



# ST. MARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN & EDUCARE HANDBOOK

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Mary Pre-Kindergarten and Educare are Catholic oriented programs where basic Christian and social values are experienced. Activities in the programs will follow Catholic teachings and develop and strengthen social, emotional and academic growth. The PreK and TK programs will provide a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. Our programs provide settings that recognize varied abilities and interests. Children are given opportunities for meaningful play that encourages development of language skills, curiosity and problem solving. We recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children and seek to partner with them in their child's educational formation.

## **ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

St. Mary Educare is certified to serve St. Mary students ages 3 -13 years of age. Eligibility is open to students regardless of race, religion, culture, sex and/or disability.

Admission is dependent upon:

1. Openings in the program
2. Completion of entire registration packet
3. Fully potty trained and able to use bathroom independently
4. Participate in teacher assessed testing (TK)

## **Requirements for Admission for students in PreK & TK**

**No child can attend the PreK3 program until they are 3 years of age.**

**No child can attend the PreK4 program until they are 4 years of age.**

**No child can attend the TK program unless they turn 5 years of age May-December or are teacher recommended and participate in teacher assessed testing.**

The child's immunizations must be up to date and in compliance with state regulations.

A physical examination is encouraged to screen for vision and hearing deficits.

**The child must exhibit the following PreK & TK readiness indicators:**

- Separate from a parent/guardian with little redirection
- Communicate with a familiar adult (who is not the parent or grandparent) in a way that can be understood.
- Accept direction from a familiar adult (who is not the child's parent or grandparent)
- Verbalize the need to use the restroom in an age-appropriate way.
- Independently use the bathroom, including pulling his/her own pants and underwear down and up, wiping and washing hands.
- Experience or express negative emotion without biting or hurting others.

## **PRE-KINDERGARTEN TIMES AND RATES**

Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 begin at **8:00 a.m.** and end at **11:00 a.m.** In Pre-K 4, you may choose to register your child for three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) or five days a week (Monday-Friday). In Pre-K 3 you may choose two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) or five days a week (Monday-Friday). If a slot is reserved for your child, it cannot be changed without prior approval, and then **only** if there is room on that day. Pre-Kindergarten is charged at the rate agreed upon at registration for each day your child is registered whether or not your child is in attendance.

### Tuition Rates:

5 days a week (Monday-Friday) - \$4,135/year (\$413.50/month September-June)

3 days a week (M/W/F) - \$2,600/year (\$260.00/mo. Sept-June)

2 days a week (Tu/Th) - \$1,750/year (\$175.00/month September-June)

## **TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN (TK) TIMES AND RATE**

Transitional Kindergarten begins at **8:00 a.m.** and ends at **2:45 p.m.** TK is five days a week (Monday-Friday). Transitional Kindergarten is charged at the rate agreed upon at registration for days registered whether or not your child is in attendance.

### Tuition Rate:

\$6,550/year (\$655.00/month September-June)

## **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

The progress that a child is making toward social, emotional, behavioral and academic (including language) benchmarks are discussed frequently with parents during the year.

Assessments are conducted throughout the year, both formally and informally. Assessment results are shared with parents at least three times a year. Formal assessments, day to day observational assessments and samples of children's work to show individual progress and comprehension are discussed during the fall and spring conferences and an informal end of year phone call conference, email or letter is also conducted to help support parents to bridge any gaps a child may have for the following school year.

Assessment of each child's strengths and need is used to inform instruction during the school year. Children in both PreK3 and PreK4 are assessed regularly to determine progress. Assessment methods include portfolios of dated work kept for each child (e.g. monthly self-portraits, letter writing/recognition, journaling, etc.). In addition, each child works individually with the teacher, teacher assistant or aide to monitor progress on various tasks - counting, one-to-one correspondence, letter and number identification, fine motor tasks (cutting, writing name, etc.), gross motor skills (hopping, skipping, throwing, catching), following 2-step directions, sorting, sequencing, eye dominance, and many other skills. Assessments for each child are dated to show growth. Individual students are rated on his/her performance of these skills (derived from the Washington Early Learning Benchmarks) and these results are shared with parents during the bi-yearly formal conferences (November and March) and the end of year conference.

Parents and teachers sign and date a conference card, which is kept in the student's portfolio. The conference card will follow the child through their tenure at the school.

The need for ongoing assessment of all children to inform instruction is outlined in the faculty handbook and is also discussed regularly at in-services and faculty meetings.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

We do not view discipline as a means of punishing a child who has acted inappropriately, but rather, to teach a child how to problem solve for themselves in the event of conflict. Our goal is to teach children communication skills and to encourage the development of social relationships in our developmentally appropriate classroom. We ask that families take an active role in the classroom by volunteering and attending parent-teacher collaboration meetings. Assessments and instructional strategies will be used to identify, teach and support each, individual in setting and reaching goals. Skills are taught within the context of meaningful and engaging activities.

