



# St. John Catholic Academy Preschool Handbook

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## **St. John Catholic Academy Preschool Mission Statement**

St. John Catholic Academy and Preschool prepares and educates students for academic success and forms disciples of Christ for life.

### **St. John Catholic Academy Preschool Philosophy**

St John Catholic Academy Preschool views early childhood education as being the development of the whole child and we are committed to offering opportunities for balanced growth in all areas: physical, cognitive, social/emotional, creative, and most importantly spiritual. Based on our understanding that children learn through play, daily routines encourage active engagement, meaningful experimentation and positive reinforcement. We believe that in a virtuous, positive and nurturing environment a child will develop at his/her own pace and to his/her fullest God given potential. We are dedicated to providing a quality Catholic early learning program to meet the needs of our students, their families and our local community. We believe in teaching our children to be lifelong learners and disciples of Christ.

### **School Policy and Administration's Right to Amend**

Student's behavior that is consistently not in keeping with the philosophy/objective of St. John Catholic Academy Preschool is subject to the review of the administration and may lead to withdrawal from school.

Since situations can arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbook, the school reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

Administration is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and they may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause at their discretion for the safety and well-being of all students and families.

## Curriculum

St. John Catholic Academy Preschool utilizes *Frog Street and Memoria Press* curriculum to help guide and implement a developmentally appropriate program for our students. In addition we provide *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)* in K3-K4 classes. *CGS* honors the unique relationship between a child and God that is primarily directed by the Holy Spirit. Parents are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with *CGS* at: [Catechesis of the Good Shepherd](#)

Our goal here at St. John Catholic Academy Preschool is to provide an environment within which your child may grow and develop holistically through physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and spiritual formation. Teachers and their student's will collaboratively explore materials through project work, creative themes, center areas and child-initiated play.

## Fees and Enrollment

**FACTS Management Company** handles all billing on behalf of St. John Catholic Academy Preschool. Once you have been accepted into the preschool program you will receive directions on how to set up a FACTS account for billing purposes. The registration (non-refundable) and supply fees are exclusive of your monthly tuition and are paid once a year. You may choose the 5th or 20th of each month as your monthly tuition payment date.

Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account or from a variety of credit cards.

### Fee Reminders:

- If the tuition payment is not received by the end of the month, the child may not return to school until the bill is resolved.
- Current tuition rates may be found at: [2023-2024 Tuition and Fees Rate Sheet](#)

## School Hours

Our preschool program for one through four year olds is a 12 month program.

Preschool Hours of Operation are from 7:30am-5:30pm Monday through Friday; with the exception of Holidays/Teacher Work Days. The 2023-2024 calendar can be found here: [2023-2024 Preschool Calendar](#)

## Drop Off Procedures

The Preschool door will be opened at 7:30 am each morning. Our teachers arrive beforehand to ready themselves and their rooms for the day. Classrooms and the outside door will remain locked until 7:30 AM when the school day officially begins.

*All students will be walked to their assigned classroom by their parent/guardian/caretaker* until they are developmentally ready to walk to class unattended. This is not required but we find that some of our three and four year olds eventually develop independence while visually supervised by our staff.

Preschool drop off hours are between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM. We demonstrate respect for the classroom teacher by having said our goodbyes to our children ***no later than 8:30.***

We understand there will be doctor appointments and vacations, etc.; please communicate in Procare with your child's teacher, any planned tardiness or absences.

Students may not be dropped off after 8:30 am without prior communication through Procare to the Director and will need a Doctor's note for the tardy.

## Pick Up Procedures

For your child's safety we require each child to be picked up by you or an authorized person, registered in Procare, **no later than 5:30 PM.**

**A late fee of \$50.00 will be charged if your child is picked up after closing time (5:31 PM).** If an emergency presents a delay and you will be late picking up your child, please call the preschool (850-763-1775 extension 209) *before* closing time. Please also message in Procure. In the event that your child is still at the Preschool after closing and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:

1. Attempt to reach you at the designated numbers on file.
2. Call the authorized pick up person you designated on the enrollment packet.
3. If we are unable to reach authorized parties, we will call the authorities in conformity with State law.
4. Students will **ONLY** be released to adults authorized on their registration packet who present valid identification. Parents/guardians must fill out an authorized pick up list in the child's enrollment packet. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the preschool of any changes in this authorization. We are unable to release your student to any adult who is not authorized on the students registration card. Please understand **NO EXCEPTIONS** will be made to this policy.

