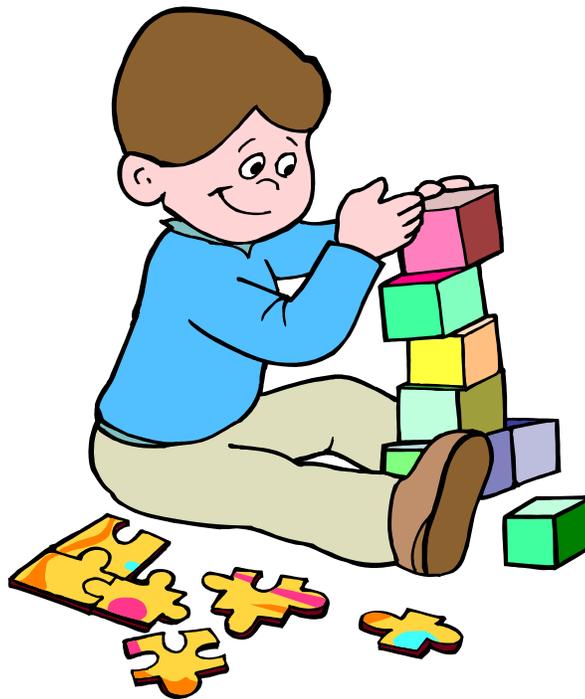


St. Thomas
LITTLE SAINTS
PRESCHOOL/CHILD CARE
An Early Childhood Education Center
2013
Parent Handbook



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Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Contents

Introduction	4
Our Mission	5
Discrimination policy of the Diocese of Lansing	5
Philosophy	5
Little Saints Goals and Practices	6
Curriculum	9
Daily Schedule	10
Meals	11
Toileting	11
Rest period	11
Supplemental lessons	12
Spanish	12
Music	12
Religious Education	12
Multi-Age Activities	12
Field Trips	12
Guidance and Discipline	13
Admission	14
Entrance priority	14
Wait list guidelines	14
Transitions	14
Schedule Choices	15
Enrollment Periods	15
School Year Enrollment	15
Summer Enrollment	15
Tuition and Fees	16
Withdrawing from program	16
Insurance	16
Communication with Parents	17
Orientation	17
Newsletters	17
Conferences	17
Assessments	17
Confidentiality	18
Health Screening	18
Parent resource library	18
Conflict Resolution	18
Parent Involvement	18
Volunteers	19
Fundraisers	19
Dress Code	19
Health	20
Wellness	20
Illness	20
Medication	21

Injury/Accident	22
Health resources.....	22
Arriving and Departing	23
Attendance.....	24
Security and Safety Issues.....	24
Visitors, Volunteers and Guests.....	24
Confidentiality	24
Weather Emergencies / Fire Drills / Disaster Procedures	25
What to Bring	26
Miscellaneous	27
Pictures.....	27
Parties	27
Lost and Found.....	27
Registration Forms	27

Introduction

Little Saints Preschool/Child Care is an early childhood education center. As an extension of St. Thomas Elementary School, the preschool offers Christian educational opportunities in the Catholic tradition.

Little Saints Preschool/Child Care is fully licensed as a child care facility by the State of Michigan and meets all requirements specified by the State Department of Consumer & Industry Services, Bureau of Regulatory Services, Children and Adult Licensing, www.michigan.gov/dhs. All licensing records are available for review in the school office. In addition, Little Saints has achieved National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation www.naeyc.org

Degreed professionals in early childhood education lead our teaching teams. All team members are screened according to the provisions of the State of MI and the Diocese of Lansing. Team members are professionally certified, or are in the process of acquiring certification according to the standards of the State of MI, the Diocese of Lansing and the NAEYC. Team members participate in yearly classes, conferences and workshops to increase their knowledge of child development, age appropriate activities, basic First Aid and CPR.

The preschool program operates from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with a variety of attendance choices within the preschool program timeframe. Child care, which contains educational components as well as play, is offered from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Participation during child care hours must be PRE-SCHEDULED.

Unlike St. Thomas Elementary, the early childhood education center offers summer camp sessions.

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Our Mission

To teach as Jesus taught with love and compassion.

Discrimination policy of the Diocese of Lansing

The ministry of the Catholic Church, in keeping with the revealed word of God, can never be restricted to people of one race or color, nor to the people of any one nation or ethnic origin. In this tradition the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Lansing believe that all people are fashioned in the image and likeness of God and have been redeemed by Jesus Christ. As an integral part of this belief, Catholic schools cannot and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in any area of administration. We affirm, then, that all educational policies, scholarships and loan programs, all athletic and school-administered programs and activities, all employment policies and contractual agreements conform to this belief. Consequently, we willingly comply with the limitations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Philosophy

Our program is based on these principles of child development:

- Each child is of unique and infinite worth.
- Learning is a natural process that occurs through exploration and active discovery in play.
- Each child learns at his or her own pace and has his own learning style, strengths and abilities.
- Children learn best in a loving, safe, child-centered environment that has a predictable schedule.
- Carefully planned, developmentally appropriate activities enrich the whole child, fostering intellectual, social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth.
- The preschool years are critical for nurturing the child's basic learning skills, awareness of self and awareness of others.
- A capable, sensitive, nurturing professional staff is an essential ingredient of early childhood education.
- A preschool program offers a support system to parents as they guide young children to a sense of respect for self, for others and for the world God gave us.
- Children are cognitively, grammatically and emotionally connected to the language and culture of their homes.

