labeled with the child's name or family name. This applies especially to coats, sweaters, hats and other removable clothing items. Many students own identical items such as hats, lunch boxes or coats. Therefore, the only way we can ensure that your child comes home with his/her correct item is that they be labeled.

- Toddlers through Kindergarteners bring a school bag which will be provided by the school. The cost is covered in the new student registration fee.
- Comfortable play clothes, appropriate for climbing, floor play and experiences with water, paint, glue, or sand are suitable for infants-preschool children.
- **Children must wear closed toe/heel shoes with socks to school.** This means no sandals or flip-flops, crocs or clogs. It is for your child's comfort and safety that we have this rule. Climbing on the playground equipment and running through the wood chips on the playground is done more safely and comfortably with closed toe shoes. If your child wears sandals, you will be asked to bring the appropriate footwear to school for your child.

- All students must wear boots and cold weather clothing as the weather dictates as students are sent outside daily for recess. *ALL children go outside unless it is raining or the temperature including wind chill is 25 degrees F or lower.*
- When the weather requires your child to wear boots to school, ***you must also send your child's indoor shoes in as well.***
- We do have emergency clothing at school. If your child should need to borrow something, please wash it and return it to school. *ALL children, especially recently toilet trained children should keep an extra set of clean undergarments and socks in their bags EVERY DAY.*
- **Please leave ALL toys or breakable items at home.** We welcome sharing of experiences or environmental treasures such as caterpillars, frogs, leaves, stones and other theme related items. If a teacher has a special sharing time such as show and tell, he/she will make parents aware of this activity in advance.
- **We do not allow cell phones & electronic devices to be used in school.** If these are brought to school, they should remain in a child's book bag/ back pack. If these are taken out of student bags, teachers reserve the right to confiscate them until the end of the school day.
- Please leave candy at home instead of sending it to school with your child. **Children sometimes put candy into their pockets because they just can't give it up before mommy leaves them at school. Please monitor your child for this.**
- Toy Guns, Knives or Weapons **ARE NOT PERMITTED** at any time at the Center. This includes bringing them for show-and-tell.
- Please see newsletters and/or supply lists (where applicable) for additional supply requirements.

Parent Participation

Parents are welcome at the Center at all times and encouraged to participate in a number of ways. There are field trips, special evening events, class parties and opportunities to volunteer in the classrooms. We hope to maintain close, positive relationships with the parents of the children in our program.

Formal parent conferences will be offered twice during the school year to review your child's development, to share concerns, and to plan for the future. However, your teacher is very willing to discuss your child's progress in the classroom privately with you. Contact your child's teacher personally to schedule an appointment to speak with her about your child's progress. We will also offer events such as open house, Curriculum Night, and school programs. You will be notified of these dates via newsletters and emails and on the St. Mary CDC Facebook page.

Discipline Policy

All children will be treated with kindness and understanding. It is our philosophy that children behave better when they have constant encouragement and reinforcement, i.e. praise for positive behavior rather than punishment for negative behavior. When a child misbehaves, the following progressive discipline will be used:

- The child will be corrected verbally
- The child's attention will be redirected to another activity.
- The child will be given a time out for a length of time appropriate for his/her age. This can be effective because it takes the child away from the situation for a short time and helps with redirecting their attention to another activity.
- If inappropriate behavior continues to be disruptive, the child will be taken to an administrator where the problem will be discussed with the child and the child will spend time in the office.

- Continual discipline problems will be discussed with the parent(s), teacher and administrator. A personal behavior contract may be used to monitor the child's behavior.
- If disruptive behavior continues, and a solution cannot be realized, the child may be dismissed.

Vacation Policy

The vacation policy applies to St. Mary CDC students who are enrolled in child care during the school year. Families are allowed 1-2 weeks of "free" vacation time per year, meaning that child care fees will be refunded during that period, provided that the rules set forth in this section have been followed. Length of vacation allowance depends on the program the child is enrolled in, and this is defined below.

"Vacation time" is meant for the purposes of pre-planned family vacations and should not be used for other reasons. For the purposes of this provision, a "week" means the number of days per week which the child attends the program. The vacation time must be taken in a minimum of 1 week blocks of time and may not be broken into individual days.