### **Inclement Weather Days**

The Preschool may close due to inclement weather. We follow Bay District Schools closures in most cases. Please be sure to check your school messages as well as Procure for further information during these times.

### **Classrooms and Daily Classroom Schedule**

St. John Catholic Academy Preschool offers a total of five different classrooms.

1. Wobbler Classroom (young ones) – starting at 1 year
2. One Year Old Classroom
3. Two Year Old Classroom
4. Three Year Old Classroom
5. Four Year Old/VPK Classroom

## **Priority Order of Admission Procedures**

1. Siblings of families currently enrolled.
2. Sons and daughters of teachers and staff members.
3. Parishioners who are active/registered members of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church.
4. Parishioners of other Catholic Churches.
5. Children on the waiting list. Parents will be notified as to a student's acceptance or placement as spaces become available.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

Each family enrolling in the school will meet with the Director to complete and review the following:

1. Application-parent will complete the application form and pay the non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00
2. Registration- parents will complete the registration packet and pay the non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 in order to register and reserve their child's spot.
3. Admission Overview- parent and child will tour the school to review the following information: center schedule, hours, fees, meals, health policies, supervision policies, dismissal and pick up policies, philosophy and curriculum and items the parents need to bring to school for the child.
4. Health Appraisal- each child needs a current State of Florida shot record and school entry physical form BEFORE they may attend their first day of school. These documents are required by the State of Florida. If a form expires during the school year, please be sure to update before the expiration day. The child may not attend school until the Director receives an updated form.
5. Family/Child Questionnaire- parents will complete an informational form answering questions about the child and their family, what goals parents may have for their children while enrolled at the school and what traditions or customs the family may have.

6. FACTs Account - The family's FACTs Account must be set up PRIOR to the child attending their first day of school.

The following are the age requirements by September 1st each year:

- Children in the Wobbler program may begin on or after their first birthday.
- Children in the One year old program must be 1
- Children in the Two year old program must be 2
- Children in the Three year old program must be 3
- Children in the VPK program must be 4

(The Director reserves the right to adapt classroom age guidelines listed above.)

### **Withdrawal From the Academy**

St. John Catholic Academy Preschool requires a two week notice in writing in order to withdraw a student. Families are responsible to pay tuition for the full month of the student's last day enrollment.

### **Communication**

As a Catholic Academy, we respect our parents as the primary educator of their children. The administration and staff are committed to building a collaborative partnership with our parents. Open and cooperative communication between parents and staff is a requirement for ongoing enrollment at the Preschool. This partnership will be grounded in mutual trust, respect and understanding. Please be sure to inform teachers of any significant changes in your child's life (moves, illness, parent out of town, etc.). This essential information will allow teachers to support them more effectively.. If a parent has any questions or concerns about their child's experience in the classroom, a conference can be scheduled to discuss. It is not possible to have an effective conference during drop off or pick up. Please understand that the teachers must attend to all the students in their classroom at this time. We will be happy to schedule a dedicated time to meet.



## **Procedures for Parents Conferences**

1. Parents may request a conference with the classroom teacher at any time during the year. Please schedule a private meeting with the teacher for any significant or detailed questions or concerns. We ask that parents exercise discretion and only discuss specific details about a student privately.
2. If after talking with the teacher a parent feels the issue has not been resolved and/or if questions still remain, they may request a conference with the Director.
3. If there are any further concerns about the same subject then the Director will call on the Principal to offer additional assistance in resolving any issues. The Administrative Team reserves the right to make the final determination regarding the solution to any concerns brought to them.