Little Saints Goals and Practices

Our commitment to children and families guides our practice. Because we recognize that each child has unique skills, abilities, and cultural traditions the staff of Little Saints has developed goals and practices to accommodate individual needs, including moderate physical differences. We welcome families of varied cultural background and traditions, which in turn enrich our program.

Show respect to children and teach them by example to respect themselves and others.

- Adhere to the guidelines issued by the State of Michigan for child care centers which prohibit the following forms of discipline/punishment:
 - Hitting, shaking, biting, pinching or inflicting pain.
 - Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him.
 - Mental or emotional cruelty, such as humiliation, shaming or threatening a child.
 - Depriving a child of meals or snacks, outdoor time, rest or toilet use.
 - Confining a child to an enclosed area, such as a closet or locked room.
- Use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.
- Promote personal responsibility and a safe environment for each student.
- Protect the rights and privileges of all members of the school community.

Offer opportunities to explore and learn through active play.

- Maintain an adaptable learning environment: picture and text signage, adjustable height tables, multiple sizes of chairs, adapted scissors, writing tools and manipulatives.
- Employ a variety of teaching strategies.
- Maintain a physical environment free of barriers: ramp entry, child sized bathrooms.

Address the whole child, social, emotional, intellectual, physical, creative, language, and spiritual growth.

- Use ASQ for screening and assessment three times per year.
- Provide space and opportunity for vision and hearing screening offered by Washtenaw County Health Department.
- Use WISD Good Start staff for standardized evaluations and recommendations for individualized care.

Assess the developmental level of each child and offer appropriate activities, scaffolding learning experiences according to developmentally appropriate practices.

- Include assessment in daily practice.
- Individualize lesson plans to reflect assessment results.
- Collaborate with parents, and consultants as needed, in creating individualized care plans for home and school.
- Implement care plans provided by consultants in classroom activities.

Provide consistency in daily schedules.

- Arrange daily classroom routines for consistency.
- Schedule consistent staff in each classroom.
- Share individualized care plans with all staff in order to provide consistent guidance for each child.

Provide opportunities for children to grow in social awareness

- Support social/emotional development by modeling interpersonal interactions.
- Represent various ethnicities and occupations in classroom play materials and displays without stereotype.
- Present language as a way to communicate which may differ from family to family.
- Teachers model acceptance of varied languages by learning and using simple words and numbers in the languages of children in the class.
- Introduce sign language as a mode of communication.
- Offer developmentally appropriate weekly lessons in Spanish language and customs.
- Invite families to share language, tradition foods, and culture with class.

Provide opportunities for children to grow in their Catholic identity.

- Imbue the day with a Catholic attitude.
- Presenting teachings and traditions in a developmentally appropriate format.
- Teach attitude of prayer.

Provide warm and supportive environment for both children and their families.

- Convey respect for the value of each family's traditions.
- Recognize that family culture informs a child's sense of self.
- Recognize individual scheduling needs.
- Arrange a stepwise transition plan involving teachers and parents for any schedule changes.

Maintain and develop the professional skills of our staff.

- Screen staff according to the provisions of the State of MI and the Diocese of Lansing.
- Maintain professional requirements of NAEYC.
- Support staff in acquiring yearly professional training hours required by the State of MI.
- Provide at least 3 hours of diversity and special needs training annually.

Work with families as partners in the developmental and educational experiences of children.

- Obtain parental input and participation when planning initial transition to school.
- Provide 4 additional formal conferences with parents to plan for the individual needs of their children.
- Support the language and culture of the family by inviting parents to participate in the teaching activities of the classroom.
- Seek parental assistance in developing the social community.
- Maintain classroom support for English as a Second Language children.
- Maintain parent referral information to local support organizations.
- Share current child development information with parents.
- Maintain confidentiality: parents must provide written permission for any information sharing with consultants, or other schools.
- Share information with non-custodial parents or joint custody parents unless prohibited by the Courts.
- Provide parents with referral to appropriate programs when our program is insufficient for a child's or family's needs.
- Maintain resources for language support to new families who may need translation from English to a native language.
- Advocate for children.
- Solicit parental evaluation of the program.

Curriculum

Our Play Based Curriculum

Little Saints Preschool curriculum embraces the National Education Goal of school readiness for every child. Little Saints has adopted the Michigan State University Thematic Curriculum which relies on degreed teachers and is guided by the Michigan Standards for PreKindergarten and NAEYC Curriculum Standards.

