

**St. Joseph
School
PreK-3
Handbook**

PHILOSOPHY

As Catholic early childhood educators, we minister the whole child – MIND, HEART, AND HANDS. In trusting Christian environments we enable the child to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually. Awakening the child’s innate desire to learn, we foster creativity and excitement about learning by facilitating a stimulating atmosphere. Understanding their uniqueness in personality and differences in learning styles creates opportunities to discover, explore, question, and succeed, thus providing the proper atmosphere which enables the child freedom of choice. **ABOVE ALL**, our setting nurtures the child’s spiritual relationship with God and self and develops a caring attitude for others.

GOALS

FACILITATE opportunities in spiritual, physical, social, cognitive and language development.

INITIATE an atmosphere where children appreciate a quiet time preparing them to begin a friendship with God.

GENERATE the value of life in the early learner.

NURTURE a warm caring environment that develops self-esteem and a positive attitude toward learning.

CONTENT OF PROGRAM – DEVELOPMENTAL

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Experience God through:

Religious Activities

Literature

Prayer

Music

Art

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Learn to play with others through:

Cooperative Interactions (Large & Small Group Activities)

Sharing Experiences

Organized Games

Free Play

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Love to learn through:

Introduction to Numbers and Letters

Introduction to Colors and Shapes

Pre-reading Activities

Manipulative Math Experiences

Story Time and Listening Activities

Science Discovery

Problem Solving

Computer Programs & Exploration

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Develop language through:

Reading, Listening and Speaking

Show and Tell

Role Playing

Songs

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Develop body through:
Sensory Table
Large Motor Activities
Small Motor Activities
Creative Movement & Dancing
Block and Art Activities
Physical Education Class

REGISTRATION AND TUITION

Registration is held in January beginning with currently enrolled students who will be returning in the Fall. Registration will then be open to the public. Applications and medical forms are available at the school office. The following guidelines will be followed:

1. A child must be three years old by **October 15** for PreK-3 enrollment and four years old by **October 15** for PreK-4.
2. A \$50.00 registration fee along with \$100.00 deposit will be charged per family. If a student is accepted, the fee is non-refundable. If a student is not accepted, the fee will be returned by mail with a letter of non-acceptance.
3. Students will be accepted in the following order:
 - a. Those who are participating members of the parish and have siblings already attending St. Joseph School.
 - b. Open to all students.

All students will be required to have a physical examination by their pediatrician before entrance. Children cannot begin class unless a current medical form reflecting mandated immunizations is on file. Questions regarding these mandates can be answered by our Health Aide. For the health and safety of his/her classmates, this policy will be **STRICTLY** enforced.

Tuition will be handled by selecting one of three payment options:

1. Single payment due July 1 – CASH OR CHECK ONLY payable to St. Joseph School – 3% discount – no fee
2. Single payment due July 1 made with Visa or Master Card credit card – no 3% discount
3. Monthly payment plan through SMART Program – \$50, processing fee – monthly SMART payments based on 10 payments beginning in July

PRE-SCHOOL SCHEDULE

PreK-3	Monday - Friday	AM students	7:55am - 11:30am
	M-W-F	AM students	7:55am - 11:30am
	Monday - Friday	All-Day students	7:55am - 2:20pm

ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL AND PARKING

For Arrival, parents will walk their child to the back of the school and drop them off with their teacher around 7:50am. We will have a small area designated just for preschool students. At this time one of the preschool teachers will be there and we ask that you to say a quick good-bye. Once the teacher is there, it is not necessary for you to stay. We will proceed into the building following all the other grades, promptly at 7:55am. If for any reason you are unable to be there for 7:55am, please enter through the front of the building because the rear doors are locked as soon as the last student enters the school.

We stress the importance of dropping off children on time so they do not miss any important information that is given out during our Prayer

and Circle Time. There will be no early admittance into the class unless your child is in Before Care.

Since school doors remain locked for safety reasons, we will open doors 5 minutes before each session begins and ends, so it is unnecessary to arrive any earlier. PreK-3 AM parents are asked to pick up children promptly at 11:30AM at the school's back door. PreK-3 all-day students will be dismissed at 2:20 PM each day, including Wednesdays (when the rest of the school is dismissed at 2:05pm). Please wait outside the school's back door until the students are dismissed.

No child will be allowed to leave the school with anyone except for parents and people listed on your car pool forms. Please call the office if there is an emergency and someone else, other than those people listed on the dismissal form, is picking up your child on that particular day.

Please use the parking lot across the street from the school yard or the street near the Church. **No parking is allowed in school yard** for safety purposes.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our Number one rule in PreK-3 is to follow these three rules: LOVE, SHARE AND CARE! Our behavior system is based on a star chart. Each student will begin their week with a chart and Zero stars. At the end of each day if the student followed our Prek-3 three rules they will receive a star. If your child receives FIVE stars (one for each day) they will be able to go to the prize box at the end of the week. If your child does not receive 5 stars on their star card at the end of the week they will not be

able to go to the prize box, and a note regarding why they did not receive five stars will be sent home.

CONFERENCES

Individual conferences will be held for all children in the PreK program in January, and at that time, progress reports are issued. A parent is free to request a conference at any time if they have special concerns. Parents are asked to make this request in writing. The individual teacher will answer your request as soon as possible. A teacher may also request a conference with a parent to address any concerns. Progress reports are also issued in late May or early June. Again, parents may request a conference at this time to review the progress report or address concerns. Conferencing **will not be allowed** when dropping off or picking up children. This is disruptive and takes away valuable class time.