## **Legal Custody**

SJCA will abide by legal custody agreements. The process will be as follows:

- Preschool must be advised and given a copy of all legal documentation regarding custodial rights *on or before* the date they become effective.
- Any changes to the custody schedule on file must be directly communicated to the Director and an official copy must be provided on or before the date to be implemented.
- Parent information (such as newsletters, notices, etc.) will be sent home to the primary custodial parent unless specifically requested otherwise.

## **Expectation of Cooperation and Mutual Respect**

We acknowledge that relationships may involve challenges, particularly during custody negotiations. At St. John Catholic Academy Preschool, parents commit to engage with one another and the staff with the dignity and respect due to all human persons. Profanity and disrespect of any form towards others has no place in the presence of our vulnerable children, other parents and staff. Aggressive behavior of any type, will not be tolerated and may result in withdrawal from the Academy.

## **General Communication**

**Procare** - Our primary method of communication is through Procare. We utilize this secure mobile app to record attendance and for teacher-parent messaging. Please familiarize yourself with the app and feel free to contact the Director with any questions.

**Weekly Lesson Plans** - will be posted both on Procare and on the classroom bulletin board along with any other important information related to the classroom activities. Please be sure to take a moment and read them.

**Newsletters** - a weekly newsletter will be written by the classroom teacher every Friday and will include themes, activities, important information to remember and calendar events.

## **Classroom Behavior**

We engage the Education in Virtue process as an Academy. We encourage our families to become familiar with the language of virtue and familiarize themselves here: [What is Education in Virtue](#). Human formation in our Preschool is provided primarily through modeling, co-regulation and positive reinforcement. We believe that children flourish in an environment of positive attention and loving redirection.

We attempt to help the child recognize and process their feelings, understand choice and consequences, and explore positive solutions and outcomes. We encourage them to learn and develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and the environment. How to have a friend and be a friend. Young children are assisted in learning to recognize how their choices and actions affect others. During the school day it is our responsibility to model virtuous behavior and give them loving feedback so they can grow in recognizing and respecting the rights, feelings, and physical space of others. The virtues encompass our 'way of life and relating' on campus. Some examples are:

### **The Virtues of Orderliness and Responsibility**

A central teaching of the Catholic Church is that we respect the dignity of every human person who is created by God uniquely. According to their developmental level, children will be encouraged to:

- Respect the rights and personal space of others
- Care for equipment and return things to the appropriate locations

- Respect quiet time during directions, stories, nap, etc.
- Follow our teachers instructions for the use of classroom materials

### **Modeling Desired Behavior**

Teachers will model the virtues of orderliness and responsibility for their students by:

- Providing directions clearly and in a positive tone while checking for understanding.

### **Problem Solving - Circumspection**

We appeal to the preschooler's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences and asking questions to encourage effective problem solving. Teachers help the children identify their needs, feelings, causes, and choices and/or appropriate alternatives. We utilize prompts such as the statement, "use your words", "hands are for helping, not for hurting", "inside voices", "walking feet", etc.

### **Progressive Discipline Process**

The St. John Catholic Academy Preschool teachers will create a safe, active, age appropriate environment for your child. They will set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior. We do not engage in any form of corporal punishment at the Academy under any circumstances.

If unsafe behaviors occur, such as hitting, pushing, biting, calling names or teasing, etc. The teachers will discuss the situation with the child, redirect them to a more acceptable behavior or activity and apply natural consequences appropriate to their age and developmental level. Children are encouraged to verbalize their wants and feelings in developmentally appropriate ways.

While at the Preschool, we ask that parents partner with us through utilizing common language and expectations for the students. Parents may never discipline *other* families' children while at our school. It is the teachers responsibility to handle classroom behaviors. If you believe there is a problem that has not been noticed by the teacher, please bring it to their attention rather than addressing it yourself. In this way we demonstrate respect for other parents and the teachers.