In cases where a child has many documented incidents of challenging behaviors, they are harming themselves, teachers, or other children, and they are not responding to the program and families' initial, coordinated attempts to modify the behavior, a special meeting will be called to discuss next steps including updating or implementing a behavior support plan. The plan will include types of redirection, consequences, and skills the child needs to work on. If, after a 3-week period, behaviors have not improved, an evaluation should be scheduled with an education expert or child's physician. Once this has taken place, another meeting will be scheduled where families and teachers will reevaluate the situation and go over next steps for the child. In most cases, this will result in a revised behavior plan.

Should we feel a situation is beyond our expertise and it is found that the behavior or developmental needs the child requires, supervision and expertise beyond our scope, then a final meeting will be scheduled with the child's teacher and the principal to consider solutions that will meet the needs of the child. This can include a referral to a local developmental preschool or other programs that may better meet the needs of the child.

## **TRANSITION POLICY**

The staff at St. Mary Catholic preschool and TK are committed to supporting children and families as they settle into the program. The school offers support, love and care to ensure that each child makes a successful transition into the preschool and TK environment, where they will be eager to learn and participate in all areas of the curriculum.

St. Mary preschool operates in three classrooms - PreK3 (for children 3-4 years) and PreK4 (for children 4-5 years) and Transitional Kindergarten (for 4yrs 9mon-6yrs). Each preschool and TK classroom provide for the well-being, learning and development of each child. The following positive and supportive strategies will help with the process of change to a new environment and separation for each child.

### **Transition visits**

Ideally, three visits are recommended before enrollment to ease transition, but at least one of the transition opportunities would prove beneficial. These visits allow the child and family to become familiar with the St. Mary environment, get to know the teachers, be involved in the program and classroom routine. There is no fee charge for these visits. Recommendations for classroom visits: while parent picks up registration packet and takes a tour (this visit is pre-

arranged through the office by parent contact), move up day (Spring) and ice cream social/classroom visit (late summer).

### **Settling into classroom**

- Parents are encouraged to help their child get started with the entry task and then leave promptly, as delays can cause the child to become more unsettled.
- Sneaking out may cause less stress initially for the parent but can cause greater long-term stress for the child. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to say goodbye when leaving and the teachers will reassure the children that parents (or caregiver) will return.
- Children may settle better with a comfort item from home (e.g. a picture w/mom or dad, a stuffed animal or special item).
- Parents and caregivers please inform staff if the child is having a tearful separation.

Registration information is sent to parents regarding enrollment for the coming school year starting in mid-February and continuing through the spring (e.g. weekly school bulletins, teacher newsletters, parent/teacher conferences, information on the website). Open enrollment for new families starts in late March and continues through the spring.

If a family is struggling with the decision about whether to move a child forward or to stay in the current class, we offer dual enrollment for the summer with an assessment in August to help make the best choice for the child.

There is a “move up” day scheduled in late May or early June each year where children from one class are given the opportunity to visit the next class for part of the morning (PreK3 visits PreK4, PreK4 and TK visit Kindergarten and incoming PreK3 students visit their “future” classroom).

At the end of the summer, incoming preschool and TK children visit their class with their parents as we have a “classroom visit” and ice cream social for families. This gives the children an opportunity to check out their new class, visit with their teacher and classmates, and their parents the opportunity to meet or re-connect with the teacher and classroom families.

### **Transition to Kindergarten**

The progress that a child is making toward social, academic (including language), behavioral and emotional benchmarks are discussed frequently with parents, formally and informally, during the year. A spring conference is scheduled with families to discuss the child’s progress and their readiness to move to Kindergarten. A Kindergarten readiness packet is given to parents and there are brochures available, prepared by the teachers, that include major skills and curricular objectives to be mastered in Kindergarten (and PreK 4). Teachers will make recommendations to parents regarding their child’s readiness for the next academic step and offer ideas for remediation that may help bridge the gaps for children who may need it. Kindergarten registration paperwork is available at this conference (and in the main office starting in late February for current families). Assessment data is shared directly with Kindergarten teachers in May.

In what seems like a blink of the eye, preschoolers are ready to leave preschool to attend Kindergarten. Many children have been together since they were three years old. Over the course of time, they have grown in many ways; physically, socially and emotionally. They have developed skills as learners, problem solvers and as friends.

\*Area school information is given upon request

### **GENERAL EDUCARE INFORMATION**

Children must be registered for Educare if they attend, other than on an emergency basis. Educare is open at 7:00 a.m. Students are released to classrooms at 7:50 a.m. After school Educare is provided from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. All childcare must be scheduled in advance. This can be done on the Educare registration form, in the school office, or you may leave a message on the Educare voice mail (924-4300 x211), and we will get back to you. If an unexpected need to use Educare arises, you must call and confirm space is available prior to your child reporting to Educare. Educare is **not** a “drop-in” daycare. Educare is to be utilized for parents to be able to drop off their children before school and come pick children up after school, as soon as they can. If a child does not attend class (including preschool) on any given day they **cannot** attend Educare that day (except for Teacher In-Service days). Parents are **not** permitted to pick up their child from school or Educare and then return them to Educare that day for any amount of time. We must maintain a specific adult to child ratio in Educare and that is not possible if the student numbers fluctuate throughout the day.

