

St. Mary Preschool
3 Year old Preschool
4 Year Old Kindergarten
2017-18



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Purpose

We are a Catholic Christian Three-year-old preschool and 4-year-old kindergarten serving children in the Richland County area between the ages of 3 and 5.

Philosophy of our Learning Center

The philosophy of our program revolves around the belief that a young child learns through play. We feel that children should be helped to acquire respect and sensitivity toward the feelings of others. Our program values multicultural diversity and appreciates the special qualities each individual child brings. The curriculum experiences will be planned with recognition of the needs and interests of the individual child. We feel that children should have meaningful concrete experiences, which are fundamental to later symbolic learning. Exploration and experimentation are basic to creative thinking and problem solving. Children should have opportunities for developing awareness and appreciation of aesthetic qualities, as well. Our plan is to provide an environment that will stimulate curiosity, a questioning attitude and an eagerness for learning all within an atmosphere of strong Christian values and beliefs.

Our preschool's philosophy mirrors NAEYC's philosophy. The preschool provides a safe and nurturing environment that facilitates learning in accordance with each child's age, interests, cultural background, and his/her physical, cognitive, social, emotional and linguistic development. Our teachers plan developmentally appropriate and meaningful activities that incorporate many different learning styles and multiple intelligences. At the 3K level, we utilize the *Learn Every Day* curriculum, which incorporates math, language arts, science, and social development into each and every day. Our 4K program is based on the highly touted *Happily Ever After* language arts program as well as the *Get Set for School Numbers & Math* curriculum. Students in 4K are also involved in learning through the core academic areas at a level appropriate to their stage of development.

The preschool focuses on the process of learning, rather than the product. When the process of learning is established the product will follow. All later education will be built upon the foundation established during the preschool years. It is our goal to provide a solid foundation, strong and well-grounded in developmentally appropriate practice, on which to build.

The experiences a child has at St. Mary Preschool are supplemental to those at home. From the family each child needs love, affection, acceptance, limits, consistency and stability. Our preschool strives to meet these same needs in addition to providing educational opportunities and enriching experiences.

St. Mary School Mission Statement: *St. Mary School is committed to the long-standing tradition of providing a high-quality Catholic and academic education in a Christ-centered faith environment focusing on the Catholic Virtues of brotherly love, generosity, faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, respect, and friendship.*

Hours of Operation

- The preschool is open from 7:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday. Before and after school care is available from 7:30 – 8:10 a.m. and again from 3:15 to 4:00 pm. This is included in the preschool tuition. Parents must sign their children up for after school care.
- 3-Year-Old Preschool runs from 8:10 – 3:15 M-F and will follow the calendar of the Richland School District for vacation and early dismissal days. There will also be 2 additional days generally one in September and one in March/April where the preschool will be closed for the bi-annual diocesan teacher inservices.
- 4-Year-Old Kindergarten will run from 8:10 a.m. to 3:15 and will follow the calendar of the Richland School District for vacation days and early dismissal days. There will also be 2 additional days generally one in September and one in March/April where the preschool will be closed for the bi-annual diocesan teacher inservices.
- The preschool will follow the Richland School District for school closings due to weather. Please listen to WRCO or WKOW Channel 27 for updates. If the district announces a delay (e.g. 2-hour delay), our preschool will not open until 9:30 a.m. If we have an early out due to weather, we will keep the preschool open until 4:30 as usual.
- 4K students are welcome to stay until 4:30 as long as there is room for them and this has been prearranged as a part of their schedule.

Admission Requirements

Students must *turn 3 by September 1 and be potty trained* in order to be admitted into the 3-year-old program. Students enrolling in 4K must be 4 years of age by September 1.

An Admissions Form must be submitted along with a \$100 deposit in order to hold a spot in the learning center. This deposit will be applied towards tuition. The proper health and immunization forms must be submitted at the time services are rendered (see *Records* p. 4).

Tuition

Three and Four-Year-Old Preschool

Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday- Friday	7:30 – 4:30
Weekly Rate	\$125
3 days a week	\$100.00
2 days a week	\$70
Half Day	\$25

Full Day 5 year old Kindergarten

Tuition: \$1500 per year**

Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

*Tuition for the 3 and 4-year-old programs is due in advance of services given. Tuition is paid through the Smart Tuition online payment program. Emails to enroll in Smart Tuition will be sent to the family upon enrollment. It is up to the family to sign up for the preferred payment plan.

No refunds are given for student absences.

** Tuition is \$1500 for the first child and \$1400 for each additional child for Catholic families (\$2500 and \$2400 for non-Catholic families).

Contracts for 3 and 4 Year Old Programming

Contracts are required at the time of enrollment for each child. Deadlines stated on contract applications apply so that appropriate planning of staff can be made. **Failure to turn in contracts by specified deadlines could result in losing your child's slot. Our preschool is not a drop-in center. Families are charged according to their child's contracted days. There are no discounts for days the child does not attend due to vacations, illness or any other reason. Any changes in a child's schedule during the school year must be done through the school office.**

Each family will receive a personal calendar of service days covered under their contract with St. Mary Preschool. We charge according to the plan selected by the family. *Credit is not given for any other missed days (e.g. vacation, illness, weather...)*

Our preschool is led by the principal of St. Mary School. Parents are encouraged to talk directly with their child's teacher regarding concerns. If concerns still exist after talking with the teacher, please contact Principal Vicki Faber or Associate Principal Stacia Kohlstedt at 647-2422. If your concerns persist, please contact the pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Msgr. Roger Scheckel at 647-2621.