Teachers will do their best to recognize and redirect potential inter-personal issues before they escalate, but they will not be able to eliminate every negative behavior that may occur. We are all growing in virtue together and as such mistakes will happen. We encourage learning from these mistakes and forgiving one another. If a child hurts another student an Incident Report will be written and signed by the parents of both students, the teacher and director; the teachers will not disclose the identity of the other students and we ask parents to respect this. The report will include what happened and how the incident was managed.

Serious incidents that include broken skin or other significant injury will include the parents being notified immediately.

### **Biting**

Young children occasionally express their frustrations through biting. While this is a developmental stage with some children, we will be proactive with recognizing the preceding signs and do our best to intervene before biting occurs. While biting is not an entirely unexpected behavior for toddlers, it is also not tolerated as an ongoing expression. Biting is harmful to other children and to staff. Our goal is to partner with our parents and quickly identify what is initiating the biting and resolve these issues as soon as possible. If a biting incident occurs, State regulations require that both sets of parents be notified. As previously stated, other students' names are not disclosed.

### **When Biting Does Occur**

The staff's job is to guard the safety of all children in our care. We are committed to helping a child that bites learn different, more appropriate ways to meet their needs.

#### **For the child that was bitten:**

1. First aid is provided. The affected area is cleaned with soap and water and a cold compress is applied. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified through an incident report.

### **For the child that bites:**

1. The teacher will calmly remove the child from the situation and provide time for self-regulation and reflection.
2. The “Incident Form” is filled out in Procare.

If a child inflicts 2 bites in one day where the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately.

If a child has 2 or more biting incidents in a single week this *may result* in a 1-3 day suspension depending on the severity of the bites.

When a child comes back from any period of suspension, any additional biting will require the parents to pick their student up immediately.

1. A parent conference will be scheduled to discuss possible causes of the child biting (teething, communication, frustration, etc.). The teacher and Director will collaborate with the parent to partner in solution focused support to eliminate the behavior.
2. The administrative staff may also observe the child if initial efforts to determine the cause have been unsuccessful.
3. The Director and Parents may agree to set up an evaluation with the Early Learning Coalition (ELC).

### **Post suspension biting:**

When a child successfully re-integrates after a suspension, with no subsequent incidents of biting, the disciplinary process resets to the beginning. This is consistent with our belief that all children are able to grow and learn from their mistakes.

## **Significant Disciplinary Issues**

St. John's Catholic Academy Preschool values strong and mutually respectful partnerships with our families. We understand that every child is unique and individualized intervention/strategy may be required for a child to be successful. We are committed to working with each family to successfully integrate each student into their age level classroom. When a students’ behavior becomes overly disruptive in the classroom setting, the student will be sent to the Director who will notify the parents of the issue and intended strategies for reintegration into the

classroom.

In the event of repeated disruptive behaviors, disciplinary actions may include:

- a. the parent immediately picking up their child
- b. parent conferences with the teacher, Director, and/or Principal.
- c. parents may be invited to observe their child in the classroom.
- d. The Director and Parents may agree to set up an evaluation with the Early Learning Coalition (**ELC**).

The Director and Principal reserve the right to determine the appropriate course of action that holds the greatest possibility of success.

Every effort will be made to work with the parent and child to correct any disruptive behavior. Parents may be required to meet with the Director and discuss utilizing the free resources offered by the Early Learning Coalition (ELC). These may include an observation, recommendations to both the family and teacher, and/or play therapy. An evaluation by a developmental pediatrician may also be recommended/required for continued enrollment in more serious cases.

It is always our prayerful intention to partner with our families in resolving incidents of disruptive behaviors. In the event that all reasonable resources have been exhausted and a child continues to display disruptive or dangerous behavior the Administrative team reserves the right to require immediate withdrawal from the Academy.

