

Saint Michael Prekindergarten

Parent Handbook



Saint Michael Prekindergarten
5750 N. High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085
614.885.7814

Due to the Department of Education Licensing Standards regarding preschool programs, the policies governing St. Michael Preschool are separate from St. Michael School and should be followed as such.

Introduction

The St. Michael Preschool program will include daily language arts, math, science, and social studies centers, with a focus on physical, social and emotional growth. One of the special features of this curriculum will be the incorporation of the spiritual development program of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Pre-Kindergarten Class

We offer a Pre-Kindergarten class to four- and five-year olds from 7:45 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Before and after care are available from 7:15 to 7:45 am and 3:30 to 4:30 pm. Children who are at least four years of age on or before September 30 and are toilet trained are eligible.

Philosophy

The St. Michael Preschool program is a place for young children to grow within the context of a developmentally appropriate environment where the whole child is treated with dignity as an individual. In an atmosphere where the practice of virtue and of independence are promoted, our program taps into the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional potential of the children. The students are placed in a context where they will be given the chance to develop a yearning for truth, a growing sense of wonder at God's creation, and an increasing awe when looking at God and His works. The Preschool program is meant to allow freedom to explore while also being taught age appropriate concepts so that the students will be ready for their next level of school by the end of the term.

Spiritual Development: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The St. Michael Preschool incorporates The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in their program. This is a religious education program which is based on the Montessori teaching method. It was started around 50 years ago in Rome and is now all over the world. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a program which takes place in a special room called an Atrium. In the Atrium a child is given the opportunity to fall in love with God through encountering Christ the Good Shepherd with different hands on experiences of our faith. This model is based on scripture and it focuses on helping children grow in their participation in the liturgy.

The spiritual potential of a child is immeasurable. It is the goal of the St. Michael Preschool to tap into this potential and guide the children in the growth of their spiritual life. Some of the ways that this goal is met include making visits to the Blessed Sacrament and participating in school liturgies, as well as opportunities for the child to experience a sense of the wonder of God's created world in the discovery of its marvels. They will be

tapping into the Word of God through a tactile interaction with the Scripture and Catholic liturgy.

Curriculum Goals

The Creative Curriculum[®] is the curriculum which the preschools of the Diocese of Columbus use. This program helps educators to create high-quality programs that meet the unique needs of the children and families they serve (see www.creativecurriculum.net). In addition to this curriculum there will be content specific to St. Michael Preschool. The Preschool class is designed to prepare the students for St. Michael School Kindergarten. The learning environment and lessons are meant to allow freedom to explore while also being taught age appropriate concepts so that the students will be kindergarten-ready by the end of the term. The curriculum will be spread throughout the session within the context of small group and free choice centers, indoor and outdoor play time, quiet and active play and time spent in the Atrium. Snack, lunch, and nap/quiet time will be included in the daily schedule.

Typical Daily Schedule

The daily schedule will include the following:

- Learning Centers** – Different tasks and activities will be offered each day. As the children are given the opportunity to discover they will be encouraged to explore without the fear of making mistakes. The children are able to work during a given time period and move from activity to activity.
- Atrium** – At least one day each week the Preschool students are scheduled to spend one hour in the Atrium, the special room set aside for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.
- Creative Expression/Motor Skills** – Opportunities for fine and gross motor development, creative experiences, science activities, dramatic play experiences and inside or outside recess.
- Gathering time/Story Time/Music** – Daily prayer, finger plays, calendar/weather, language experiences, aesthetic awareness activities, songs, group games, traditional children’s stories, nursery rhymes, sharing, and creative music.

Typical Daily Schedule:

7:15-7:45	Before care/Greet Children/Opening activities-drop off in classroom
7:45-8:00	Opening circle
8:00-9:15	Whole group/Learning Centers/Atrium
9:15-9:45	Snack
9:45-10:00	bathroom
10:00-10:45	Outside Recess/Creative Expression/Motor Skills
11:00-11:30	Lunch
11:30-12:30	Nap/quiet resting time
12:30-12:45	Circle
12:45-2:00	Whole group/Learning Centers/Atrium
2:00-2:30	Snack

2:30-2:45	bathroom
2:45-3:30	Outside/Creative Expression/Motor Skills
3:30-4:30	Aftercare-Outside/Inside Circle/Centers until pick up

Staff/Child Ratios

The staff/child ratios at St. Michael Preschool meet the Ohio Department of Education Standards. The Department of Education Standards are:

1:14 for young five-year olds

Our ratio for the Preschool class will be 1:8.