DRESS CODE FOR SCHOOL

In order to feel a part of the St. Joseph School community, we are implementing a uniform policy for all PreK students. We ask that students wear the gym uniform that is worn by the students in grades K-8. An order form can be obtained in the school office. Our classroom tends to be warm, so dressing your child in layers seems to work out best, even in colder weather. Sneakers are recommended for safety reasons. Plastic cover-ups are available in our classroom and will be worn when necessary. In accordance with the rest of St. Joseph School dress code policy, no mohawk hairstyles are allowed in PreK.

SNACKS/LUNCH

School snacks are provided by parents. Nutritious snacks are encouraged (fruit, cheese & crackers, cut up veggies, etc.) **One** or **two** snacks and a drink box or drink in a thermos are sufficient. Because of the possibility of allergies, please talk to your child about only eating their food. We will remind the children at school as well. Also include a napkin and a straw for thermos. **Please label all lunch boxes and thermoses with your child's name!** Students in PreK all-day program will need to come with a lunch as well as morning snack. We recommend using a lunch box for lunch and a large labeled Ziploc bag or brown paper bag for snack. Lunches and snacks will be separated in the morning to ensure quick distribution at both snack and lunch time. **Please label snack and keep it separate from your child's lunch.** Hot Lunch and milk can be offered if you are interested. Watch for milk forms and monthly hot lunch forms to be sent out with school notices.

SHOW&TELL

Prek-3 students will have show and tell every WEDNESDAY, your child is asked to bring in ONE small item that can fit inside their backpack.

READING RUG

Reading Rug is “quiet time”. Your child will sit quietly throughout the room looking through his or her favorite books for 30 minutes. At the beginning of every month your child will bring in 4 of their favorite books, to read during this time. We will provide a basket for your child for this special time during the day.

BACKPACKS

Please send your child to school with a regular sized backpack. We often have lots of lunch boxes, big crafts and rest blankets that take up lots of space!

PreK POLICIES

- Every item sent to school needs to be labeled including: lunch boxes, snacks, backpacks, jackets, sweatshirts, hats, gloves, mittens, rest blankets, etc.
- Rest time will occur each day for all-day PreK-3 students. All students are required to rest on their mats with a **small blanket**. Children will be reminded to use the restroom before rest begins in order to avoid any disruption of sleep.
- Birthday Party invitations will not be passed out in school unless each child receives one. If not, pass out invitations before or after school. In PreK we want each child to feel included and cared for!
- We ask each family to donate the following items within the first week of school, if you have not already done so:
 - 1 roll of paper towels
 - 1 canister of disinfecting wipes (Lysol or Clorox)
 - 1 bottle of hand sanitizer
 - 1 container of baby wipes
 - 1 box of tissues

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution!

- There are lots of theme parties, holiday parties, and of course the end of the year celebration. An email will be sent pertaining to the sign up for different refreshments prior to these activities.

- We love extra sets of hands, especially at lunch time. However, all lunch helpers: Moms, Dads, Grandmas, Grandpas, etc. must follow and model classroom rules and policies, and **be Virtus trained**.

EMERGENCY PLANS

ILLNESS AND INJURIES

Please do not send your child to class if you suspect he/she is ill. A child who is sick will be isolated and a parent will be contacted. Please let us know if your child contracts a contagious disease (i.e. chickenpox, conjunctivitis, etc.). Please talk to your child about using tissues when needed.

In case of injury, first aid will be administered by the Health Aide. Parents will be notified of injuries and it will be documented. If necessary, 911 will be called as well as your child's physician. The school principal will also be authorized to transport the child to the hospital.

FIRE

Children will participate in fire drills several times during school sessions. In case of a fire alarm sounding, the children will be led outdoors via the nearest exit. If exiting through a doorway is not possible, the children will exit through the fire window located in the classroom.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Weather emergency **no school** days are announced on WTIC 1080 AM radio, local morning news channels, and through our School Reach program (which you will be asked to sign up for in your Orientation packet). If Bristol Public Schools cancel classes, the PreK program will be closed as well.

If weather conditions become poor during school, parents are free to come early to pick up their child. If we should have to dismiss school early at any time, an announcement will be made through our School Reach program, and on station WTIC 1080 AM radio. School will remain open until every child is picked up.

A delayed opening of **2 hours** means our morning AM session is cancelled. However, the all-day session will follow the delayed opening schedule.

AFTER CARE

This program begins immediately after regular school hours and ends at 5:00 pm. There is a form in the school office that you must fill out before attending. The fee is listed on the initial sign-up form. Payment is due at the end of the week. There is no aftercare when there is an early dismissal due to inclement weather, conferences, or before a holiday.

Only all-day PreK students may attend the after school program if he/she is socially/emotionally ready to attend an all-day session. The after school teachers will determine this within the first few weeks of the program.

If it is necessary to stay until 5:30 pm, a nominal fee of \$5.00 is charged.

BEFORE CARE

The teacher arrives at school by 7:00am each morning to provide before care services to working parents. Fees are collected at the end of each week. For safety reason, the doors of the school will be locked, so the teacher will meet you at the back door. The fee schedule is as follows:

1 hour before school- \$10 /day

40 minutes before school- \$7/day

30 minutes before school- \$5/day

PreK-3 AGENDA

7:55-8:30- Arrival/Opening Prayer/Free play

8:30-9:00- Morning Meeting

9:00-9:30- Reading Rug “Quiet Time”

9:30-10:00- Special of the day

10:00-10:20- Bathroom/Snack Time

10:20-11:20- Lesson of the day: Math, Science, Reading and Religion

11:20-11:30- Morning Friends Dismissal

11:30-12:15- Clean up and Lunch

12:15-1:00- Small Groups/Free play

1:00-1:45- Rest Time

1:45-2:10- Enrichment Activities

2:10-2:20- Clean up/ Dismissal behind school- Promptly at 2:20pm