Based on observations of the children at play, the teachers plan developmentally appropriate activities taking into consideration varying abilities, interests, home language, family culture, and learning styles. Staff and parents participate in completing the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) as a baseline for assessment and screening and meet frequently during the school year to plan and promote each child's individual development.

Goals for children's play activities

- Children will develop social skills with peers and adults.
- Children will develop emotional self-control and purposeful behavior.
- Children will treat others with kindness and respect.
- Children will have positive feelings about themselves and others.
- Children will learn how to communicate effectively.
- Children will develop the ability to express feelings with words.
- Children will see the natural consequences of their behavior.
- Children will gain knowledge about social units: family, parish, community.
- Children will learn customs valued by their culture.
- Children will learn cognitive skills through opportunities for exploration in literature, math and science.
- Children will learn to represent or symbolize their world.
- Children will express themselves verbally, artistically, and through movement and dramatic play.
- Children will develop motor skills to enhance body control and school skills.
- Children will gain knowledge and skill in making healthy choices in nutrition, activity and safety.
- Children will develop problem solving skills and independence.

Daily Schedule

Each day consists of small group, large group, choice, snack, lunch, rest and toileting periods.

Small group activities are designed to develop language skills for self-expression, listening skills, and cooperation: stories, special projects, organized games.

Large group activities are generally action oriented: music, rhythms, songs and movement are tied to the weekly theme. These movement activities form the basis for cognitive learning by teaching sequences and spatial concepts, and encouraging memory skills.

Daily play options in science, art, drama, pre-reading/writing, large muscle, and “construction” classroom centers foster choice making skills and independence. Examples from each center include:

Science Area: water-play, plants, animals, cooking, and magnets provide opportunity for scientific experimentation and develop critical thinking skills.

Art Area: play-dough, crayons, paint, markers, chalk, and scissors provide opportunity for artistic experimentation and develop fine motor coordination.

Dramatic Activities Area: role-playing props, household items, dolls, and puppetry encourage social interactions and understanding of community.

Pre-reading/writing Area: in-class library area for reading, conversations, puzzles, listening to stories or music, provides opportunities for developing oral and written language skills.

Large Muscle Area: tumbling mat, beanbag toss, balls; indoor and outdoor areas encourage physical fitness and spatial awareness.

Construction Area: blocks, Duplos, woodworking, develop fine motor skills and understanding of relationships between objects.

Outdoor play is an important part of our day. Staff are responsible for assuring:

- All children have outdoor play opportunities each morning and evening as weather permits.
- Children do not become overheated or excessively chilled.
- A child is properly supervised if he/she has a written and signed order by a health care provider to remain inside.
- Weather safety, including air quality, wind-chill below zero, or heat index over 95 degrees.
- Appropriate sun and shade.
- Playground safety through daily monitoring and requests for maintenance.

Meals

Breakfast is not served, but children may bring a breakfast from home if they arrive before 7:45 a.m.

Snacks are provided and may include fruit juice, milk, fruit, cereal, crackers, or cheese. Foods from two food groups are served at each snack.

- Menus are posted as part of the weekly lesson plans.
- No substitutions from home except for allergies or medically required special diet. Parents must provide specific written directions for these exceptions.
- Birthday treats, usually served at morning snack, must be pre-planned with the teacher.

Lunches are planned by the month. Menus by Main Dish are posted online and in the parent information areas. Lunch is provided for school day students, and is included in the tuition. Lunch is available to morning preschool students for an additional charge, but must be a standing order, or ordered one week in advance.

Children are encouraged to taste each food item offered during snack and lunch before seconds are offered. They are given the opportunity to request a taste (also known as a “no thank you bite”), “a little”, or “a lot”. Food is often served family style to encourage skill development and independence. A record of lunch eaten is kept for each child daily and communicated with parents.

Toileting

Though toilet learning is a natural process, children are only successful if they are physically, mentally and emotionally ready. Toileting opportunities are scheduled at regular times throughout the day, since modeling and imitation of peers often contribute to the success of a child’s toilet training. In addition, children may use the toilet as needed, may observe how other children use the toilet, may request privacy as they become aware of the custom, have teacher support and supervision as needed to maintain healthy habits.

Please choose clothing that the child can manipulate easily, and be patient with the transition to the school environment, as some accidents may occur.

Rest period

The Center is required by law to provide a rest period for children attending 5 or more hours. If your child will be staying after lunch, please send a small blanket or beach towel. These covers are to be taken home and washed weekly. The center provides cots which are cleaned, rinsed, and sanitized at least weekly.

Supplemental lessons

Spanish

Spanish is presented to the children every week through songs and stories. Classroom teachers reinforce Spanish words during daily activities.

Music

Choral and instrumental music in the classroom is supplemented by visits to our in-house music specialist, and trips to the AA Symphony KinderConcerts.