Children's Records

Before your child's first day we must have this paperwork:

- Application Form
- Alternate Arrival/Release Agreement
- Contract for Services Form
- Health History and Emergency Care Plan Form
- Day Care Immunization Record
- Family Information Form
- Health History and Emergency Care Plan (giving permission to give any medication including sunscreen and bug spray)

Recommended forms include: Physical Examination Record and Dental Examination Form

It is important that we have all of this paperwork so that we know the necessary information about your child. Without this information we cannot allow your child to be dropped off at the preschool. If you ever need to change any of the information, please let us know and we will be more than happy to get a new set of paperwork for you. It is very important that your records stay up to date.

Health Policy

Immunizations

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, childhood immunizations are the leading reason children have remained healthy for more than 50 years. The viruses and bacteria that cause diseases still exist, so vaccines are still needed to protect children. State law requires that your child be immunized before attending a daycare setting with other children. Remember, immunizations are one of the most important steps in keeping your child healthy. Immunize your child based on your physician's schedule (it does change...). It's important that your child is seen by a health professional on a regular basis, rather than just being seen when your child is unhealthy.

* The “Immunization Record” must be completely filled out with the month and date of each vaccination in a series and must be signed by a parent or guardian.

Information About Allergies/Other Health Concerns

Any health concerns or allergies indicated by caregivers or medical personnel will be noted on a posted sheet, along with the child’s picture for all staff members to view. This will be placed in our office area and in our kitchen area to alert every one of potential concerns for your child. If your child has been prescribed an Epi-pen for more severe allergens and possible anaphylactic shock, his prescribed Epi-pen will accompany your child’s teachers any time they leave the building. If your child has doctor’s orders for any medical treatment while at daycare. Please be sure you return your completed *Authorization to Administer Medication Form*, with the medication in its original container.

Physical Requirement

State law prevents us from admitting your child to daycare until you have returned the “Child Health Report” properly completed by your child’s health professional. This exam must be completed no earlier than six (6) months prior to daycare beginning. All forms will be completed and turned in 30 days after the child’s starting date at the Center. A child will not be allowed to participate at the Center until all forms are completed and turned in by the scheduled date.

*A follow-up health examination will be needed at least once every 2 years after admission.

Dental Exam

A child’s dental health has a big effect on a child’s comfort, appearance, acceptance by others and ability to learn. If you are unable to afford regular dental care, UW Madison and Ronald McDonald offer a great opportunity if you are not insured or underinsured. The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile is a dental office on wheels that visit our area at least once a year. You will need an appointment, so watch our local paper for information on dates and times.

Attendance Procedures

Each parent of a 3K student will sign his/her child in/out on the appropriate forms in the classroom upon arrival and departure. The State of Wisconsin has instituted a law that requires centers to call families when a child does not attend during contracted times. Please help us by calling before 8:30 a.m. if your child will not be attending. If you have not called us we will call you by 9:30 a.m.

Drop Off and Pick Up of Children

An adult must accompany all children entering the building and into the classroom. It is important that the teacher see you drop off the child, which also allows us to notify you of any information that may need to be addressed. We ask our parents of 3K children to sign your child in and out in our preschool sign-in log in each classroom. Teachers arrive at the school early enough to prepare for the day’s activities. This time is needed for preparation so please do not bring your child earlier than five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival time.

Please let us know of any change in your scheduled plans. If your child does not arrive within 20 minutes of his scheduled check-in, we will start contacting those people on his emergency forms to ensure and verify his safety.

Dismissal

4K students may ride the school bus. Students are picked up at St. Mary School at 3:15 M-F.

Be prompt when picking up your child. If you are going to be late please call St. Mary School to let us know. This way your child (and we) will know that you are okay and will be coming shortly. We ask that you please sign our log when taking your child out of the building. Even if you are planning to return after a short medical appointment, please sign in and out on the sheet so we can verify your child's attendance. Children will be released only to their parents or authorized person(s) listed on the enrollment forms. If the teacher doesn't know the person picking up the child they will be asked to show a photo I.D. to identify who they are and confirm their identity. Children are not to leave the building unless accompanied by an authorized adult. A written note must be sent to notify the teachers if someone other than the legal guardian is picking up the child or the person(s) authorized on the enrollment forms. Children feel safer and more secure when their schedule is consistent. We encourage you to keep this in mind as you drop off and pick up your children.

Form for alternate pick up. http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/forms/pdf/DCF_F_CFS0104_e.pdf

Late Pickups

Parents need to be respectful of teachers' time and planned activities after hours. Late pick-ups can result in unplanned conflicts for staff's personal schedules. If you are running late it is requested that you call. In the event you are late picking up your child, staff will attempt to contact you. After sixty minutes with no response, Richland Center police will be notified. Staff will follow the police department's suggestions and remain with the child until the situation is resolved through parent or law enforcement arrival. Once law enforcement arrives, police will take responsibility for the child.

There will be a series of late fees for any child left at the center after 4:30 (the end of all educational programming at the Center). A late fee of \$5/child will be assessed for any time past 4:30 per every 15-minute interval. Late fees will be assessed based on parental check-in and staff records.

Promptly pick your child up after checking out on the check-out form. Staff cannot leave until all children are under a parent's care. Habitual failure to check your child in or out may result in a discretionary fee of \$10.00 per occurrence.

Sickness

Keep Your Child Home Under These Conditions

- Undiagnosed rash with a fever.
- Until 24 hours after a fever.
- Until a meal has been retained after a child has vomited.
- When eyes are mattering (conjunctivitis/pink eye).
- A cold with severe coughing, nasal discharge, or sore throat.
- Until a case of head lice has been treated and you have removed all nits.

Be sure to send a "healthy" child to school. If the teachers see evidence of ill health, they will contact you to arrange to send the child home. In cases of illness, please call St. Mary School at 647-2224.

If your child contracts a communicable disease (chicken pox, strep throat, etc.), please let us know as soon as possible so we may post a notice and watch for symptoms in other children. Children may return to classes after they have been absent for the recommended period of time.