Staff Qualifications

The St. Michael Preschool teachers and assistants are early childhood educators who are chosen for their experience working with young children. Additionally, each staff member is to submit to the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigations a fingerprint sample for a background check of criminal history upon employment (BCI/FBI check). Each staff member will have two written references in their employee file and these references will be checked by the preschool director through email or phone call. In any one classroom, either both or one of the teachers/assistants is trained in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Tuition Policy

Preschool tuition will be set each year for the full time and part time program. All families must sign and have on file in the Preschool classroom a current “St. Michael Preschool Tuition Payment Agreement” form. The form will be included in a tuition packet which will be sent to the family upon notification of the child’s acceptance into the Preschool program. This form explains the various payment plans (advance, quarterly, and monthly), late fees and matriculation fees (fees for withdrawal during the school year/tuition refund formula). It is your signed agreement stating your payment choice for the current year. The FACTS Management Company will be handling our tuition collection. All families of St. Michael Preschool will be expected to participate in the FACTS program.

Preschool Discipline

The word “discipline” stems from the word “disciple” meaning a follower of Jesus. We view discipline as a way of teaching children to develop and maintain a virtuous life. In continuity with the virtue program that is utilized in St. Michael School, the Preschool will be promoting the practice of virtue in the classroom and at home. This means that the teachers will be encouraging imitation of Christ rather than avoidance of rule-breaking. Terms such as “making good choices” and similar statements will be used to assist the children in conflict resolution and following expectations.

Teachers will.....

Treat each child with respect.

Put the child and his/her interests first.

Encourage the children to do their own problem solving through reflective listening.

Encourage the children to use their words.
Use positive suggestions.
Emphasize and model desirable aspects of behavior.
Use routines and a consistent schedule as a teaching tool.
Give each child opportunities to make choices when appropriate.
Use a variety of methods to communicate expectations.
Set clear limits with clear expectations.
Explain the reasons behind expectations.
Use their voice as a teaching tool.
Be consistent.
Laugh with a child, not at a child.
Use appropriate hope, empathy and love to build trust.
Provide appropriate consequences.

Teachers will stop any activity that endangers the child or endangers another child physically, mentally or emotionally and any activity that is destructive to materials or equipment. A child may be separated from the group when he/she is unable to control his/her behavior and if that behavior infringes on the rights of others.

Below is the Ohio Department of Education discipline policy for distribution to all of our families as part of our parent handbook the following:

ODE Behavior Management Policy

- (A) A Preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.
- (B) The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for review.
Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation and praise for appropriate behavior.
- (C) The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:
 - (1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
 - (2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
 - (3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may gain control.
 - (4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.

- (5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
- (6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- (7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate shame or frighten a child.
- (8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- (9) Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a Preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- (10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the Preschool program.
- (D) The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the center's written discipline policy.
- (E) All Preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the center's discipline policy for review upon employment.

Organization

Saint Michael Preschool is compliant with the standards developed for early childhood programs by the Ohio Department of Education. The O.D.E. Standards are available for your review upon request in the Preschool classroom.

Contact Information

St. Michael Preschool
5750 North High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085
Attn: Preschool Program

Email: lwells@cdeducation.org

Atrium contact: chmoore@cdeducation.org

Preschool contact phone number (via the Parish Office): (614) 885-7814 ext. 152

Staff Directory

Pastor: Fr. Anthony Dinovo

Associate: Fr. Tim Lynch

Principal of St. Michael School: Sr. John Paul srjp@cdeducation.org, 614-885-3149