Religious Education

Religious education curriculum follows the Liturgical year. We celebrate the Angels on October; the Saints in November; Old testament heroes through the Jesse tree in Advent; St. Nicholas and the Christmas season; St. Patrick and St. Joseph in March; Ash Wednesday, sacrifice, and Jesus' ministry during Lent; Easter; and Mary in May. Throughout the year, in conversations and theme presentations, the teachers strive to assist the children to recognize God in His world, and to help them grow in faith.

Multi-Age Activities

Preschool children have the opportunity to interact with children in the elementary school and participate in the elementary school activities (Catholic schools week, parent lunch, Spring Evening with the Arts, reading month).

Field Trips

Field trips are considered an extension of classroom activities. They are undertaken with the approval of the St. Thomas School administrator for the purpose of cultural, religious and/or educational enrichment.

- Parents must give written permission for any off-campus activities.
- No student may participate in a field trip unless a signed Field Trip Permission Form for the specific event is on file at the school office.
- A Volunteer Driver Information Sheet must be on file at the school office if a parent drives a personal vehicle for a field trip.
- Car seats or booster seats are required for all children on driving trips.
- Chaperones may not bring other children on field trips.

Guidance and Discipline

Children are expected to observe simple rules of order such as picking up toys, observing safety regulations, and respecting adults and other children. Expectations are limited to what is realistic, and are clarified for children so that they know what is expected of them.

- The classroom environment is designed to minimize conflicts.
- Teachers model appropriate behavior and are warm, loving, firm, consistent and patient in the process of setting limits.
- Consequences are natural, logical and related to the situation; for example, if a spill occurs, punishment is not an option, but a child may be expected to clean up the spill.
- Age related “misbehavior” requires a variety of responses. The teacher may
 - suggest a different activity,
 - remind the child of a rule he has forgotten,
 - offer alternate solutions to a conflict
 - identify the consequences of an action,
 - recognize and channel the child’s emotion,
 - teach problem solving skills, and involve the child in problem solving.
- As the children learn how to recognize and deal with feelings, take responsibility for their actions, problem solve, and compromise, they develop self-discipline.
- Some behaviors require joint guidance efforts of teachers and parents. They may include, but are not limited to,
 - Repeated disrespect of adults, other children, or self.
 - A pattern of refusing to cooperate.
 - Running out of the room or away from the teacher.
 - Physical aggression – biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, throwing or breaking items, hair pulling, choking, pushing
 - Verbal aggression – threatening, name calling, bullying

Together, parents and teachers will identify and document the specific behavior, and agree on an action plan designed to minimize /eliminate the behavior and /or to teach new coping skills to the child. Staff involved in the plan implementation will maintain confidentiality at all times.

If the parent-teacher plan is unsuccessful, a Washtenaw Intermediate School District consultant is available to observe the class and offer recommendations.

- St. Thomas Little Saints reserves the right to recommend another school/care setting for a child :
 - If his actions continue to be a danger to self or others.
 - If parents fail to comply with recommendations of WISD consultant.
 - If our program cannot meet the needs of the child as identified by WISD assessments.

Admission

Children must be **three years of age** and **toilet trained** to participate in the program.

Little Saints Preschool/Child Care Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin. Admission will be on a probationary basis during a three to six week trial period. It may not be possible to meet the needs of children with special behavioral, emotional and adjustment needs. After every effort has been made to solve any difficulties, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the program. Tuition for the remaining portion of the semester will be refunded.

All registration forms must be completed prior to the first day of attendance.

Entrance priority

Following the winter Information Night Open House, open enrollment for the coming fall will be conducted. Currently enrolled families have first priority until April 1. New enrollees will be accepted at the time of registration as long as space is available. Entrance into Little Saints will be prioritized according to the following formula.

- A. Parishioners with students already enrolled in Little Saints.
- B. Parishioner with siblings enrolled in St. Thomas School.
- C. Parishioner, (according to the date of registration in the Parish).
- D. Catholic non-parishioner, with students already enrolled.
- E. Other Catholic students.
- F. Non-Catholic students from Catholic Schools.
- G. Non-Catholic students.

Wait list guidelines

The wait list is maintained for the current school year only. When a space becomes available, the first family on the list will be notified, and has 1 week to respond. After 1 week, the space will be offered to the next family on the list.

Transitions

Staff are happy to assist with the transition into the school setting, to other preschool classrooms as the children grow, to Kindergarten, or to another school as needed. We plan for gradual adjustments individualized to each child's needs. We are also pleased to ease the change to big brother or sister as your family grows. Please allow us to assist you and your child as changes occur!

Schedule Choices

Preschool (2 to 5 days are available)

Full day 8:00a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Half day 8:00a.m.-11:30pm
Before and after school care 7-8am and 3-5:30pm

Any request for change in the child's schedule must be given **IN WRITING** to the Little Saints director as soon as the change is needed. Requests will be honored on a space available basis at the beginning of the subsequent month.