Children Who Become Sick at School

Children who become ill at the Center will be isolated within sight and hearing of a staff person until the parent or other authorized person takes the child home. *Parents will have one hour to pick up the child from school.* Parents are required to supply the preschool with written permission to obtain medical care or advice in the event of an emergency, accident, or questionable communicable disease.

Administration of Medicines

Staff can administer medicine as needed. However, all medication must be in the original bottle and bear the child's name. We must have written authorization from the legal guardian allowing preschool personnel to give medication in the dosage prescribed by the physician as well as over-the-counter medication other than Tylenol or Ibuprofen (*these are covered on the Family Information Form*). Please complete the mandatory form "Authorization to Administer Medication" and give it to us along with the medicine. All medication administered to children will be recorded in the medical logbook.

Medical Logbook

The preschool maintains a daily medical log to record any injuries received by a child or medication dispensed to a child. The book is available if you wish to view **your own** child's entries.

Communicable Disease

Parents are asked to notify the preschool within 24 hours if their child has been exposed to any communicable disease.

The preschool will notify all parents in writing or email when the children in the program have been exposed to a communicable disease. Further, the program will notify the County Public Health Department when any illness or condition specified by law or regulation is present in the program - within 24 hours of the program's awareness of this situation.

Head Lice

The preschool has a NO-NIT POLICY. If lice are detected on your child, you will be notified to immediately pick him/her up. Children will not be permitted to return to school until a teacher confirms that there are no lice or their eggs (nits) in the child's hair. A parent must be present upon re-admitting your child. Information will be provided as to the procedures for lice/nit removal.

Outdoor Activities

It is the preschool's policy that ALL children who are well enough to be at the preschool should play outside in above ten-degree weather, factoring in the wind chill. Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play including coats, jackets, socks and shoes, snow pants, boots, hats and mittens. All teachers must provide a minimum of 45 minutes of gross motor activity during the day for each preschool program.

If the outside temperature is in question it will be checked on the Sycamore weather page before going outside. As a general rule the children are kept inside if the outside temperature is 0 degrees or less, with wind chill. Anyone with a medically sound reason to remain indoors will be allowed to do so, providing they have a note from their parent or physician.

Clothing

Children need to be dressed casually, ready for play and messy art projects. Children are encouraged to be creative with art and other activities. Dress your child in clothing that is easily washed. Sometimes stains do not come out so choose each day's attire with this in mind. We ask that you have an extra set of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) in a labeled plastic bag here at school in case of an accident or mess. It is important for children to be dressed comfortably in order to fully enjoy their day. **In an effort to avoid foot and ankle injuries, flip flops are not allowed.** In winter, your child will need to have a warm winter coat, snow pants, boots, mittens or gloves, hat, etc. **Please label all extra and outdoor clothing with your child's name.** If your child is sent home in clothing provided by the center, wash it and return it to your child's teacher within the next few days.

Arrival at School

We ask our parents of 3K students to bring their children in to the classroom, take off their outerwear and go to the bathroom with them to wash their hands. Please do this upon arrival to the bathroom and complete this task before dropping him/her off in the classroom. 4K students will do this with their teacher as a regular part of their morning routine.

Use of Sunscreen, Bug Spray, Hand Lotions, Chapstick

Sunscreen

Your child's teacher will apply sunscreen and insect repellent as needed if **you** so choose. The product information will be posted on our parent bulletin board. You may choose to use the preschool's provided sunscreen/insect repellent or you may provide your own. Permission for this is given on the *Health History and Emergency Care Record* specifying the specific sunscreen or insect repellent that should be used.

Hand Lotion/Chapstick

Hand lotion and Chapstick, will not be provided for the children, in any forms.

Parent/Guardian signature is needed on the preschool's *Authorization to Administer Medication Form* specifying the specific hand lotion and Chapstick, along with the product that you have provided.

Hand Washing

Hand washing, when done correctly, is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. A good hand washing technique is easy to learn and can significantly reduce the spread of infectious diseases among both children and adults.

How to wash your hands:

1. Wet your hands with warm running water.

2. Add soap, then rub your hands together, making a soapy lather. Do this away from the running water for at least 15 seconds, being careful not to wash the lather away. Wash the front and back of your hands, as well as between your fingers and under your nails.
 3. Rinse your hands well under warm running water. Let the water run back into the sink, not down to your elbows.
 4. Dry hands thoroughly with a clean paper towel. Then turn off the water with a clean paper towel and dispose in a proper receptacle.
- * These are the instructions your child will be given. They are based on recommendations by the American Medical Association.

It is important to encourage and help children to wash hands before eating, after playing outdoors or playing with pets, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their noses. Even though hands may appear to be clean, they may carry germs or microorganisms that are capable of causing disease.

Safety Policy

Employees

All of our caregivers must have a background check completed before they may begin working at our preschool. Another background check will be done after three years of employment. We make sure that all of our employees are trustworthy and an asset to our children. If any problems arise we will make sure that you are informed. We take pride in our employees and we want your children to get the best care that is available.

Staff Qualifications

We have very high expectations of our staff to ensure that we always provide the best at our preschool. To be hired, staff must have at least one year of experience in a pre-school setting, and have taken at least 2 courses in Child Development or Early Childhood Education. We prefer that all staff have a degree in Education, but it is not required. All staff members are required to enhance their education by continuing to take credits to acquire new and exciting information about how children learn and develop. The people selected for this position have been hired based on their warm, and friendly personality, sensitivity to the feelings and the needs of others, their ability to relate well to children and willingness to fulfill responsibilities in accordance with the philosophy of our Center. We are proud of the experience our staff has in working with children and our developmentally appropriate curriculum. We support program planning based on children's interests.