Vacation time may be taken at any time during the school year, provided the parent gives the administration four weeks written notice of the vacation. The allotted vacation time does not carry over from year to year. The summer camp vacation policy is different from the school year vacation policy, and is stated on the summer camp enrollment form.

Vacation time allotments:

- Infants: Two weeks of vacation time is allowed.
- Toddlers: One week of vacation time is allowed during the school year.
- Preschooler-BegK: One week of vacation is allowed during the school year for after school care fees only. Fees for morning programs are not refunded.

Additionally, to qualify for vacation time allowances, a family must be current with all tuition payments. Therefore, vacation allowances are given as a credit after the vacation period. A student must be enrolled at our school for 6 continuous months to qualify for vacation credits.

"On Hold" Policy:

If a child needs to be absent from school for 4-8 weeks, a parent may opt to save the child's place in class by putting the child's account "on hold". In order for this to occur, written arrangements and administrative approval must take place at least 4 weeks in advance of the first day of absence. [Additionally, a \\$75.00 holding fee per 4-week period](#) and the first tuition payment for the child's return must be paid before the child begins the leave of absence.

Parent-Teacher Communication (Report Cards, Conferences)

Conferences for St. Mary students are held twice yearly. Parents of all students are encouraged to attend both fall and spring conferences in order to be well informed about their child's progress in all areas of development.

St. Mary CDC Conferences Held In:

- In November
- In May

If you have a question for a teacher or an administrator, please call, email, send a note or speak to them directly. ***Please DO NOT give oral messages to the bus driver.*** The bus driver would be happy to take your written note to the appropriate staff member. This method of communication will ensure that the message is properly transmitted.

Field Trips & Special Events

Field trips and special events are announced monthly in newsletters, notes and calendars from the classroom teacher and the administration. Field trips can include walks taken around the grounds of our school. Walks are not announced on calendars. Parents have already given permission for field trips by filling out the field trip section on his/her child's information form.

PLEASE READ ALL NOTICES!

It is the parents' responsibility to take seriously correspondences received from the school. In this way, they and their children will be prepared for these specially planned events. Children whose parents neglect to read these reminders are often very upset when they arrive in class unprepared.

Fees incurred by participation in field trips and special events will be added to the monthly statement. Students who are scheduled to attend on a particular day will be billed for that field trip whether or not they attend. For field trips and special events, we have to reserve class spaces in advance, and we are responsible to pay the contracted amount regardless of the head count the day of the event. Parents reserve the right to keep their child home if they do not approve of a particular field trip. Children participate only in the field trips on the days that they are contracted to be in school unless otherwise notified by the teacher or administration. Trips will be scheduled on a rotating basis in order to accommodate the different class schedules. **Children must be 3 years old in order to accompany the classes on a field trip. This included sibling of students participating in the field trip.**

Birthday Celebrations

Each child and adult at our school is a gift from God who is celebrated for his/her unique gifts and personality. When birthdays arrive, we are happy to recognize this event with a simple celebration at school. Typically the class sings *Happy Birthday* and the birthday child distributes an optional simple treat to eat for snack time. However, in order to respect the learning environment and the dignity of the families who attend, we ask that you follow these guidelines.

1. Speak with your child's teacher at least a week in advance of a birthday to be sure that a particular day will accommodate the recognition of a birthday. At times there are field trips or other special event which would make sharing a birthday treat difficult. At this time, food allergies or restrictions may be discussed.
2. Keep birthdays simple. A small dessert that is ready to serve works best. **We discourage:**

- a. Cakes which need to be cut
 - b. Goody bags
 - c. Piñatas
 - d. Asking that children from other rooms be allowed to join a particular child's classroom, even if they are siblings or cousins.
 - e. Special events such as clowns (a surprising number of children have a fear of clowns.)
 - f. Special guests- this should be limited to a class celebration
3. It is best to send a birthday treat in with a child when they arrive at school for the day. If a treat must be delivered later in the day, please adhere to the teacher's time frame. Lunch and/or snack time occurs at set times. If a delivery is delayed, instructional activities may have to be interrupted or even eliminated. Additionally, children are easily upset when schedules or plans do not work out as promised. These disappointments can be eliminated by sending treats in with the child at the beginning of his/her day.
 4. We discourage passing out invitations to birthday parties at school unless every child in a class is being invited to the party. Feelings are easily hurt in this situation. Instead, please mail or email these types of invitations. A list of addresses can be obtained from your child's teacher.
 5. If your child's birthday occurs during the summer months or during the holiday time and your child would like to have his/her birthday recognized at school, please speak with your child's teacher to arrange an appropriate date. This is often called an "un-birthday" and gives a child the chance to celebrate their special day with his/her classmates.