Enrollment Periods

Enrollment contracts are available for the school year, and/or for the summer camp.

School Year Enrollment

Monthly preschool tuition only covers days on the school calendar. Child care is offered before and after preschool hours and is charged by the hour. Preschool child care is offered in a separate classroom from the elementary school after school program (ESP). Little Saints Child Care is available 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. and/or 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., pre-scheduled only.

Little Saints child care is offered during school holidays other than national holidays. Little Saints will be closed Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Labor Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Thanksgiving Day. There will be no reduction in tuition for these holidays. Little Saints reserves the right to close or shorten hours on the days before Christmas and New Year's and the day after Thanksgiving, and if fewer than five families request care. If care is requested during school holidays including Christmas break, mid-winter break or Easter break, an additional fee will be charged. Care for these weeks must be requested in advance in order to schedule adequate staff.

Summer Enrollment

A separate summer registration is required, and tuition is charged according to the week(s) scheduled. Families may register for all or part of the 9-10 week program which bridges the time between school years. Registration for summer will close May 15.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is paid in 10 equal payments September through June. Tuition payments are due on the first of each month, with no credit or discount applied for holidays or illness. Checks must be made payable to **St. Thomas School** with preschool in the memo line. A \$20 late fee will automatically be added to any payment not received by five school days after the due date.

Childcare payments - Extended care hours are calculated from attendance records and billed monthly. Make checks payable to **St Thomas School** with preschool/daycare in the memo line.

A late fee of \$1 per minute may be imposed as a deterrent to abusing services of the extended childcare program. Consistent disregard of the closing time will be cause for dismissal from the extended care program.

Please place payments in an envelope stating the following:

- Child's name
- Amount of payment
- Date paid

If checks are returned because of insufficient funds, cash payments will be required from that time forward.

Withdrawing from program

If parents decide to withdraw their child, a written notice should be provided to the school one month in advance of the child's last day. Tuition will be charged until the end of the current quarter. Any prepaid tuition in excess of the quarter fees will be refunded.

If Little Saints recommends withdrawal due to nonpayment of tuition or fees, due to unsuitability of the program for a particular child, or due to specific behaviors that are unacceptable, tuition payment will be determined based on individual circumstances.

Insurance

Occasionally students are accidentally injured while taking part in activities. To help manage any medical bills incurred as a result of such injury, the Bishops of Michigan have approved the placement of a statewide student accident insurance policy effective July 1, 1993. This policy will be provided at no cost to the students' families and will extend to all students enrolled in a diocesan school and will cover school related activities. Claim payments for student accident medical expenses will be made after the primary carrier has paid.

Communication with Parents

Orientation

Parents are required to attend an orientation session before the child may participate. A general session will be held in August in conjunction with the elementary school orientation. Parents who enroll after the school year starts will be scheduled for individual orientations.

A **message area** is located near the hall time clock computer and in each classroom. A weekly theme, daily activities, snacks, lunch menu and upcoming events are posted.

Newsletters

The monthly St. Thomas school newsletter is mailed or sent via the oldest child to all parents. It contains a calendar of upcoming school events, summaries of past events, and other pertinent information. The calendar and newsletter are also available on-line at www.saintts.com. Throughout the school year, memos are sent home or e-mailed as announcements and reminders of school functions and regulations. Please notify us if email and web pages are not available to you.

The Little Saints Preschool Newsletter is sent monthly via e-mail, and posted on-line at www.stlittlesaints.com.

Conferences

A teacher-scheduled conference will be planned prior to the first day of attendance, and for four to six weeks after entry. Subsequent conferences are scheduled for December, March and June. Conference reports are designed to foster interaction between parent and teacher for the benefit of the child. We discuss social, emotional, language, motor, creative and cognitive growth. Each conference concludes with a parent/teacher plan setting new developmental goals for the upcoming months. Additional conferences may be requested at any time, but should be scheduled with the teacher outside of class time. In addition, teachers are available before class, and at the end of the day for informal chats. You may also reach teachers via e-mail.

Assessments

Parents participate in child assessment by completing the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) each fall. Teachers also complete the ASQ in the fall and spring. In addition child observations during daily activities are gathered on checklists and anecdotes in the child files. The observations form the basis for conference reports and assist teachers in planning developmentally appropriate activities.

Confidentiality

Child files are held in confidence by all staff. Written information is stored in locked files in the classroom or the main office. Parents must provide written permission for information to be shared with outside consultants or other schools.

Health Screening

Staff perform daily health screenings as children arrive. Yearly vision and hearing screenings performed by a trained technician are scheduled through Washtenaw County. Language screening checklists are also available in-house for parent and teacher use; other standardized assessments are available through WISD.

Parent resource library

Books and articles on parenting, child development, health and nutrition are available.