### **Learning Goals**

St. John Catholic Academy and Preschool strives to encourage child-led activities and centers. We emphasize hands-on activities that engage the children in active learning. We provide a natural learning environment while cultivating a spiritual setting where the students are formed as disciples of Christ for life. Children are naturally eager to learn and are very capable of creating their own learning path if given the opportunity. Our Academy invites students to explore the good, true and beautiful through exposure to a variety of disciplines including religion, music, and art. Our commitment is to encourage each student to reach their full potential academically and spiritually on their educational journey. We value providing an environment that will meet the needs of each of God's children. The teachers create purposeful, practical life activities such as role-playing, and activities that help children feel comfortable and interact appropriately with one another while utilizing the language of virtue to frame their experiences. Children become aware

of the happiness that engaging in these tasks brings to them. Lessons focus on treating others the way we wish to be treated which is with respect and kindness, just like Jesus taught his disciples.

### **Illness & Medication**

The staff at the preschool will take precautions to prevent the spread of germs. A few ways that we will maintain a healthy learning environment are through careful hand washing by staff and children, sending children home if they become ill during the school day, taking extra precautions with diapered or toilet training children such as wearing gloves, proper disposal and/or handling of soiled clothes and of diapers as well as cleaning changing tables between use. Maintaining an orderly and clean classroom, sanitizing classroom toys and materials on a daily and monthly rotation system.

#### **Sick Child Policy:**

**Please DO NOT bring your child to school if he/she has had any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours.** If your child is at school and shows any sign of the symptoms listed below, you will be called to pick them up within one hour. Please help us protect the other children and our staff by responding promptly to a sick child call.

- Diarrhea**
- Vomiting**
- Unidentified Rash** – rash must be identified and treated before returning
- Fever-100.4** You may return 24 hours after fever has broken without the administration of medication. If your child is required to be on an antibiotic, he/she must be on the antibiotic for a full 24 hours before returning to school in addition to being fever free for the same.
- Severe Coughing**—child gets red or blue face, child makes a high-pitched croup or whooping sound after cough, difficult or rapid breathing– esp. in infants, yellowish skin or eyes
- Diaper Rash** - Cracked skin and/or bleeding

## **Communicable Disease:**

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, all parents will be notified by an Illness Alert posted on Procure. Parents should report all communicable illnesses to the Director as soon as possible. The name of the child who is ill will not be disclosed publicly.

**Children with contagious diseases must not attend school during the contagious period.** Common guidelines for returning to school are:

- Strep Throat-** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- Mumps-** 9 days after onset of swelling
- Chicken Pox or Shingles-** 7 days from onset of rash or until all lesions are crusted
- Influenza-** until all symptoms are resolved
- Impetigo-** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- Hand Foot and Mouth-**24 hours after fever has broken and all blisters have scabbed
- Colds-** after continuous cough ends and there is no purulent discharge from eyes and nose.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)**– 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and visible discharge has resolved
- Lice-**24 hours after treatment begins and all nits have been removed
- Pinworms-**24 hours after medication has been administered, a doctor's note and absolutely no itching

## **COVID-19**

**Children who test positive for covid OR develop symptoms after coming in direct contact with someone who has tested positive for covid (ie: living in household) must quarantine for 5 days. Students may return to school when:**

- 5 day quarantine AND fever free without medication for at least 24 hours.



- Doctor's note stating they may return to school (date of return included).

### **Medication:**

A staff member may administer medication to a child provided:

- An ***authorization for medication form*** must be filled out and accompany all medication. Instructions on the form must agree with the prescription label, over the counter label or doctor's instructions as appropriate.
- The medication is brought in the original container with the child's full name clearly marked (no sharing between siblings).
- The medication is brought to the director's office and kept in a locked cabinet.
- Current and complete prescription information, if any, is clearly marked on the container.
- Medications of any kind including ointments, lip balm, pills, cough drops, vitamins or liquids ***may not*** be placed in a child's lunch box, book bag or carried in the student's pockets.

Routine medication such as diaper cream, sunscreen and bug spray may be sent in, but must have an authorization form filled out. Authorization forms must be filled out and updated monthly.

No medications are ever directly accessible to children. Staff members will document the time and dosage of medication administered on the authorization form. All empty medication containers will be returned to the parents.