Educational Programming

Our preschool works to broaden each child's interests and understanding of the surrounding world through the guidance of qualified teachers and staff along with a variety of quality equipment, supplies and enriching experiences. Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are provided for each age group. Learning materials are multiracial, multicultural, non-sexist, and non-stereotypical. All teachers will have ongoing training providing them with a broad base of knowledge and an excellent understanding of child development. In addition to providing a curriculum which fosters language and cognitive skills, teachers plan and provide a rich variety of developmentally appropriate activities such as the following:

- **Dramatic Play** in which the children have a chance to express their feelings and ideas about the world they know – their homes, families and school. To dramatize this world,

we provide housekeeping toys, dress-up clothes, dolls, animal/people figures, trucks, cars, trains, thematic supplies and puppets.

- **Science and Nature Activities** in which children have an opportunity to investigate and observe the world through the use of scientific inquiry. Simple experiments are provided throughout the year.
- **Creative/Sensory Materials and Activities** that allow for self-expression and exploration through clay, easel paints, finger paints, collage materials, sand, glue/paste, sensory materials in tables, water, musical instruments, dancing and singing.
- **Large Motor/Active Play Activities** that include running, jumping, climbing, music and/or movement games. The children also have access to the playground.
- **Small Motor/Quiet Activities** that include the use of crayons, colored chalk, markers, books, tapes, CD's, puzzles, cutting, sewing cards, stringing beads, manipulative toys and simple games.
- **Self-help Routines** such as toileting, washing, eating, cleaning up, dressing and rest time.
- **Self-regulation Opportunities** that help each child develop self-control through activities that encourage listening, positive transitions, making appropriate choices, and accepting responsibility for one's own actions.
- **Social Opportunities** that help each child develop skills to interact appropriately with peers and adults.
- **Field Trips** to learn more about the world around us. Volunteer parental drivers are utilized when needed. Other activities are planned within walking distance of the preschool. Parents always have the option to allow their child to participate on a field trip.
- **Cultural Diversity:** The most obvious is the benefit of being immersed in a variety of cultural experiences. We also realize how important it is for children to learn other cultures' traditions and beliefs. We welcome family members who are willing to share their own culture to our students.

Assessment

Assessments will be done on your child. This means that we observe and gather information about what your child is doing and how he/she is progressing in relation to developmental milestones. We use many tools. Formal assessment activities are completed in both the 3 and 4-year-old programs. Parent feedback is also an important tool used in our assessments. You are the authority regarding your child and your input is extremely helpful to us in becoming acquainted with him/her. Evidence is collected while observing your child during work and play. Forms of evidence could be writing, coloring and cutting samples, conversations your child has had, anecdotal notes and observations of social interactions. When there is a question or concern regarding a child's growth and development, the evidence gathered can help us provide a focus to address the concern. We also enjoy sharing our observations of your child's growth with you.

As teachers, assessments give us a clearer understanding of how to plan and design our curriculum to best meet individual needs. If we find that the children are interested in a certain topic we can design the curriculum and environment to meet this interest. When we are able to integrate necessary concepts and skills into a theme that is interesting to them, we support their growth and learning. If, through the assessments, we see the children may be lacking a skill that is viewed as typically developing for a particular age, we can integrate this need into the curriculum or environment.

We work as a team between home and school when it comes to your child's development. You know your child best, and we know the developmental milestones of young children, as well as knowing your child in this setting. Sharing information between us builds a strong foundation. We look forward to sharing information and observations with you.

All children's records are kept confidential. Any information gathered concerning your child's growth and development is only accessible to the center's teaching and administrative staff. This information is only made accessible to others with the parent/guardian's written approval.

3-Year-Old Program Sample Schedule

- 7:30 – 8:30 **Children arrive.** Parents toilet & wash child's hands. Individual / Small Group Play - Children Choose Quiet Activities (Puzzles, Coloring, Books, lacing)
- 8:30-9:00 **Table Time*** and Bathroom Break
- 9:00 – 9:30 **Circle Time:** Prayers, Weekly Theme, Books, shapes, colors, counting, daily songs, letters, etc.
- 9:30 – 11:30 **Discovery Time*** - Small Group Activities, Art, Science, Mathematics, Language Arts, Center Play, Music and Movement, Free Play-all centers open
- 11:30 – 12:45 **Bathroom Break / Lunch/ Outdoor Play**
- 12:45 – 1:30 **Art or Crafts Activity / Music or Movement Activity**
- 1:30 – 2:30 **Nap Time/Rest Time** Those not sleeping after 30 minutes will work individually on skills with staff
- 2:45 – 3:15 **Story time, discussion of the day, prayers, prepare to go home.**
- 3:15 **3K programming is finished for the day!**

*DISCOVERY Learning Centers switched out weekly based on the theme being taught that week
TABLE TIME Table Tray Activities (Playdough, Manipulatives, Beads, Puzzles, Cutting, Pasting, Coloring, Legos), Kids go to tables.

4-Year-Old Kindergarten Program Sample Schedule

Our program is based on planned weekly or bi-weekly units in areas such as community helpers, dinosaurs, animals, space, the ocean, transportation, etc. We are open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

A typical day at the Center for the 4 year olds may include the following:

- 8:00 **Children arrive at school.** Parents will encourage the child to independently undress and hang clothing in appropriate area. (The sooner a child can do these skills independently, the better your child will feel about himself.) **Interest Centers** are available for child to choose.