Conflict Resolution

- If your concern is a classroom issue, please approach your child's teacher.
- A sincere attempt will be made to resolve any complaint within the week.
- Failing a resolution, please speak with the director, followed by the principal if necessary.
- A copy of the full text of the Diocesan grievance procedure may be obtained from the school office.

Parent Involvement

We adhere to an open classroom policy. Parents are welcome to visit and observe the children at play. Other opportunities for involvement include

- Serve on the school advisory commission –subject to lottery drawing
- Acting as room parent and PTG representative
- Participating in Family Life Nights, annual school Auction, Ice Cream Social
- Chaperoning field trips or assisting with enrichment activities
- Organizing classroom events
 - Catholic Schools Week events
 - Heritage presentations (family customs)
 - Lenten projects
 - April Week of the Young Child
 - June picnic
- Create digital preschool picture albums or picture books
- Assist with web news page about preschool events
- Participating in the annual parent survey

Volunteers

- Volunteers must sign the Diocesan and NAEYC ethics statements.
- If spending more than 4 hours per month with the children, volunteers must clear medical and background check and complete VIRTUS training.
- Volunteers will be provided with an orientation and a clear set of expectations.
- Supervising staff are responsible for the activity of volunteers at all times and provide direction while volunteers are with the children.

Fundraisers

Various fundraisers are sponsored by the PTG. Parents are encouraged to choose the most appropriate fundraiser(s) for their family. Information is available at orientation, at parent night, through the school news, or from the office staff.

- TRIP
- Sally Foster
- Reader's Digest
- Market Day
- Auction
- Campbell's labels
- Box tops for Education
- Class fundraisers
 - Pizza Kits
 - Christmas flowers and greens
 - Easter flowers

Dress Code

The St Thomas dress code will not be in effect for the students in Little Saints Preschool/Child Care Center.

Please choose clothing that is playable, comfortable, and easy for the child to fasten and unfasten.

- Pull on pants and t-shirts or sweatshirts work well.
- Be aware that we will be getting "dirty", and make your selections accordingly!
- Shoes should be rubber-soled flats - no elevated soles or heels!
 - Please choose a shoe style that is firmly fastened to the foot (not flip-flops).
 - Crocs, though comfortable, do stick to our floors and are a tripping hazard. **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO WEAR CROCS!!!!**
 - **Gym shoes** should be clean and **white soled** (non-marking). Please **label** them with your child's name. They will remain in the classroom.

Health

Wellness

Hand washing- Teachers wash hands with liquid soap under running water, using disposable gloves as required:

- Before and after handling food /medicine
- After wiping noses
- toileting
- handling animals and equipment
- cleaning up projects and on arrival to school

Hand Washing Procedure as prescribed by MI Child Care Regulations

The following procedures are considered best practice for hand washing:

- 1) Have a clean, disposable paper or single-use cloth towel available.
- 2) Turn on the water to a comfortable temperature between 60° F to 120°F.
- 3) Moisten hands with water and apply soap.
- 4) Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 20 seconds.
- 5) Rub areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and the back of hands.
- 6) Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the water running while drying hands.
- 7) Dry hands with clean, disposable paper or single-use cloth towel.
- 8) If the water faucet does not shut off automatically, turn it off with the disposable paper or single-use cloth towel.
- 9) Dispose of the single-use paper towel in a lined trash container or place the cloth towel in a laundry hamper.

Children are taught hand washing skills following the same procedure with the exception of leaving the water running while drying hands..

Cleaning - A four part process is employed for cleaning classroom furniture, toys, and equipment: soap, rinse, disinfect, air dry.

Illness

IT IS TO YOUR CHILD'S BENEFIT THAT YOU KEEP THE SCHOOL UP-TO-DATE ON PHONE NUMBERS, EMERGENCY NUMBERS AND OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION. Parents will be contacted in illness or injury situations. If we are not able to reach parents, the school will contact the emergency person indicated on the Child Record card.

- As children enter group settings, sickness does occur until immunity is developed. Please make arrangements for sick childcare for those days that children are not well enough to come to school. If symptoms of illness are present at home, you should not bring your child to the program.