School Liturgy

An important mission of our schools is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. During the school year, we celebrate school liturgies on **Wednesday** mornings. Besides hearing the Word of God and celebrating the sacrament of Eucharist, children learn many things by attending our weekly liturgy. They are learning to behave respectfully and reverently as well as how to take responsibility for themselves when in the care of their teachers and assistants. Therefore, we are asking parents, visiting grandparents, aunts and uncles to allow children to remain with their classes instead of sitting with the family members, so that our children can learn these valuable lessons.

Transportation

Transportation is available for students living in Troy. **Children must be at least 3 years old to use our transportation, including field trips.** Forms are found in the registration folders, or they can be found in the main office.

Our bus driver has been properly trained and holds the appropriate State of Michigan driver's licenses for the vehicles that he drives.

Michigan law does not require children who ride school buses to sit in a child safety seat or booster seats.

Parents and child(ren) should be ready and waiting at the bus stop 5 minutes in advance of the designated time for both pick-up and drop-off times. If passengers are not ready, they risk the chance of being left.

There is an extra fee for bus service which will be added to your child's monthly invoice.

Rates for children in the Troy area are \$8.00/ daily round trip & \$5.00 one-way. For availability of bus service, please contact the administration.

Transportation Rules

Our school is pleased to be able to provide transportation for your child(ren). In order for our system to run smoothly and allow all students to arrive at school on time, there are a few rules we would like you to follow. Thank you in advance for following these rules.

- Make sure that your child is ready and waiting for the bus 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- Some helpful hints to be sure your child is ready on time are as follows.
 - Children should have bathroom needs taken care of well in advance of the bus' arrival.
 - The night before lay out the following items.
 - Shoes/boots and snow pants, book bags, back packs, lunches & coat
- A parent/ guardian must be dressed and ready to walk the child to the bus a minimum of 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- The driver's assistant will help the children get on & off the bus.
- Buses & vans are not allowed to enter parking lots to pick up or drop off students.
- **If parents need to communicate with the school or teacher**, send a written note in the child's bag, email the teacher, or call the school office at 248-619-0530. Please do not ask the bus driver or the assistant to deliver an oral message for you. Their main responsibility is safely transporting the children to and from school. Teachers of St. Mary students check bags of bus students daily for messages.
- If you are not home when the driver arrives to drop your child off, the child will be taken back to school and the parent will be responsible for picking up their child from school. **Your account will be charged for child care while your child is being cared for in child care at the school. The bus driver WILL NOT return to your house a second time** to drop off your child.
 - When a child must be returned to school, in addition to being charged for child care a "Return Bus Fine" may also apply.
- Drop off/ pick up locations can only be changed in writing in advance. This is subject to approval by an administrator. Do not expect to call the school or bus driver to make a last minute change of this location.
- **Parents are asked to** contact the school in writing the day before or by phone no later than 7 AM on that day **if their child will not be riding the bus** on a particular day,
- **DO NOT CONTACT DRIVER ABOUT CHANGES IN RIDING THE BUS.**
- **ONLY CONTACT THE SCHOOL REGARDING BUS SERVICE.**
- The driver will not be phoning families to warn them of his arrival, since driving and talking on the phone are not a safe practice. **Do not expect a call from the driver.**
- **If a child is sick, please call the school at 248-619-0530 in the morning and leave a message.**

You and your child should be waiting at your bus stop before the bus arrives. We thank you in advance for having your children ready to board the bus.

Drivers are instructed to limit waiting to 30 seconds total at each stop in order to stay on schedule.

Transportation fees are billed monthly, and are not adjusted for absences, snow days, or holidays.

A transportation fine or the risk of being dropped from a bus route may apply in cases where these rules are repeatedly broken.