- 8:30 **Gathering time** with morning meeting, music with Bible songs, weather, counting, shapes, colors, alphabet, stories, and/or themes/concepts. Prayers are said as a group at this time, as well as the Pledge.
- 9:00 **Happily Ever After Reading Program**
- 9:30 **Bathroom, snack and conversation time**
- 10:00 **Math**
- 10:30 **Discovery Time** with one-to-one teacher/child contact, including activities chosen by the child such as art, blocks, science, math, writing, dramatic play, creative play, fine and gross motor skills, books and music. The materials within these options are changed weekly.
- 11:15 **Bathroom and Lunch**
- 12:00 **Outdoor recess**
- 12:45 **Religious Instruction and table activity**
- 1:15 **Pack Up/Bathroom/ Rest/Quiet time on mats**
- 2:00 **Art (M/W/F) Science/Math Centers (T/TH)**
- 2:30 **Music (T/TH) Reading center, puzzles, file folder games, Ipad (M/W/F)**
- 2:50 **Bathroom, snack and conversation time.**
- 3:00 **Get dressed to go home/story- Recap the day**
- 3:15 **4K programming is finished for the day!**

Staff to Child Ratio

St. Mary Preschool strives to provide ratios of higher quality than the minimum guidelines. Child to staff ratios is dictated to all child care centers in the State of Wisconsin by the Department of Health and Family Services, under the Division of Children and Family Services, in the Wisconsin Administrative Code, HFS 46. The National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of NAEYC, sets even higher standards. As a private center, we are not required to follow the directives from the state of Wisconsin. However, realizing the benefits of low child to teacher ratios we do everything possible to meet or exceed these recommendations. The Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) table is printed below.

HFS 46 Table 46.05-D

Children's Ages	Ratio: Staff/Child	Maximum in a Group
3 yrs. to 4 yrs.	1:10	20
4 yrs. to 5 yrs.	1:13	24

Field Trip Policy

First hand experiences are a very important part of the program. Parents will be informed of field trips through a posting on our bulletin board and on the Sycamore website. Attendance on all field trips requires the caregiver’s signature of approval. You will be notified in advance of each field trip your child will be taking by vehicle. You will need to provide a state-approved car seat for trips. Parents will be asked to assist on field trips. A form needs to be completed by volunteer caregivers prior to transporting any children.

Field trips may be scheduled throughout the year. **Parents are required to sign up their child for each field trip.** Sign-up sheets will be emailed to you and also posted near the classroom

daily communication area. Occasionally, parents are asked to help with transportation. **Parents are asked to make advance payment of any admission fee to the classroom teacher. Parents also need to note beginning and ending times of the trips and adjust their schedules accordingly. If the child's entire class or the entire preschool is participating, failure to do this can create significant problems.**

Please be aware of the following when you assist on field trips:

- Drivers must have a valid driver's license and auto insurance
- Proper safety seats must be in the vehicle
- Vehicles must have current license plate
- Vehicles must pass inspection
- Vehicles must be enclosed (no open trucks)
- Appropriate seat belts must be worn by all in vehicle
- Vehicles must be clean, uncluttered and free of obstructions on the floor and seats
- Smoking is prohibited in the vehicles when children are being transported
- Doors are to be locked at all times that the vehicle is moving
- The children must remain seated when the vehicle is in motion
- The children may never be left unattended in any vehicle
- No one under 13 may occupy the front seat
- When going on a field trip, the cars must follow one another in a caravan formation

On the day of a field trip a written notice will be posted reminding parents where the class will be going and when they will be gone. A first aid kit will be taken along with a cell phone in case of an emergency.

Emergencies

Each room of the preschool has its own written plan of action in the event of a fire or tornado or other emergencies such as a lock down. Each room has a map of the building and what they need to do in each situation. Each month the preschool will practice the fire and tornado plan with the children. By doing the drills each month children should stay calm and in case of a true fire or tornado they will know what is expected of them. Our goal is to get everyone to a safe place as soon as possible.

If for any reason we need to evacuate the building, the preschool has a "safe zone" and you will be notified as to where your child will be at that time. We cannot disclose this information now, in case we need to evacuate due to an intruder.

It is our policy that each child has at least 2 emergency contact names on his/her information sheet. These people will be called if we are having difficulty contacting the parents due to an emergency, illness or anything else requiring immediate action.

Notification of Sexual Offender in the Community

At our preschool, our main goal is to keep each and every student safe. To meet this goal we are notified by the local law enforcement of any registered sexual offender who moves into the area. Any pictures will be provided for staff. We encourage you to go to familywatchdog.us to keep yourself informed and aware of any potential offender that may be in the area.

Supervision

Inside

While inside the preschool, a provider shall closely supervise each child to guide the child's behavior and activities. The teacher will prevent harm and assure safety at all times. Based on the ages and the needs of the children, you can be assured that staff ratio will be followed as recommended by the DHFS.

Outside

When outside, at least one provider, depending on the number of children, will be with the children and provide sight and sound supervision of them. If more than one teacher is outside, each employee will be assigned a different area to watch to ensure the safety of each child when outside. The maximum number of children in a group does not apply when children are napping, on field trips, outdoors and areas of the center reserved for eating.

Vacations, Absences, and Schedule Changes

There is no discount for days/hours missed due to vacation or illness for the 3K, or 4K programs. (By signing the contract you have reserved that slot for your child.) Days cannot be traded. Schedules cannot be changed on a daily or weekly basis. Any changes in schedule can only be done at the end of a quarter, must be permanent, and must go through the school office.

Nutrition

St. Mary School participates in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program offered through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Applications are included in the back to school packets or can be obtained by contacting the school office. They are also found online at

What Meals are Served

Children who attend any program in our preschool for the full day can access the following meals: morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Drinks are provided throughout the day, and water is always available. Hot lunches are served by the Center at a cost of \$2.40 per day and will meet the US Child and Adult Care Food Program minimum meal requirements. Our menus will be posted on the Sycamore website by the month. Snacks will be provided by you, the caregiver, on a rotating basis, unless otherwise requested by the caregivers. (i.e. if the child is on a special diet).

Special Diets

If a child requires a special diet, all staff will be notified, along with a note posted by the child's picture explaining what the special diet is. Special diets are listed in the same space as food allergies. If a child has a special diet, caregivers may feel free to pack necessary food items and send them along with the child.