### **Items from Home**

#### **Clothing**

We ask that each child brings in *two sets of seasonably appropriate change of clothes in a labeled zip lock bag*. Please include underwear and socks. These clothes need to remain at the school for emergencies.

#### **Personal Belongings**

Students ***may not bring any personal toys*** to school. We have lots of fun things here at school for them. All toys and items of value should be left at home. The Preschool is not responsible for any misplaced, lost or damaged personal items.

*Toys and extra items will be stopped at the door and sent home with parents.* Please understand that integration into the classroom is best achieved without battling separation from special objects while at the door or in the classroom. Please consider a transitional routine that will best support your child beginning their school day with joy. We appreciate you partnering with us concerning healthy and happy transitions into school.

All students are allowed *one small stuffed animal for nap time*. Please make sure that it is soft and small enough to fit in their cubby (no music makers please). Please label their comfort item with their full name. Please explain to your child that these nap time comforts remain in their cubby until nap time and return to their cubby after waking.

### **Meals and Snacks**

- If your child has any type of food allergy, the parent is responsible for notifying the school in writing.**
- All children at the preschool will bring a separate AM snack and PM snack and lunch to school. NOTE: Students who remain at school after 3:00 pm will need a third snack packed.
- All children should have their own water bottle filled with water for the day. Lunch needs to be “Ready to Serve”. NOTE: It is a Florida Law that we are **not permitted** to heat lunches up in the microwave.
- All lunchboxes, thermos cups, sippy cups, bottles, baby food and pouches should be labeled with your child’s full name.

*The Preschool does not have a breakfast program.*

- Students are expected to have had their breakfast *before drop off* in the morning. If they are still working on their breakfast in the car, please wait until they have finished to bring them into school. This courtesy will allow for a smoother transition and teachers will be able to begin their day promptly upon arrival.
- Each classroom has a morning snack at 9:30am.

### **Nap & Rest Time-**

**Nap/Rest Time is from 12:00pm-2:00pm**

\*All classes rest between these times with the exception of the Wobbler Room. In

the event of picking up during these times, please notify the director or front office, to prevent the disruption of nap time.

### **Wobblers:**

Wobblers are provided with their own crib and or cot. The wobbler class is a transitional class. Schedule will vary based on the individual child's needs. Our goal is to transition to have 1 scheduled nap time at 12. You will need to bring two clean crib sheets at the beginning of each school week. Nap linens will go home on Fridays for washing.

### **Toddlers and Preschoolers:**

Each child will receive a nap cot. Please bring in a crib sheet and personal blanket on Monday of each week. The nap linens will go home for washing on Fridays. Nap time is provided for all children in our preschool program, 12:15pm to 2:15pm.

### **Birthdays:**

Birthdays are very important to you and your child and we will be glad to help you celebrate. If you would like to bring a special snack, please make arrangements with your child's teacher. **The state of Florida does require that any refreshments brought into the classroom must be store bought. Please consider reasonably healthy options for celebrations. Fresh fruit is a lovely way to celebrate and most of the children prefer it.**

If you plan to have a birthday party for your child outside of school and you plan to invite all students in your child's class, then we welcome you to hand out your child's invitations at school. Birthday invitations will not be uploaded electronically into Procure. If you do not intend to invite all students, then please handle your invitations outside of school.

### **Bathroom Needs:**

**For those children in diapers-** Please provide diapers and wipes for your child to be kept at school in their cubby. We will notify you when the supply needs to be replenished. St. John Catholic Academy Preschool will work alongside you on your child's potty training journey. All of our students **must** be potty trained by the age of **three**.

**For those children who are potty trained-** We encourage you to visit the bathrooms with your child to familiarize them with the potties, sinks, soap and paper towels. Please always keep an extra change of clothes in their book bag.