Emergency Drills & Building Safety

(Also referenced in Staff Manual)

We have several types of drills to make sure that our school is as safe as possible under all circumstances. ***Before reviewing our emergency plan, there are three things that you can do personally that will help to increase our safety here at St. Mary.*** They are very simple. Please remember the following:

1. Children must be signed in and out daily. This is a confirmation of our attendance records and is required by law.
2. If any contact information changes, please notify an administrator in writing immediately so that we may change school records. Some of this information includes but is not restricted to the following: home & cell phone numbers, emergency contact people, addresses, place of work, work phone number, people to whom your child may be released, etc.
3. **Whenever you enter or exit the building, you must make sure that the door closes completely behind you. This only takes a moment, however it is critical to the security of the building.**

We do have emergency evacuation and tornado plans that are posted in each classroom, in the church and in the narthex. We practice fire and tornado drills throughout the school year according to the State of Michigan licensing rules.

We also have an emergency plan that covers intruders, threats, and serious accidents/injuries. We have set up a code green, yellow and red alert system and practice each of these on a regular basis so that students and staff and children can remember the procedures. Since we work with very young children, we are careful of how we present these drills to the children. To avoid instilling fear, we will use general explanations like, "We are practicing a code yellow or code red to make sure that we can always be safe in our school." The emergency plans listed here are only excerpts from the much more detailed Emergency Plans which are found in the staff manual. These emergency procedures are reviewed and practiced throughout the year as a staff in order to plan as well as possible for the unexpected. What follows is an excerpt from our Staff Manual. The complete plan is contained in the St. Mary Staff Manual.

1. **CODE GREEN ALERT-BUILDING EVACUATION PROCEDURE (Changed 11/21/12 for code green, yellow, red & blue):**
 - a. If a CODE GREEN alert is announced or fire alarm goes off, all building occupants are to evacuate the building. The route will be the nearest UNOBSTRUCTED path that leads to the NW corner of the parking lot where their class would assemble in the **PRE-ARRANGED MEETING AREA**. Stay to the north side of the lot to allow firefighting equipment access to the main entrance.
 - b. Teachers/ Aides are to ***bring attendance record for the day*** and account for all children at the pre-arranged meeting area.
 - c. Teachers are to ***lock classroom doors upon exiting rooms.*** (No others can mistakenly go into the rooms.)
 - d. Staff & children should not take time to put on boots, coats, etc. Shoes are on when children sleep.(10-09)
 - e. All occupants are to wait at the pre-arranged meeting area until the all-clear is given either by the police or fire commander, or an administrator.

- f. If the plastic cover to the alarm box is accidentally removed, a beeping sound from the box is activated. The fire alarm is NOT automatically activated. This can be turned off by a sliding a small red switch on the inside of the top of the plastic cover. An administrator can help with this. Be sure no one pulls the switch down when the box is opened as this pull switch will activate the alarm. (10-09)

2. CODE YELLOW ALERT - MINIMUM SECURITY LOCK-DOWN:

- a. If a CODE YELLOW alert is announced, Teachers/ aides are to visually sweep all hallways and direct students & visitors to go to their classrooms.
- b. All classroom doors are to be locked by teacher or assistant from outside (check that handle doesn't move) (added 1-08) after 3 minutes, or when all students are accounted for-whichever is first (11/28/12). Remain in classrooms and continue with daily activities until all clear given.
- c. Students who are in the narthex for recess or class will return to classrooms to stay with classroom teacher. If classroom teacher is out of the building 2 classes will be combined. (added 10/5/09)
- d. DO NOT admit any unknown people into the classrooms.
- e. Shut classroom blinds (Added 11/21/12)