Severe Allergies, Food Intolerances, and Other Health Issues

Our required paperwork provides space for documentation of severe allergies and or food intolerances/allergies. In addition to this written documentation, notify your child's classroom teacher with a written note so he/she can record this important information on the First Aid cabinet in the classroom. Your child's name and allergy will be displayed in a confidential manner unless you complete a permission form for us to display it openly in the classroom. If there is medication that the preschool needs to have for emergencies, please give it to your

child's teacher with the completed administration permission form. We cannot administer medication without this completed form.

Treats/Snacks from Home

Parents will be scheduled for days on which they are responsible for bringing snacks. On your scheduled day for snack, we also request that you send in a bottle, frozen or other container of juice that we can make for the children in your child's class. **State regulations now require that we only serve juice that is 100% juice or packed in its own natural juices.** We will choose to follow this regulation as it is in the best nutritional interest of our students. Caregivers may send an alternative snack along with their child if they would rather. If caregivers do send along snacks, we ask that you please send in a healthy, nutritious snack. We will provide an informational brochure to provide a guide for bringing in proper snacks and portions, as well as suggestions. Make sure snacks do not pose a choking hazard for the child. Soft drinks (soda), candy and gum are not allowed at the center for children. We encourage children to drink 100% juice, milk, and water. You will be notified of any child who has any food sensitivities so that you will be aware and not mistakenly send in the wrong food and cause a child to have a reaction.

Policy on Seconds

Each child will be offered a serving of a nutritious snack. Snacks are served mid-morning, and in the afternoon. Snacks are in place to hold the child over until the next meal and are encouraged to be a healthy food such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, nuts, yogurt, enriched grain products, etc. Each child will be given the recommended amount of food for a child his age during lunch. Lunch will be provided through the Center, based on USDA recommendations for serving size. For those children wishing to have more, seconds will be available on fruits, vegetables, breads and milk.

How Food is Served

Lunch will be served in the church undercroft. The students will go through the regular lunch line with assistance from our staff. Preschool students sit together at tables appropriate to their size. We encourage all children to at least try a variety of the foods being served. We want mealtimes to be a pleasant socialization time as well as an opportunity to eat, so we encourage conversation as well as discussing appropriate manners.

Access to Food Throughout the Day

Children who are in the preschool the full day will receive the snacks and meals stated above. This schedule is set up so that no child goes longer than 3 hours between meals. Fresh drinking water is always available, and encouraged, throughout the day.

Cost of the Meals

A meal plan is available for each child at a cost of \$2.40 per day. This is determined in the Contract for Services and is paid at the same time tuition payments are made, but with a separate check. We are proud of our menus and food provided here at St. Mary, which makes us better able to furnish high-quality, nutritious meals and snacks. Our goal is to provide healthy diets and establish healthy eating habits for our children. If a parent would like to join their child for lunch, they should let the school know by 8:30 a.m. Cost for an adult meal is \$4.00.

Feeding Children

Children at the preschool are expected to be able to feed themselves. We will cut up larger pieces of food into bite-sized pieces. We may encourage someone to “try a food” or “take one more bite.” However, we will not “spoon feed” anyone. The child should be able to eat all items on his plate independently with little or no assistance. If a child has physical limitations, we will certainly accommodate his needs. We encourage children to eat their lunch, but they will **never** be forced to finish everything. However, if they do take seconds, they will be encouraged to eat more of it, since they actually requested the additional serving. We want children to realize that food is always available for them to eat, but taking and not eating seconds is not following our virtues.

Hygiene

Tooth Brushing

Each child is welcome to bring a toothbrush. Our staff will assist children with brushing their teeth after lunch each day if they come to school with a toothbrush. Parents can decide whether or not to have their children brush their teeth at the center.

Hand Washing

Hand washing, when done correctly, is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. A good hand washing technique is easy to learn and can significantly reduce the spread of infectious diseases among both children and adults.

How to wash your hands*:

1. Wet your hands with warm running water.
2. Add soap, then rub your hands together, making a soapy lather. Do this away from the running water for at least 15 seconds, being careful not to wash the lather away. Wash the front and back of your hands, as well as between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Rinse your hands well under warm running water. Let the water run back into the sink, not down to your elbows.
4. Dry hands thoroughly with a clean paper towel. Then turn off the water with a clean paper towel and dispose in a proper receptacle.

* These are the instructions your child will be given. They are based on recommendations by the American Medical Association.

It is important to encourage and help children to wash hands before eating, after playing outdoors or playing with pets, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their noses. Even though hands may appear to be clean, they may carry germs or microorganisms that are capable of causing disease.

Potty Training

Children are to be potty trained upon admission and are not to come to the preschool in diapers. We do not have diapering facilities located in our preschool. Parents are responsible for potty training their children. We will work with parents to follow through on this training. Children will also be encouraged to use toilet facilities and redress/fasten their own clothing as

appropriate. Developmentally appropriate independence is encouraged. Children having problems with using the toilet may be asked to find alternative programming.

Physical Activity

Making sure children are physically active is a big part of staying healthy. Physical activity behavior patterns are established early in life. Physically active children become active adults. Since physically active people are healthier, they feel more confident and happy and are able to sleep better. In addition to setting the foundations for adulthood, children who are active perform better at school, develop better social/emotional skills, are able to manage stress, have more stamina, and have increased self-esteem. Most forms of physical activity are great fun and are a way for children to meet friends and develop long-term relationships. With those thoughts in mind, we will do everything possible to keep your child active and healthy!

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is very important in the education of a young child. You are your child's first teacher and your role will continue as that throughout their school years. Your involvement may include:

- Reading to and with your child
- Communicating with your child's teacher on a regular basis
- Having a positive attitude toward school
- Reading all correspondences from school (hard copies and on the Sycamore website)
- Volunteering in and out of the classroom
- Working on suggested activities with your child

We want this school experience to be positive and rewarding for your child and for you. You are welcomed and encouraged to visit and participate with us. Please let us know ahead of time if you plan to spend time with us. (Lunch can be purchased by calling ahead and reserving a tray.) When we all work together, we will help your child build a strong, moral foundation for learning and exploring.