Preschool Director/Lead Teacher: Mrs. Laura Wells, lwells@cdeducation.org

Preschool Teacher Assistants: Mrs. Stephanie Wasto, Mrs. Mary Ann Scholl

Atrium Lead Teacher: Mrs. Christine Moore, chmoore@cdeducation.org

(614) 885-7814

Parent Participation and Volunteering

Parents of the Preschool children will be encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and/or participate in the school activities particularly during the time of holidays and special occasions. Please note that St. Michael Parish and School, in cooperation with The Diocese of Columbus, has determined that all volunteers must be compliant with the “Protecting God’s Children” requirements as well as submit a criminal background check to the Safe Environment Coordinator at St. Michael Elementary School before working with the children. Information and registration for this program may be found online at www.virtus.org. All paper work must be turned in to the St. Michael Safe Environment Coordinator office before beginning any volunteer work and can be contacted at smsafe@saintmichael-cd.org.

Parent interest and involvement is important to a child’s growth and development in school. We encourage you to be involved in your child’s Preschool experience and provide the following suggestions as potential opportunities to get involved:

- Assisting in the preparation and making of Atrium materials and/or assisting the teacher during your child’s Atrium session. (Parents must attend Atrium training which will be held by the lead preschool teacher).
- Checking the calendar and following through on snack responsibilities.
- Sharing your special talents in storytelling, art, music, sewing, carpentry, gardening, etc. If you are able to share your talents, let us know and we will make the volunteer opportunity available for you.
- Watching the classroom bulletin board for important announcements. Please check it frequently.
- Helping with an after school activity.
- Volunteer to be a room parent for your child’s class.

Non-Discrimination Policy

St. Michael School recruits and admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs and athletics/extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated desegregation.

Registration Process

Registration for Saint Michael Preschool will take place during January of each year. Registrations will be taken on a first come first served basis with the parish families and those families with children already in the school taking precedence. When classes are full, waiting lists will be formed and vacancies will be filled with the following priorities:

1. A family already in the school
2. Participating parish family members

3. Any non-participating parish members
4. Members from other parishes
5. Non-Catholic families

Each Preschool Class Registration form must be accompanied by the following items:

- A copy of the child's birth certificate.
- A copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate, if available.
- A copy of the child's Social Security Card.
- A copy of the child's immunization record.
- A \$100.00 non-refundable check. \$50 of the registration fee will be applied towards the Preschool tuition cost, and \$50 will go towards registration costs.

Registration will not be considered complete unless all the above information is provided at the time of registration.

St. Michael Preschool Policies and Regulations

Arrival

The Preschool classroom is located downstairs at the west end of the new addition of the church building. All children must be accompanied to the classroom by a parent or guardian (not a sibling or another child). Please wait with your child in the hallway outside the Preschool classroom door until the classroom is opened. It would be helpful if you have them use the bathroom before class and if you escorted them to their cubby area to store their belongings before they come to the gathering area of the Preschool room.

Please do not drop off your child in the parking lot or at the double doors to Marian Hall in the hallway. Also, please note that the door located on the north side of the new addition is not an entry way. It connects to the Preschool classroom but is an emergency exit only. For security purposes, the elevator is locked during certain times during the day. If you need to access the Preschool classroom during times other than pick up or drop off please go to the church front office and you will be given access to the classroom.

Late Arrival

Children who arrive late for Preschool with their parent or guardian should go to the church office and ask for access to the Preschool. For the safety of the children, the door to the classroom will be locked at all times during the Preschool day.

Dismissal

Children will be dismissed beginning at 3:30 P.M. Parents will need to come to the classroom or the playground to pick up their child. A child will only be permitted to leave with a parent or other pre-designated adult, i.e., a person listed on the Authorized Pick-Up Form. If a parent must send some other adult to pick up their child, the Preschool Lead

Teacher must be notified of this change in writing prior to the pickup. If we do not know this person, we will ask to check his/her ID.

In case of a true emergency, you may call the Preschool Lead Teacher at (614) 885-7814 ext. 152 and discuss other pickup arrangements.

Late Pick-up Fee

Reasonable attempts must be made in order to pick up your child on a timely basis. More than three late pick-ups will necessitate the beginning of a late fee charge. After the third late pick-up, a fee of \$5.00 per every 10 minutes will be charged for the amount of time that the parent is late. This fee is paid immediately to the staff person that has been required to stay with and supervise your child.

