"Let Your Light Shine"

In Christ, We Live, Love and Learn!

2026-2027

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School

Preschool Parent Handbook

Please note that this is not a legal document.

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Louisville, Kentucky 40222
502-426-2635
www.stmm.org

St. Margaret Mary Preschool

St. Margaret Mary Preschool is a vital part of the St. Margaret Mary Parish and School Community. In partnership with parents, we are committed to nurturing the uniqueness of each student as we provide a quality educational program. The preschool provides a supportive and compassionate learning environment that assists students in becoming their best selves; socially, emotionally, and academically. Students will learn to work in community, grow in independence, and be challenged to become moral, responsible, and self-motivated community members. We will foster a love for learning and a curiosity about the world around them through a variety of experiences, resources, projects, and programs.

The program provides for the total child: His/Her particular needs within their moral and spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and mental development.

Moral and Spiritual - To help the child:
1. Become aware and know that God loves and cares for them.
2. Lay the groundwork for a personal and lasting relationship with Christ.
3. Develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation, respect, courtesy, and helpfulness toward others.

Social - To help the child:
1. Grow in ability to work and play with others. Play is the work of children. Play allows children to learn. Learning is fun!
2. Respect personal and property rights of others.
3. Develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation, courtesy, and helpfulness toward others.
4. Accept appropriate individual and social responsibility in their group.
5. Build problem-solving skills.

Emotional - To help the child:
1. Gradually mature in emotional responses and self-regulation.
2. Properly express emotional responses.
3. Become progressively independent.
4. Develop self-confidence and leadership skills.

Mental - To help the child:
1. Develop a love for learning.
2. Develop independent and critical thinking skills.
3. Broaden his/her range of interest.

4. Develop his/her language powers and encourage self-expression
5. Grow in an ability to concentrate.
6. Encourage creativity.

Physical - To help a child:
1. Participate in a variety of both fine and gross motor activities.
2. Establish desirable health habits.
3. Know and follow simple rules of safety.

The SMM Preschool schedule offers a wide variety of activities that include rhythm, music, art, literature, physical education, math, social studies, science, and language arts. Our curriculum also includes play, both structured and unstructured. Through play, children learn how to navigate the world around them, how to get along with others, and how to creatively problem solve.

Preschool Policies and Procedures:

Hours of Operation- The preschool classroom opens at 7:30 AM. School ends at 2:30 PM. Limited After Care is available through the Northeast YMCA at an additional cost. Preschool drop off and pick up will be at the K doors. The preschool will operate on the same calendar and schedule as St. Margaret Mary School. Please see the school calendar for holidays and early release days. If school is not in session, neither is the preschool. In addition, the preschool will be closed for two designated Teacher Professional Development Days during the school year. These dates will be communicated to families in advance and reflected on the school calendar.

Snow/inclement weather days- We will follow the snow day closures set by the Archdiocese of Louisville.

Early release days- The preschool will release early on the same days as the school. After Care will be available if you are already enrolled. These days are used for staff professional development.

Tuition and Payment- Tuition is handled through the school office and FACTS management.

Meals- All children may purchase lunch from the cafeteria or bring a nonperishable meal from home. If a child brings lunch from home, it must contain the following: unflavored milk, a meat or meat alternative, a whole grain, two different vegetables, or a fruit and one vegetable. If a child brings lunch without these required items, we will have to purchase them from the cafeteria and charge the child' s lunch account. This is state mandated.

A doctor's statement is required for all children who have food allergies so that adjustments to the menu can be made. A physician's note is also required for any requested milk substitute.

Toileting- All children **MUST** be fully potty trained before entering SMM Preschool. Students must be in underwear and not pull-ups. They will be able to pull up and down their own underwear and pants for toileting. Students are accepted into the program on a conditional basis to ensure potty training. NO exceptions will be made.

Bathrooms and Handwashing-

Routine Bathroom Use:

1. All children will be assisted with personal care and cleanliness, maintaining as much privacy as possible.
2. Children will be encouraged to wipe themselves to the best of their ability. They may be assisted by staff if necessary.
3. If a child has an accident, they will be encouraged to wipe themselves and change their own clothes. They may be assisted by staff if necessary.
4. Hands will be washed with soap and water after using the bathroom.

Handwashing will be done:

1. Before and after meals and meal prep.
2. Before medication is dispensed.
3. After using the toilet.
4. After the handling of soiled clothing.
5. After coughing, sneezing, and blowing nose.
6. After playing or caring for a pet.
7. After playing outside.
8. After using shared classroom materials.
9. Wherever hands look, smell, or feel unclean.

Birthdays- Please make arrangements with your child's teacher if you wish to send in a birthday treat. **The food must be store or bakery bought rather than homemade. Items must be peanut free. Items must be single servings or individually wrapped.** Birthday invitations cannot be sent through school.

Clothing- All children must have an extra set of clothing, including underwear, in their backpacks. Please place this in a ziplock bag. Clothing, including jackets, should be clearly labeled with the child's name. Children participate in outdoor play whenever possible. Please send your child dressed appropriately for the weather. During colder months, children should

arrive with a coat, hat, and gloves. During warmer months, lightweight clothing and closed-toe shoes are recommended.

Preschool students will <u>not</u> wear uniforms. They must wear clothing that is appropriate and comfortable. They must wear athletic shoes. They can wear SMM Spirit wear. No jewelry with the exceptions of small stud earrings will be allowed. Girls must wear shorts under skirts, dresses, or jumpers. Clothing and shoes must be safe and appropriate for active play.