Shaken Baby Syndrome

Shaken Baby Syndrome occurs when an infant or young child is violently shaken. The shaking may only last a few seconds, but it can cause severe brain damage and even death.

Effective April 1, 2007, the law requires all childcare employees, substitutes, volunteers who are considered for ratio purposes, assistants, and everyone else who works directly with children 5 years of age and younger to complete a training on Shaken Baby Syndrome. The law requires each person to be trained only once. The preschool will provide an annual review for those who have already received the initial training. The training will be provided to all new employees as they are hired with our center.

Multiple Residences, Legal Custody, Court Orders/Records

Please let us know if information must be communicated or mailed to more than one parent or address. We want to support enrolled children by communicating with those who are important in a child's life. Please advise the center as to any issues pertaining to legal custody, court orders or records with each of your children. We are required by law to have copies of any documents that pertain to billing or visitation. Other directives or requests in regard to visitation or custody disputes must be in writing from the parent, court or attorney. Information about your child's care with us will be released to both parents unless specified differently in a court order.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

St. Mary Preschool has a goal of strengthening and supporting families. Children are observed regularly for signs of injury, illness, or abnormal behavior. Unusual observations will be documented in detail in the medical logbook. Observations that require intervention will be reported to the principal as per HFS 46.07 (6) (a) and then to required agencies as listed in HFS 46.04(8) (a & b). http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications/pdf/dcf_p_pfs0101.pdf

All caregivers are required to report any known or suspected child abuse to the county department of human services or local law enforcement agency within 24 hours. Employees and volunteers are required to receive training on child abuse and neglect laws, how to identify children that have been abused or neglected, and the procedure for reporting child abuse. You may be questioned about a bruise or cut on your child. We will also keep a written log of any such markings. Please don't be offended by the questions. We hope you'll understand that answering to the best of your knowledge will help ensure the health and safety of your child. All caregivers must complete the safe environment training through the Diocese of La Crosse on an annual basis.

Any staff member who physically or verbally abuses a child or another staff member will be dismissed.

Confidentiality

All records and information on families and children will be kept confidential. Children's records are accessible only to the principal, teachers, office personnel and the parents of the child. Information will not be released to unauthorized parties without parental consent.

Concealed Carry Policy

DCF 251.06(2) (c) addresses the presence of firearms and ammunition in a licensed group childcare center as follows:

DCF 251.06(2) (c) Firearms, ammunition and other potentially dangerous items may not be kept on the premises.

Weapons are banned in all St. Mary buildings, even for those licensed to carry concealed weapons. Employees, even those licensed to carry concealed weapons, will be prohibited from carrying weapons while at work (this prohibition does not apply to law enforcement personnel).

Orientation of Children to the School

Attending the preschool for the first time can be emotionally trying or difficult for some children. A good start is not automatic, but it can happen, or come about sooner, if there is good planning and preparation at home and school. The acceptance of separation from parents is an important step in emotional maturity and should be made with confidence. The staff at the preschool is here to help, support and nurture you and your child with this big step.

Sometimes this separation can be difficult for you or your child. This is normal. To help your child prepare for this you can talk simply about the fun he/she will have and the process you will go through the first morning in preparing, transporting and dropping off your child. Tell him/her about some of the fun things that happen each day at the preschool. Because this is a new experience, you are encouraged to come to the Open House the week before school starts. On your child's first day, you may want to plan to stay for a short time at first to help your child feel

comfortable. Make sure your child is aware when you leave. It is best if you do not try to sneak out. Let him/her know when you will be back. This will give your child a sense of security even if there are tears.

If your child clings or cries, the teacher may help you by taking your child, with your permission, and holding him/her gently until he/she calms down. Sometimes the teacher may take the child for a walk or distract him/her with a quiet or fun activity.

Children usually stop crying within a few minutes of a parent's leaving and then do fine. This situation may be harder for you than it is for your child. For your peace of mind, feel free to wait in an area out of sight for your child to calm down. You may also call the office at 608 647-2422 to find out how your child is doing. Of course, it is completely fine to request that the teacher call you after a while to let you know how things are going. **If there are any special circumstances at home or otherwise, please let us know. A recent move, illness, new sibling, parent traveling or other disruptions in normal family routine can affect a child's behavior in many different ways. Children exhibit their concerns through behavior differently than we do as adults. We will keep this information confidential.**

Occasionally some children may still be apprehensive about this separation even after the first week or so. It takes some children longer than others to become acquainted and comfortable. Even after an initial happy adjustment of several weeks, a child occasionally suffers from a period of dependency. This is all normal.

Rest

All children, except those of school age (5K), will rest quietly for about an hour in the afternoon. State licensing regulations state "a child under 5 years of age in care for more than 4 hours shall have a nap or rest period." (HFS 46) Those who no longer sleep can look at a picture book on their cot. You may provide a blanket, "special stuffed animal" and/or a small pillow. These items will be sent home with the child on Fridays so that parents may wash them over the weekend. It is the preschool policy that a quiet rest time is beneficial to all children.

Birthdays

Birthdays can be celebrated at school. Children can bring a special treat to share. Due to possible allergies, at the beginning of each year, every parent will be contacted regarding children in your child's class who have allergies. You will then be asked to avoid that food when bringing in snacks or treats. Please contact your child's teacher in advance so that arrangements can be made and a small celebration planned.

Toys From Home

If a child brings a toy from home to share with the entire class, a reasonable attempt will be made to care for it. The center will not be responsible for loss or damage. Unless a toy is needed for show and tell or a similar activity, we suggest that your child's toys stay at home.