- In order to prevent the spread of disease, children may be excluded from school until the symptom or condition listed below is resolved or until evaluation by a physician determines that the child can return to the school.
- **Exclusion conditions** are:
 - Fever accompanied by other symptoms (temperature of 101 F.)
 - Diarrhea or vomiting accompanied by other symptoms (fever, rash, crankiness, etc.)
 - Conjunctivitis or pink eye with discharge.
 - Any rash suspicious of contagious childhood disease.
 - Any skin rash, lesion or wound with bleeding or oozing of clear fluid or pus.
 - Mouth sores with drooling.
 - Evidence of severe illness such as lethargy, unusual sleepiness, prolonged crying, obvious discomfort, difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing, wheezing, or poor appetite.
 - A specific contagious infection such as whooping cough, strep throat, head lice, scabies, chickenpox, impetigo, mumps, measles, ringworm, etc.
 - Any condition preventing the child from participating comfortably in usual program activities.
 - Any illness or condition requiring one-on-one care.
 - Constant, uncontrolled nasal discharge or constant, uncontrolled productive cough (raising phlegm).
- **Illnesses require exclusion for 24 hours after symptoms have disappeared** unless a physician authorizes an earlier return in writing. These authorizations may be faxed (734-769-9078) to the school. When children return to school, they must be able to fully participate in the program, including outdoor play.
- Please notify the school when your child is ill (so we can be alert to similar symptoms in other children), or if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Certain illnesses need to be reported to the health department. Information about illnesses that are identified at school will be distributed to parents immediately, and posted in the classroom Parent Information areas.
- If symptoms develop while at school, the child will be immediately isolated from the group and will need to be removed from the facility as soon as possible (within one hour). In the event that you cannot pick up your child in this time frame, we will call the names listed on the Child Record card.
- If a child becomes acutely ill and requires immediate attention, the school will call for emergency medical assistance. Your signature on the Child Record card gives emergency medical personnel permission to care for your child.

Medication

In the interest of health and safety, we ask that you comply with the following guidelines regarding students and medication.

- If your child requires prescription medication during the school day, you must give your authorization to the school to administer this medicine. In addition, a signed and dated set of instructions from the child's physician must be

presented to the office along with any prescription medication. Form available online.

- Medication must be in its original container. The name of the child and the doctor, written directions for safe use or dosage, the name of the medication, a current issue date, special precautions (e.g. taken with or apart from food), storage requirements, and expiration date should be on the container.
- We must also have written parental permission to administer aspirin, cough drops, Tylenol, and anything applied to the child's body (lotion, topical ointments, sunscreen, and insect repellent), which must be supplied by the parent. All products must be presented to the teacher in original containers. They may not be stored in the child's backpack or cubby. The medication form should be used, but the physician's signature is not required.

Medication will be administered in the school office. A yearly medication contract is available in the school office. All contracts are kept on file in the school office and **must be renewed each year**. Any medication left in the school office at the end of the school year will be destroyed. **An office medication log is maintained for each medication administered.**

Injury/Accident

Accident/Incident Reports are prepared for each accident and must be signed by parents the day of the accident. Most injuries will be handled by our staff, which has received training in emergency first aid and CPR.

- When a minor emergency occurs, such as a chipped tooth or a small cut requiring a few stitches, parents will be called. The child will be kept comfortable until the parents arrive. Children will not be transported in staff cars under any circumstances.
- If a serious injury occurs, the faculty will call the paramedics by dialing 911. The child will be transported to the closest or most appropriate hospital via ambulance. You will be called immediately and asked to come to the hospital. Your signature on the enrollment card gives emergency medical personnel permission to care for your child.
- Child care providers are mandated reporters. Under the Child Protection Law, child care providers must contact Children's Protective Services (CPS) **immediately** when they suspect child abuse and/or neglect. The immediate verbal report must be made to Centralized Intake by calling (855) 444-3911. The verbal report must be followed by a written report. The written report must be submitted within 72 hours.

Health resources

Call 2-1-1 a free, easy to remember and confidential telephone number that links people with the human services they need. It can be used any time of the day or night; trained professionals are always available.

Arriving and Departing

Parking

Please observe parking regulations as posted on Elizabeth Street, State Street, and in the parking lot.

- A Preschool drop-off zone is on Elizabeth Street near the front door.
- One hour parking is also available on State Street throughout the day.

Checking In

The child care program opens at 7:00 a.m.

Children should not be dropped off before 7:00 a.m. since staff will not be available.

The preschool program begins at 8:00 a.m.

Please escort children to the classroom and follow the procedure outlined below.

- Use ID code to sign in on the Hall time clock computer.
- Check for messages near the sign-up sheets and parent mail boxes.
- Preschool children should hang up coats and backpacks. Summer campers place lunches in refrigerator or cubby.
- Enter notes for teacher on the time clock computer by selecting the message button.
- Assist your child with bathroom use and hand washing on arrival.
- You are welcome to play with your child for a short time.
- Unless arrangements are made to assist in the classroom or to observe, parents should leave as soon as their child is settled.
- Be sure to say good-bye!

Dismissal and Sign-out

Parents must come to the classroom at dismissal

- It is VERY important for parents to assume the serious obligation of signing out on the computer time clock when taking their child home. Your cooperation in this area is most necessary for the protection of your child.
- Only people authorized on the Child Record card will be allowed to pick up children unless specific written permission has been granted.
- Custody issues: parent must provide legal document to be kept on file.
- Please arrive at least 10 minutes before closing (5:30 p.m.) to allow time to gather belongings and speak with teacher before closing time. If parents fail to arrive by closing, we will call each parent number on the Child Record card. If we are not able to reach parents, the school will contact the emergency person indicated on the Child Record card.
- Check child's cubby for personal belongings, notes, and artwork. Check parent communication notices nightly.