### **Emergency Procedures:**

The Academy has a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan developed in coordination with local law enforcement. We have developed procedures to ensure the safety of your child in the case of a variety of possible emergency situations. Local police and fire authorities are willing partners with the Academy and have been provided a copy of our procedures. They have assured us that their response time would be less than 90 seconds should we need them. Our teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR. Monthly fire drills are conducted at the school. In addition a quarterly lock down drill will occur. Parents will be notified when a lockdown drill is occurring in order to discuss and debrief the experience with your child that evening. Our external reunification site in the event that we need to leave campus is St. Andrews Episcopal Church 1608 Baker Ct , Panama City Fl. 32401.

If any child should need emergency medical care, he/she will be transported to Gulf Coast Hospital ER by ambulance and parents will be contacted immediately. The director/teacher will accompany the child and remain with the child until parents arrive.

For minor injuries, first aid kits and the teachers will clean the injury with soap and water and apply ice if needed. All minor injuries that occur are reported to the parent on an Incident Report. The parent, the teacher and the director will sign and keep the incident report filed in the director's office.

### **Prayers:**

Jesus has invited us all into a relationship through prayer. We pray together with the children throughout the day, particularly in the morning and before snack and lunch. We honor both traditional and spontaneous prayers with our students. Some of the prayers practiced can be found in the back of this handbook. We encourage you to say the prayers with your child at home.

### **Field Trips:**

Only the K4 class may participate in field trips. Wobblers through 3 years old go

on nature walks on school grounds, walk on the church walkway and play on our school playgrounds.

**School Pictures:**

School pictures will be offered both in the Fall and Spring of each year. Purchase of the pictures by parents is optional. Parents will be provided relevant information prior to picture day. We welcome parents to volunteer to assist with picture day.

**Use of Student Picture and Information:**

Parents or guardians of students who attend St. John Catholic Academy Preschool must sign a consent form either giving permission or not giving permission for all photographs taken during the school year to be used by St. John Catholic Academy Preschool for our website, advertising or publicity. This signed consent form will be kept in the student's file.

**Fingerprinting:**

According to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Diocese, all staff are required to be fingerprinted and background checked before hiring. Any parent or adult who intends to have routine contact with the students is required to be fingerprinted and background checked before working with the students. Parents who are not fingerprinted are not permitted to be left alone with the students for any reason. A teacher should accompany the parent while with the class.

**Parent Volunteer Program:**

We believe our school is built upon the relationships between our parents and our school. Parent involvement is one of the many factors which contribute to our success.

**Reporting and Confidentiality:**

**Child Abuse:**

Florida law requires that persons who work with children and have reason to believe that a child is coming before them in their professional or official capacity is a victim of child abuse are required to report suspected child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline. They are also required to notify the person in charge of the institution of suspected abuse and to make a written report. All staff members are oriented towards this policy. Child abuse is defined as a:

1. Serious physical or mental injury that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental
2. Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation
3. Serious physical neglect of a child under 18 years of age.

### **Confidentiality:**

DCF regulations state that a staff person may not disclose information concerning a child or family, except in the course of inspections and investigations by agents of the Department. Staff must keep confidentiality concerning children at all times. Our staff will not disclose information regarding the children as to which child has an illness (although the illness itself will be posted), which child is biting or behaving inappropriately in the room, or the developmental progress of other children.

In order to provide mutual respect and consideration for other children and families, parents should not discuss other people's children, classroom situations, or teachers while enrolled in St. John Catholic Academy.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement:**

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, creed, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. The school does not discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, creed or national origin.

## **Prayers:**

The following prayers are those that will be said with your child while at St. John Catholic Academy preschool. We encourage you to pray with your child each day.

### **The Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father,  
And of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit  
Amen.

### **Grace before Meals**

Bless us, O Lord,  
And these thy gifts  
Which we are about to receive  
From thy bounty  
Through Christ our Lord  
Amen

### **Our Father**

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
Amen.

### **Hail Mary**

Hail Mary full of grace my Lord is with thee,  
Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

**St. John Catholic Academy Preschool**  
**Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

**The parent handbook acknowledgement form must be signed by both parents/  
legal guardians and returned to the Director.**

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Date

If you have additional children in this preschool, please complete the following information.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name and Grade (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name and Grade (please print)