Consistency Between Home and School

Parents of preschoolers will let the teacher know what comforts their child and any other "tricks" that will aid the teachers in being as consistent as possible with their "at home" practices.

Discipline and Child Guidance

Our discipline policy is based on the philosophy that each child is a special gift from God. All children will have days when they need guidance and direction in assessing and selecting appropriate choices and behaviors. We will guide each child to develop self-discipline by providing consistent and age-appropriate limits. Classroom manners will be discussed by the teachers throughout the year. Behavior will be labeled “acceptable” or “unacceptable” by each teacher. Acceptable behaviors will be encouraged and rewarded at all times. Unacceptable behaviors will be discouraged and redirected; biting and hitting are unacceptable behaviors. A parent/teacher conference will be scheduled in the event that a student’s behavior becomes unmanageable despite all efforts by the staff. We believe that we are a direct support to parents in the raising of their children, and we will communicate any and all concerns as they occur.

Parent-Teacher Communication

We consider parent-teacher communication to be very important. The preschool is a learning environment in which parents and teachers are partners in caring for and educating each child. We are eager to have excellent communication between parents and staff and encourage parents to express comments, suggestions and concerns directly to the child's teacher and/or the Principal.

Following are communication opportunities and suggestions:

1. **Daily Communication.** Talking to teachers at the beginning or end of the day or session is possible if between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15a.m, or after 3:15. Please make other arrangements directly with the teacher if you need to talk to them outside of these times. We value the informal contacts we have with parents, but also need to be available to our children during class time.
2. **Talking With Classroom Teachers.** If the teacher is busy when you arrive please be considerate and wait until she/he is free to talk. All teachers have mailboxes if you would like to leave a note for them.
3. **Sycamore Student Management System Website.** Each family will be given access to the Sycamore website for the following information: Classroom news (posted at least weekly), tuition/lunch/milk balances, lunch menu, attendance, and school information are all available on the Sycamore website. Parents access this information site online at the following website: <https://www.sycamoreeducation.com/index.php?schoolid=> It is the responsibility of all parents to check the Sycamore website for information. Updates from the teachers will be posted at least weekly. Issues that are on a short timeline and need immediate attention will be emailed to parents.
4. **Conferences.** Conferences are scheduled twice a year. The first conference is meant for Goal-Setting. The parents/guardians have input regarding what skills the teacher will focus on with their child. Anyone desiring an additional conference can request one at any time.
5. **Newsletters.** All teachers write and post on Sycamore their weekly classroom news. *Parents are responsible for reading this information and responding to any requests in a timely manner.*
6. **Large Group Communication.** Occasionally it is important for the center to communicate with all parents. This is done through emails or at the sign in area in the preschool entrance. **Please pay attention to posted information in these areas.**

7. **Photographing Children.** Children at the preschool are occasionally photographed by the teacher for class use or by representatives of the media. If you object, please inform the Director and check the appropriate exemption boxes on the enrollment forms.
8. **Parent Involvement.** We have had some especially enriching experiences through parent involvement. We are always open to suggestions for activities and experiences from which the children can learn and benefit. We urge you to share your talents and knowledge with us!
9. **Family Activities.** An Open House will be held at the beginning of the academic year. Parents are also often invited to special events during the year, including music programs in December and May. These notices will be posted on Sycamore.
10. **Visiting.** We have an “open-door” policy, meaning parents are welcome to visit at any time. It’s sometimes nice to spend lunch or just a short break with your child. It’s helpful to remember that children do rest in the afternoon. Please let the office know by 8:10 that day, if you would like to join us for lunch.
11. **Health or Medical Concerns.** Preschool staff will contact you if we have concerns about a change in your child’s health or an injury that has occurred while in our care.

First Aid and CPR

All staff members are required to take a certified first aid course, to be renewed every two years. A staff member who has successfully completed CPR must be present at all times in the program, including all field trips. CPR is required for all employees who work with the children. Any emergency will be handled by dialing 911 and checking the child's file for desired medical practice. The main First Aid kit is located in the teachers’ lounge. Smaller kits are located in each classroom.

The three basic aims for first aid:

1. To keep the patient alive.
2. To prevent the condition from worsening.
3. To relieve anxiety, pain and discomfort.

All staff will remember that first aid is FIRST aid only, consisting of measures to be taken before a nurse or doctor attends to give second aid, which is treatment proper. All staff will have taken Shaken Baby Syndrome training prior to working with all children under the age of (5) five. If a child is injured while in care at the center, the incident and injury will be documented in the classroom's medical logbook and the parent will be informed. Soap and water are the only applications the state allows staff to use without a medical authorization form.

Toy Cleaning/Sanitizing

Toys are to be washed and sanitized weekly.

Each classroom has a "mouthed toy" bucket. When a toy has been put into a child's mouth, that toy shall go directly into the "mouthed toy" bucket. All of those toys must be cleaned and sanitized before being put back out for play. The toys should be run through the dishwasher weekly, if possible. If not, this is the process to be used:

- 1. Lay out a towel on a table.*
- 2. Spray the toys with bleach/water. Wipe them dry with rag. (cleaning step)*
- 3. Spray the toys with bleach/water. Wipe them dry with rag. (sanitizing step)*
- 4. Spray the bucket with bleach/water. Wipe.*
- 5. Put toys back into bucket.*
- 6. Spray the shelf with bleach/water. Wipe.*

St. Mary Preschool Handbook Compliance Form*

2016-17

(Available on the Sycamore home page. Click on the "Documents" tab along the top of the page.)

The actual handbook is also found on the Sycamore website under the "Documents" tab. (see directions above) Turn in to the school office at the open house or prior to the first day of school.

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the policies located within this family handbook.

Parent Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____ (2016-17 school year)

** If you would like a hard copy of the handbook, please contact the school office. We will be happy to make a copy for you! We are just trying to do our part by going as green as we can!*

Thank you!