Transportation- SMM Preschool does not provide transportation service to and from school.

Rest Time- Each child is expected to rest after lunch each day for a reasonable period of time, not to exceed two hours. Cots are provided for this. Please send in a small blanket labeled with your child's name for rest time. Blankets will be sent home at the end of each week for washing and should be returned on Monday.

Play- Play is an integral part of the preschool experience. It is vital for a child's development. Children will be taken outside each day, weather permitting. Should we not be able to go outdoors that day, the Gym or PAC may be used for gross motor activities.

Field Trips- Preschool students will experience various on-site field trips during the school year. Special guests may also be invited to present to the class.

Immunization- Children are required to have a current and updated immunization form in the school office within 30 days of enrollment. Updated forms should be provided as children receive further immunizations. Notices will be sent home if your child requires an updated immunization.

Toys- Children should be discouraged from bringing personal toys and books to school. The preschool is not responsible for loss or damage to personal items.

Discipline- The goal of the preschool is to teach children to develop self-regulation. The guidance techniques used are at the developmental level of the child. The preschool will discipline through positive guidance and redirection to help students develop self-regulation and assume responsibility for his/her actions. Methods will include: positive reinforcement, redirection, time-out, and teaching children problem solving skills. Children are given clear expectations for behavior. Should behavior problems continue, the parent and teacher will work together to find an appropriate course of action. Individualized behavior plans can be utilized when necessary.

In order to provide a safe and consistent environment the staff will:

- Establish fair and consistent rules of behavior
- Demonstrate coping skills
- Provide safe and attractive learning spaces
- Offer a variety of constructive and engaging activities
- Engage children in play
- Distract and redirect when possible
- Remind students of rules and procedures often
- Help with problem solving by discussing choices and consequences

Sometimes it is necessary to address an undesirable behavior with a consequence. When necessary, we will do the following:

- Time away- removal from the group for a quiet activity of reflection
- Reflection/Discussion-staff will help the child reflect on the behavior in a positive manner
- Apology-student will verbally or draw/write an apology to the person who was wronged
- Parent Meeting- director and/or classroom teacher will meet to discuss behavior issues and goals for improvement
- Suspension or Dismissal-Persistent behavior challenges can result in suspension or dismissal from the preschool program at the discretion of the director

Communication- Frequent and positive communication between home and school is an essential part of a student's development and success. The school sends out weekly newsletters and Tuesday reminders through email. You will also receive communication directly from your classroom teacher. School staff will often contact parents through email and phone calls. Please be sure that we have your correct contact information. Teachers and the school office must be notified in writing of any transportation changes. Please do not expect your child to relay the message.

Screening & Assessment- All children enrolled in the preschool program will complete a developmental screening using Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) to assess developmental, social, and emotional progress and to support appropriate classroom planning and interventions when needed.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences- PTS conferences are scheduled twice a year. You will be notified in advance as to how to sign up for a conference. You are also welcome to contact the teacher or school staff at any time to discuss your concerns or ask questions. Please allow up to 24 hours for a follow-up response.

Arrival and Departure-Students may arrive as early as 7:30 in the preschool carpool line. Dismissal will be at 2:30 PM. After Care is from 2:30 PM until 5:30 PM. Upon arrival and dismissal, an adult will chaperone the children to and from the classroom to the desired location. If a child is tardy for school, please bring them to the front of the school building for drop off. Early pick up due to an illness or appointment will also take place at the front of the school. Children must be picked up promptly at dismissal. Repeated late pick-ups may result in dismissal from the program.

Health/Illness Policy- The health and safety of our students and staff members is of utmost concern. In order to keep illnesses to a minimum, please observe the following procedures:

- A child must be fever, diarrhea,vomit, contagious illness and undiagnosed rash free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.
- Please keep a child home who has an acute cough, runny nose, or sneezing.
- Please keep a child home who has a sore throat or an earache.
- A child with lice must be nit free before returning to school.

The preschool reserves the right to send a child home if they are unable to comfortably participate in daily activities or require one-on-one care due to illness. Please notify the school if your child will be absent from school. 426-2635 or preschool@stmm.org

Accidents/emergencies- In case of an accident, your child will be given first aid and you will be notified. If it is a life threatening incident, proper emergency procedures will be followed. Your child's health forms must be updated at all times. Your contact information must also be up to date and listing an alternate contact is vital.

Medication- The school can dispense medication that is prescribed by a physician if the medicine is in the original container and a medication permission form is on file. Medication permission forms can be obtained in the school office. If your child uses medication on an as-needed basis, such as an Epi-pen or inhaler, we must have a doctor's note on file. That medicine will be kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom or in the school office.

Custody issues- If there is a signed custody agreement in place, the school must have that on file. Students will not be released to unauthorized adults. Court orders will be followed.

Emergency Drills- The preschool will follow the emergency drill schedule of the school. There will be monthly fire drills to familiarize staff and students with procedures and appropriate exits. There will also be lock down, tornado, and earthquake drills held on a regular schedule.

Right of Dismissal- SMM Preschool reserves the right to dismiss a child due to non-compliance of policies by the parent or severe behavior issues that cannot be resolved.

Curriculum- The preschool will follow the PreK curriculum established by the Archdiocese of Louisville.

Photo & Media- Photographs and videos may be taken during school activities for educational and promotional purposes. Parents who do not wish for their child to be photographed should notify the school in writing.