3. CODE RED ALERT - MAXIMUM SECURITY LOCK-DOWN:

- a. If a CODE RED alert is announced, Teachers/ aides are to visually sweep all hallways and direct students & visitors to go to their classroom unless the way is obstructed. In this case go to nearest classroom. (Changed 11/21/12)
 - i. Students in the narthex will go to their classrooms unless the way is obstructed. In this case students go to nearest classroom. (Changed 11/21/12)
 - ii. Students in the computer/ Spanish/ Music room should be sent to their classrooms unless the way is obstructed. In this case students go to nearest classroom. (Changed 11/21/12)
- b. All classroom doors are to be locked by teacher or assistant immediately (from outside). Turn off lights (Including computer monitors), close blinds and shades.
- c. Move students away from glass or open exposures. Create blockade if needed. (11/2013)
- d. Verify attendance & post appropriate card. Green=all students accounted for, all is well; Red= student is missing (place # of kids missing on card or extra student or guest in room.) (11/2013)
- e. DO NOT admit anyone into the classroom.
- f. Administrators check bathrooms, hallways for students & bring to nearest classroom (11/2013)
- g. Administrator or designee call rooms to check if all are accounted for. (added 5/7/07)
- h. Administrator calls a priest (Fr. Mina, Fr. Max, Fr. Mark) to inform him of lockdown. (11/2013)
- i. Stay in position until all clear given by administrator, designee, law enforcement or fire officials. (4/28/08)

4. SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURE - BEFORE SCHOOL OPENS:

- a. In case of emergency closings due to severe weather, utility failure or other emergencies, St. Mary CDC will announce the closing on all the local Detroit television stations, or on the WXYZ website at www.wxyz.com/schoolclosings. Additionally, parents who have signed up for the *Remind* one- way texting service will receive a text from the school if school and/or child care has closed for the day.(Sign up for *Remind* occurs at registration. See an administrator if you have any question about signing up for this service.) (08/2014)
- b. If it is determined, for whatever reason, that St. Mary will not be open for the day, the Administrator will post closure by 6 AM.
- c. See Parent Handbook for explanations on how to determine whether only school or both school and child care is closed.

5. SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURE - AFTER SCHOOL IS IN SESSION:

- a. If it is determined that the school must be closed for whatever reason after school is already in session, the Administrator will announce the closing on all the local Detroit television stations, or on the WXYZ website at www.wxyz.com/schoolclosings.

- b. Additionally, parents who have signed up for the *Remind* one- way texting service will receive a text from the school if school and/or child care has closed for the day. A parent or emergency contact will be expected to come and pick up children. (08/2014)
- c. Teachers will require all parents to sign their child out at the classroom.
- d. All sign-out sheets will then be turned into the office at the end of the day, or when staff is dismissed.

During Code Yellow and Red Security Lock-Downs, it is important that you know that NO ONE (even a parent) is admitted to the building and NO ONE will leave until we have had an all clear from the police authorities. Your child or children will be safely in our care during this time. It is important that we follow the no entry/exit guidelines for everyone to insure the safety of those inside the building. So as not to jam up phone lines, teachers will call all parents of children in their classes from their cell phone or class phone to assure you of your child's safety. You will be reunited with your child as soon as it is safe.

Please know that we are continually evaluating our emergency and safety procedures. Our goal is to provide a safe, healthy, Christian environment. We are open to suggestions for improvement that you may have.

Pesticide

The Center is involved in a pest management program with Orkin. Pesticides or traps are used inside and outside the building to eliminate the possibility of ants, bugs and rodents around the facility. The building and grounds are inspected monthly and pesticides and/or traps are used as needed. Liquid or aerosol insecticide applications will not be applied in a room unless the room will be unoccupied by children for not less than 4 hours or longer if required by the pesticide. Parent notification of pesticide application will be given in advance via email and by posting the notice on our school news bulletin board.

If there are any questions regarding the application of the pesticide or the ingredients involved, or to view our Integrated Pest Management Program, please ask to see the Orkin Binder located in the main office. General questions regarding pesticides can be answered by Poison Control at 800-222-1222. For more specific information about our program, contact Orkin Commercial Services at 248-356-5081. **Annual notice of pesticide application is contained in the Parent Manual which is emailed to parents in September of each year as required by PA 451, The Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.** Additionally, the Parent Manual is emailed to parents at the time of enrollment.

Changes to Handbook

St. Mary Child Development Center reserves the unilateral rights to add, delete, or amend the policies and procedures provided in this Handbook upon thirty (30) days' written notice to the parent. Changes to policies and/or procedures contained in the Handbook are effective only if set forth in writing by the administration.

Parent Handbooks are emailed to parents yearly in September or at registration when enrolling at a time other than for the new school year.

[Please Note that during final registration all parents have signed a notice that states that they have read and understand the contents of the Parent Handbook.](#)