Preschool Uniform

- Boys' Options: Navy blue pants or shorts (no belt); light blue polo shirt; navy or white crew socks.
- Girls' Options: Navy blue pants, shorts, or skirts; light blue polo shirt; navy or white crew or knee socks or tights.
- Shoes: St. Michael School Uniform Code applies to Preschool with the exception that all shoes must be athletic velcro (no shoestrings): Athletic shoes must be white, black or gray (or combination of the 3 colors); no high tops, "lights", or fluorescent colors permitted. Please note that Preschool must wear athletic shoes only.
- The children may wear any St. Michael approved sweater, sweatshirt, vests, hair ribbons, or other accessories which can be bought at local uniform store.
- Children may not wear any jewelry or nail polish.

The local uniform stores sell the above items. There is a substantial discount if you order your uniforms during June.

Tote Bags

All children will be provided with a large canvass style tote bag on the first day of school. The cost of the bag is factored into each child's tuition. This is the bag that each child will use to place their papers, pictures and projects into. The bag will be labeled in large print on the outside with the child's name. Backpacks will not be utilized. Inside the bag the child needs a large zip lock bag, labeled with your child's name, with an extra set of clothes, including underwear. Please label all clothing with your child's name including jackets and sweaters. This will enable us to take care of any kind of accident that may happen during the day.

Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Any staff member suspecting an incident of abuse or neglect is required by law to notify the local children's protective services agency.

Emergency Information

Please keep emergency contact information up-to-date for the preschool files. Please notify the Preschool Lead Teacher in writing as soon as possible if you have a change of street address, email address and/or phone number during the school year.

Children with Life-Threatening Allergies

Saint Michael Preschool strives to provide a safe environment for students with life-threatening allergies. Parents should notify the Preschool teacher of any life-threatening allergy on or before the first day of school, as well as any new allergy diagnoses throughout the year.

The Preschool Lead Teacher will review all allergy information provided by the student's parents and/or physician and will consult with the school nurse at St. Michael School as needed. Each school year, parents and physicians will be required to complete and sign an "Allergy Action Plan" specific to the student with life-threatening allergies. This plan will then serve the student in any situation of known or possible exposure to the allergen. Parents will provide the school with the medications prescribed in the "Allergy Action Plan." Medications should be provided to the Preschool Lead Teacher in a plastic carry case with a locking lid and the student's name should be clearly written on the front of the case. The case for each child will be kept in the appropriate Preschool classroom or with the student as specific needs dictate.

The Preschool will not serve any foods that are known to produce life-threatening reactions to students in our Preschool (i.e. peanuts, tree nuts, or their oils/extracts). Teachers will also refrain from using these ingredients when planning activities in the classroom. The parents of a student with a life-threatening allergy will provide a supply of "safe" snacks for their child each day of our Preschool year. All families will be provided with a list of appropriate and acceptable snacks to be used when their family is to provide the daily snack.

Teachers and staff will be given training annually in recognizing allergy symptoms and appropriate actions to be taken.

Illness at Home/Management of Communicable Diseases

A person trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness shall observe each child daily as he enters a group. Children should not be brought to school if they show any signs of illness or disease as listed below:

- Diarrhea and or vomiting during the night or in the morning before school
- Skin rash, unusual spots or untreated infected skin patches
- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit

- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Conjunctivitis
- Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestations
- Severe coughing causing the child to become red or blue in the face or makes a whooping sound
- Difficulty or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stools
- Stiff neck
- Any communicable disease such as strep throat, chicken pox or scarlet fever

If, upon arrival, any of the above symptoms are observed by the Preschool staff, the child will not be admitted to class and will be sent home. The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

(1) The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness. The parent will be notified by phone call. If the parent is not available to be contacted by phone, the contacts listed on the emergency contact list will be called until someone is reached to be able to pick up the child.