A Picture ID will be required when taking children home.

Attendance

On a day a student is absent, parents should call the school (734/769-0911) before 9:00 a.m. to report the absence. Absences may not be made up: tuition is not refunded.

Please notify teachers if there will be a significant departure from normal arrival and departure times.

Security and Safety Issues

School doors are locked at all times, and are monitored by closed circuit cameras. Please buzz to be admitted.

School grounds are a designated “No Smoking” area.

State of Michigan law governing all schools and child care centers, and diocesan regulations require staff to report any suspected abuse or neglect of children in their care. This includes suspected abuse or neglect by parents, guardians, other family members, friends, acquaintances or school staff.

The center maintains a licensing notebook of licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans. The notebook is available to parents for review during regular office hours. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Visitors, Volunteers and Guests

All parent observers, visitors, and volunteers must register at the office. Your name on our sign-in sheet will help us determine the number of adults evacuating the building during emergencies.

- Volunteers must review and sign the Diocesan Ethics statement before participating in the classroom. Visitors must wear school I.D. badges.
- If spending more than 4 hours per month with the children, volunteers must provide medical, TB, and DHS background screening, and complete diocesan VIRTUS training.
- Supervising staff are responsible for the activity of volunteers at all times and provide direction while volunteers are with the children.

Confidentiality

Any information on a child attending Little Saints is highly confidential. Staff may not share private or developmental information about a child with anyone but the parents or guardians of a child. Parent volunteers and observers are expected to maintain this code of confidentiality as well.

Weather Emergencies / Fire Drills / Disaster Procedures

Weather

St. Thomas Elementary School may close because of inclement weather. Notice is given over radio stations WAAM/AM-1600 and WJR/AM-760, television stations WDIV/TV Channel 4, FOX 2, WXYZ TV-Channel 7, and through the **automated calling system**.

Little Saints Preschool/Child Care Center MAY NOT automatically close when Ann Arbor schools close. If conditions allow, the director will open Little Saints for those families **who register for snow day care**. Determination will be made by 6:45 a.m. Please make arrangements with the preschool director if you will require child care on snow days.

If the National Weather Service posts a tornado warning, a tornado has been sighted. Little Saints children are moved to the safest place in lower level of the elementary complex. Parents may come to school to pick up their children.

Designated shelter locations and procedures are on display in each classroom. Children will proceed to the shelter location under the direction of staff, just as practiced during school day drills. Severe weather drills are planned in the fall and the spring so that the children have an opportunity to practice safety procedures.

Fire

Evacuation plans for fire emergency are posted in each classroom. Fire safety inspection reports are maintained on each fire extinguisher, and posted near the time clock computer. The children will also learn fire safety and have the opportunity to practice fire drills at least monthly. Fire drill records are posted in each classroom.

Disaster Procedures

A building crisis plan is in place.

A general announcement through the phone system will advise teachers whether to follow lock-down procedures, or evacuate the building following fire drill procedures.

What to Bring

One 12" x 15" tote bag
Two boxes of tissues
One box of zip closure sandwich bags (last name A-L)
One box of zip closure gallon bags (last name M-Z)
Two rolls of paper towels
Family photo 4 X 6

A **complete set** of clothing must be provided.

The extra set of clothing (pants, shirt, socks) should be placed in a plastic Ziploc bag labeled with name and date.
Please make your selection seasonally appropriate

Outdoor clothing appropriate to the season must be provided.

We will be playing outdoors whenever the weather permits.
Boots, hats, mittens, snow pants are required during winter.

1 pair of inexpensive **white-soled** tennis shoes is required for the gym
These shoes remain at school.

A small **non-spill** (covered) 4 to 12 ounce water bottle or cup.

A large beach towel or a small throw blanket for rest time (full day students only).

No toys from home should be brought into the classroom.

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME!!!!

Miscellaneous

Pictures

Picture day will be scheduled in conjunction with the elementary school. Little Saints students may participate even if the scheduled day is not a day when your child is normally scheduled to attend.

Pictures play a large role in our literacy program, assessment records, and classroom displays, and field trip memories. Parents are asked to sign a picture release form so that we might take pictures of the children during school activities.

Parties

Invitations to parties and social activities outside of school hours are not to be passed out at school.

Lost and Found

A lost and found area will be available in the hall outside the preschool classrooms. Parents are encouraged to label their children's belongings for easier identification.

Registration Forms

The following items must be on file in the office before your child's first day of preschool:

- Family Registration Form
- Copy Of Birth Certificate
- Copy Of Social Security Card
- Copy Of Baptismal Form
- Health Appraisal Form
- Child Information Record Card
- Preschool Enrollment Contract
- Little Saints Preschool/Daycare Student Developmental History
- Health History and Medical Release Form
- Video/Photography Release Form
- Signature page for Parent Handbook