(2) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent or guardian:

- (a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period);
- (b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- (c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
- (d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
- (e) Conjunctivitis;
- (f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
- (g) Untreated infected skin patch(es);
- (h) Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool; or
- (i) Stiff neck; or
- (j) Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

Care of the Mildly Ill

"Mildly ill child" means a child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified in the paragraph describing communicable disease or a child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms of communicable disease as specified in paragraph above.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed in paragraph (B)(2) of this rule as well as the following:

- (a) Unusual spots or rashes;
 - (b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;
 - (c) Elevated temperature;
 - (d) Vomiting.
- (4) Programs shall follow the Ohio department of health “communicable disease chart” (September 2009, odjfs.state.oh.us/forms) for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.
- (5) A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:
- (a) Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program;
 - (b) Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised;
 - (c) Made comfortable and provided with a mat. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the mat shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or, if soiled with blood, feces, vomit, or other body fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent;
 - (d) Observed carefully for worsening condition; and
 - (e) Discharged to parent, guardian, or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.

Please notify the Preschool Lead Teacher at (614) 885-7814 ext. 152 if your child will be absent. If your child has a communicable disease, e.g. chicken pox, strep throat, impetigo, conjunctivitis, or if you have knowledge that your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please inform the Preschool Lead Teacher. Parents will be notified by email and a notice sent in the child’s folder when their child’s class has been exposed to a communicable illness such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.

Any child who has been discharged due to illness shall upon re-admittance to Preschool be observed by a person trained in first-aid before reentering class. A child must be free of fever, vomiting and /or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. If an antibiotic has been prescribed for an infectious disease (i.e. strep throat, impetigo, conjunctivitis) the child should not return to school until he/she has received at least 24 hours worth of the antibiotic and is feeling well

This policy shall be furnished to the local health department, clinics, hospitals, and physicians.

Certain diseases require a specific recovery time frame:

- Chickenpox – until the scabs are dried;
- Measles (three days) – four days from first appearance of the rash;
- Measles (regular) – four days from first appearance of rash;
- Mumps – nine days after swelling occurs
- Scarlet Fever – until the child has been under antibiotic treatment for twenty-four hours or until recovered;
- Whooping Cough – three weeks from date of first whoop or until recovery has occurred as determined by a physician.

**If a child has a communicable illness, they are required to bring a doctor’s note stating the illness upon return to the class.

Head Lice and Nit Free Policy

If a child has lice they must have received treatment and be nit free. Students that have been sent home due to head lice will be readmitted to school only after completing the following:

He/she must be treated with a lice shampoo.
ALL nits must be removed.

After treatment, the child must be inspected by the preschool director. The preschool director will do a follow-up check one month after the student returns to school.

Should your child be sent home with head lice, a letter explaining the treatment procedures will be sent with your child.

In the event a case of head lice is found in the classroom, the preschool director will notify all parents. If lice are found in the classroom, all students in that room will be checked by the preschool director. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. The name of the student with lice will not be released to anyone other than the parent and classroom teacher.

Illness/Accidents at Preschool

The Preschool staff may give only first aid. If a child becomes ill while in school and is running a temperature (100 degrees or above), the child will be made comfortable and the parent/guardian will be contacted to come for the child. If the parent wants to send a neighbor or a person unknown to us, that person’s name must be listed on the Authorized Pick Up Form. The child will be comforted and cared for until the parent or guardian arrives to take him/her home. For care of the mildly ill, the preschool will follow the Ohio department of health “communicable disease chart” for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.

Medical and Dental Emergency Plan

If your child has any kind of an allergic reaction, is asthmatic or is subject to seizures, please inform the Preschool director or head teacher prior to the first day of school.

If a child is hurt while attending Preschool and requires first aid or any emergency treatment, an incident report will be completed and signed by the director. One copy will be given to the parents and another copy will be kept on file in the office.

If a child becomes severely ill or injured while at school, the staff will immediately call 9-1-1 for the emergency squad to respond. The physician or dentist listed on the child's emergency card will be notified for any child taken to the hospital by the emergency squad. The parent or legal guardian will be immediately notified of the emergency situation. In the event that parents cannot be reached, staff will call the listed emergency contacts families have listed on the student's emergency card.

It is very important that every student maintain an up-to date address and telephone number record at the school. Please notify the Preschool office if you or your emergency contacts have a change of address or telephone number during the school year.

Administration of Non-Emergency Medication

The Preschool does not wish to dispense medication at school unless it is absolutely necessary. If, however, routine medication must be administered during Preschool, please follow the guidelines listed below:

- The parent/guardian must provide written permission for the medicine to be administered;
- A physician must verify on paper the necessity for the medication to be administered during school, the dosage and times/intervals at which the medication is to be given, the duration of the medication, and any possible side effects that may occur.
- The medication must be in the original container with the label affixed and bearing the child's name.
- A statement releasing and holding school personnel harmless from any and all liability for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the presence of the medication in the school or its use by the child.

Accurate records of the medication given will be kept in the child's file in the Preschool classroom.

Health Immunizations

All immunizations and health records must be current as stated in the Ohio Department of Education Guidelines. The parent shall provide, prior to the first day of school or not later than thirty days after the start of school, and annually from the date of examination thereafter, a report from a licensed physician affirming that the child is in suitable

condition for enrollment in the program. The Preschool reserves the right to deny class participation to a child if the medical information is not in compliance with state guidelines.

Safety Policy

A staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their safety.

- No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- All materials used at the Preschool (art, etc.) shall be approved by the Preschool Lead Teacher for safety.
- Fire drills will be held monthly and tornado drills are conducted from April through June. Each area of the Preschool has a posted plan for evacuation.
- For fire drills or other emergency procedures, each class has an escape route to an outside area a safe distance from the building. Children are moved to those designated areas in a safe, quiet, and orderly manner. During tornado drills, each class goes to a designated area within the building. All children sit with their heads covered and their faces towards a wall.
- The Preschool has on hand, at all times, a first-aid kit. Staff members are required to complete in-service training in first aid, child abuse recognition and prevention, and the prevention, recognition and management of communicable diseases.

Crisis Plan

Saint Michael School has a School crisis Plan to be used in the event of a school emergency. This plan is reviewed and revised each year. The Preschool is included in the school emergency plan. In the event of a preschool evacuation, we will move to St. Michael School Gym. If it is necessary to leave the grounds completely, we will go to Gethsemane Lutheran Church (35 East Stanton Avenue/three blocks south of Selby Boulevard). Fire Drills, Tornado Drills, Lockdown Drills, and Reverse Evacuation Drills are part of the monthly routine. Evacuation plans are posted in the Preschool classroom. The Crisis Plan binder is located in the Preschool classroom.

Severe Threat Level for National Security

The sixteen public school districts of Franklin County, and the Diocese of Columbus, have joined together to establish a common protocol to follow in the event of a Threat Level of Red, the highest level of alert as declared by the United States Department of Homeland Security.

If the Franklin County Red Alert School Team, comprised of the superintendents, determines that the threat is a potential danger to Franklin County, the following procedure will be followed:

If Red Alert is issued before or after school hours:

Then, normal school operations will cease, based upon the Red Alert School Team's recommendations and will remain closed until advised by the Red Alert School Team to re-open. All school activities and events scheduled will be cancelled until notified by the Red Alert School Team.

If the Red Alert is issued during school hours:

Then, school buildings will be secured and remain open until regular dismissal time, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team. Children will be sent home by normal transportation means or released to parents pursuant to district policy. All after-school activities and events will be cancelled, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team.

Emergency Closings

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. St. Michael Preschool will use email to notify each family when school is closed. Radio (610-WTVN) and television stations also will be notified. Please tune in starting at 6:00 a.m. Please note that "St. Michael Preschool" will not be announced or listed separately. If "St. Michael School" is closed, then St. Michael Preschool is closed as well.

Parents will be contacted directly by email and by phone in case of an emergency closing during school hours. In order for the notification system to be effective, please ensure your emergency information is kept up-to-date.

Inspections/How to File a Complaint

St. Michael Preschool is subject to fire, health, and building inspections. Inspections are also made by the Department of Education to assess compliance with state regulations regarding all aspects of program operations. Copies of the reports and inspections are available in the Preschool classroom. To obtain a copy of the recent report and inspection you may ask the preschool director and one will be provided.

To file a complaint concerning the operation of the St. Michael Preschool program, you may contact the preschool director, pastor, or the elementary school principal. Also, to file a complaint and report concerning the operation of the program, report to the office of early learning and school readiness through Ohio Department of Education at:

Ohio Department of Education

25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio
43215-4183

(P) 877-644-6338

Publishing Student Information

Parents will be asked to sign and date a consent form for the Preschool to release personally identifiable information. Personally identifiable information is information that makes the identity of a student more traceable. Such information would include student names and pictures (with and without names). Sometimes the children are photographed and video-taped for evaluative purposes or, on occasion, for teacher training at educational conferences on the local and state levels. Photographs also may be used in the children's journals or memory books. Preschool student information may be released in various formats, to include websites and the St. Michael School Directory. If parents do not want any of their child's information published, they should notify the Preschool Lead Teacher.

Preschool General Information

Lost and Found

All items should have the student's name and "Preschool" written on them. This will assist in getting the items back to the student when they are lost. If an item without a name on it is found, it will be placed in a lost and found box in the Preschool classroom. The box will be cleaned out at the end of each quarter. Unclaimed items either will be discarded or donated to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences

The parents will be kept abreast of their child's development through periodic reports which will include categories such as: Academic Growth, Physical (fine and gross motor) Growth, and Emotional/Social Growth.

Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss each child's progress. A conference may be scheduled at any other time during the year by request of the parent or teacher. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers throughout the year. However, please refrain from "conferencing" with teachers at drop off time or when picking up your child each day. Please send a note (written or by email) or call the Preschool Lead Teacher to request a phone call or conference from the teacher.

It is helpful for us to know any special stresses in your child's life (ex. a birth, a death, separation, death of a pet, etc.). This information helps us to be more sensitive to your child's feelings and needs.

Daily Classroom Snacks

Parents will participate in providing the daily classroom snacks throughout the year. We require that these snacks be nutritious and healthful. Please refer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture food pyramid for healthy snack suggestions <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>.

Please try to choose from the following list of recommended snacks:

*crackers

- *veggie sticks
- *fruit slices
- *cheese
- *granola bars
- *popcorn
- *mini muffins or bread

Parents will provide snacks on a rotating basis. Each child will be assigned a 2 week slot. A calendar is posted at the beginning of the year and the snacks should be given to the teachers on or before the assigned 2 weeks. If there is a conflict, please tell the teacher and other arrangements can be made. The drinks will consist of water, provided by the Preschool staff.

Lunch

Only children who attend prekindergarten full time will eat lunch. Parents will provide their child with a packed healthy lunch every day. Please refer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture food pyramid for healthy lunch suggestions <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>.

Birthdays and Celebrations

We will celebrate school year birthdays during scheduled snack times. We also will celebrate the students' summer birthdays during a snack time assigned to the student. If parents wish, they may provide a special snack for their child's day. (no cupcakes or cake please) Please contact the lead teacher two weeks before your child's birthday.

School Pictures

Preschool students will have their school pictures taken at the same time St. Michael School students have theirs taken.

Custody Paperwork

The custodial parent is required to provide the principal or the person in charge of Admission with a current certified copy of any child custody order or decree pertaining to the student. These documents include Temporary Orders, Final Orders, Restraining Orders, Protective Orders and Guardianship Papers. It is the responsibility of the Custodial Parent (or the Residential Parent in Shared Parenting Agreements) to provide the Preschool with all pertinent documents. In the absence of a Court Order directing the Administration to perform a given act or in the absence of direction from the proper authorities, the Administration of the school will decline involvement in matters regarding custodial rights.

Classroom Observation

Parents who wish to observe their child and the Preschool program may do so by appointment. Please contact the Preschool Lead Teacher to schedule a date and time for an observation. Parents are encouraged to observe anytime between October and the end

of April, but not before a holiday break. Any parent of a child enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the director. Upon entering the premises, the parent shall report to the parish office.

Communications

Email Communication

Email will be the primary means of communication between the school and families. The office will utilize it for whole school communications. Staff members will post pertinent information in email such as announcements, homeroom schedules and policies, etc. Parents are expected to review information in email regularly.

E-mail can be used to facilitate communication between parents and the Preschool staff. Staff members will, in most cases, respond to email within 48 hours (unless they are absent from school). E-mail is best used for asking questions with specific factual answers as well as scheduling calls. E-mail should be informative, succinct, and respectful. Care should be given to the tone of e-mail. Phone calls are preferred to solve a problem requiring a complex discussion. If your matter is not resolved by an initial exchange of e-mails, it's best to call and speak by phone. Truly urgent messages should be communicated via phone.

Parent File

Children's artwork and classwork will be put in the parent file box outside the classroom door. Please check this file box daily for information.

Parent Resources

These file folders are outside the classroom door and are filled with resources for parents to take. Please feel free to utilize this resource.

Daily Folder

Daily communication between teacher and parents is through the student's daily folder. Please check this daily and initial the behavior log. Any information that needs to be addressed in a timely manner will be put in this folder such as an injury report.

Family Events

During the school year, the children may have the opportunity for preschool students and families to get together after school hours or on a weekend. These optional events are organized by the preschool and attended by the teachers. During the family event, preschool children must remain with their parent at all times.

Questions and Concerns: Grievance Procedure

Parents are encouraged to contact the preschool with any questions or concerns that they have in regards to their child. The first phone call should be to the teacher. If you are not satisfied, then you are asked to contact the preschool director who will sit with the parent and the teacher to work out a possible solution to the question or concern.

Records

Your child's records are available to you at your written request. The records of St. Michael preschool children who plan to attend St. Michael's kindergarten will be passed on to the Kindergarten teacher. When children are being served by other agencies, we can share child information with early childhood professionals only with a parent's request. Parents that send their child to a school different from St. Michael can request their records to be sent to the desired school. All child and staff records are strictly confidential.

Transition

Into Preschool/Beginning of the Preschool Year: Transition into the preschool is done at the beginning of the year. We plan an Ice Cream Social/Open House for the children and families to meet their teachers and explore the space. The preschool also hosts a Curriculum Night/Orientation at the beginning of the year for families to ask questions and teachers to discuss the upcoming year. The Orientation is done without children for more open dialogue. Our first week of preschool is a transition week where we have smaller groups of children coming each day. This small group allows for teachers and children to build their relationship in a smaller group size. We want to accommodate all children's needs and realize each child's transition to preschool is unique. We will work with you and your child to develop additional individual strategies if necessary. This might include allowing them to come to preschool when others are not present, having your child come earlier in the morning for a "quieter" entrance to the day, or matching them with a peer for support. The information you provide in the Child Health Information helps us to learn more about your child and a family's specific needs or wants.

Preschool to Kindergarten:

We use the spring conference to discuss your child's transition into Kindergarten. We give children opportunities to visit the school and meet the teaching staff. Pre-K children attend library once a week and have opportunities to be familiar with the school during assemblies and the elementary school quarterly Family Day. In addition, teaching staff can create an individual plan outside our normal activities if needed. This might include additional time visiting the new classroom, meeting with the school principal or Kindergarten staff to share feedback on your child. As mentioned above, when your child leaves St. Michael Preschool to go to St. Michael School, we forward their records. Preschool teaching staff will meet with the Kindergarten staff to discuss any specific information they and you feel is important for the transition to Kindergarten. Parents that send their child to a school different from St. Michael can request their records to be sent to their desired school.

Referrals and Special Needs

If a teacher, administrator or parent is concerned with the development of their child, we will collaborate to make appropriate referrals. Families are asked to complete the ASQ-3 (developmental screening tool) within the first two weeks of their child starting school. We use the ASQ-3 and observations in the classroom to determine if additional resources or referrals are necessary. Typically we discuss goals and monitoring activities at our first parent/teacher conference in October/November. Teaching Staff and families may schedule a conference before this date if one feels more immediate action is needed. If a parent is in need of additional support for their child, we will try to connect them to their local school district and/or appropriate services or agencies. We are open and support dual programming arrangements and will make every effort to continue a child in our program when appropriate. The office has a list of family community resources with agencies and programs that may benefit your family.



**St. Michael's Preschool
Parent Handbook Review Form**

Date _____

I have received a copy of the St. Michael Preschool Prekindergarten Parent Handbook and have reviewed the policies related to my child's enrollment in the St. Michael Preschool Program.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Please return this form to the preschool director by July 1. Thank you.