**EDUCARE RATES** are recorded **per minute the child is checked into the computer system.**

<b>Rates</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Child</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> child</b>	<b>3 or more</b>
<b>Per Hour charge:</b>	\$5.75	\$4.85	\$4.30
<b>Max Daily Rate:</b>	\$34.00	\$34.00	\$34.00

### **HALF DAYS AND FULL DAYS IN-SERVICE DAYS**

Educare will be open on all ½ day and full day in-services. We are licensed for 75 children, and therefore, space will be limited and is available on a first come first served basis. A clipboard with sign-up sheets for each of these dates can be found in Educare, on the sign in counter. You will be charged the full daily rate of \$34.00 per child if your child is signed up and does not attend. You may remove your child’s name from the list to avoid being charged. Advance sign-up is required by the Monday before the half day or In-Service Day. A \$10 late fee **per child** will be added for late sign-ups given space is still available.

### **HOLIDAYS**

**Educare is closed** on the Holidays that the school is not open. These are Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Break, M.L.K. Day, President’s Day, Spring Break, Easter Monday (when observed), and Memorial Day.

### **DROP OFF/PICK UP INFORMATION**

You must check in your child in the morning and check them out in the afternoon, on the Sycamore Kiosk. Educare staff will check out your child for school in the morning and check them in for afternoon Educare. Your child will not be allowed to enter or leave Educare without your kiosk e-signature, or the e-signature of someone who has been approved by you to pick up your child. A staff member may ask for picture identification, or other verification of identity before releasing a child (WAC 388-1250-450).

## **OVERTIME CHARGE**

When a parent is late picking a child up (after 6:00pm), a **late fee** will be charged. This fee is \$5.00 for every 5 minutes past 6:00pm per child, if applicable.

## **MEALS**

A morning snack with milk or water will be provided for PreK and TK, and an afternoon snack with milk or water will be provided during Educare. Milk is included with hot lunch purchase and is also available for ala carte purchase at morning PreK and TK sign-in, if desired for lunch.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS**

The PreK and Educare Center staff are required by Washington State Law and DSHS licensing requirements to immediately report any instance where there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation to the police or Child Protective Services. The Center will follow the recommendation of Child Protective Services. This policy is supported by the Catholic Diocese of Spokane (WAC 388-150-480).

## **PRACTICES CONCERNING AN ILL CHILD**

Any student who is ill **cannot** be accepted into morning Educare. Students who become ill during morning care will be isolated and cared for until school begins and will then be released to the school where standard procedures will be followed. (WAC 388-150-220).

If a child becomes ill after school, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child, and the child will be isolated and cared for until parents arrive. Students may not return to school until **at least 24 hours after the last time they vomited, and/or their fever is under 100 degrees F, without medication.**

## **IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

An immunization form will be given to parents/guardians upon registration for Pre-Kindergarten. This form is to be completed and returned to the Program Supervisor upon enrollment. State Laws concerning immunization will be enforced. Immunization exemption form must be properly completed and signed by child's doctor. MMR can only be exempt as Religious exemption (EHB 1638). Failure to comply will result in loss of enrollment.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

**Medication will not be administered in the Pre-Kindergarten or Educare facility** (WAC 388-150-230). Medication will be dispensed through the school office only after a *physician has signed a Medication Authorization Form*. Medication must be in its original container and will be stored in a locked drawer in the school office. Over-the-counter medications, vitamins, throat lozenges, etc. require only a parent's signature on *Medication Authorization Form*. Please see medication policy in School Handbook for more information. Educare will have access to the locked medication drawer in the school office in case of emergency after school office hours.

## **ILLNESS AND ACCIDENT RECORD**

Educare will maintain an illness and accident record for injuries and accidents, which may occur on premises. The report will include the type of injury as well as the treatment given. Any serious bruises or injuries noticed on the child prior to the beginning of the day will be noted.

## **FIRST AID SUPPLIES**

First aid supplies will be on hand in Educare, PreK, the school office and in the gym.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Emergency numbers are posted by both phones in Educare/Pre-K, and in Morning Care. Emergency consent forms are included in the registration packet and must be on file with the Program Supervisor before a child will be admitted to Educare. Emergency transportation will include ambulance, paramedics, or like transportation. In the event of dire emergencies, the most effective manner of transportation will be used.

## **EDUCARE DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline is an essential ingredient of Christian life. Discipline is demonstrated through the principles of respect ~ respect for self, for others, for other's property, and for the welfare of the group. Part of the discipline process is learning to take responsibility for one's choices. When a student fails to exercise self-discipline, it becomes necessary for the program's staff to use measures to safeguard the rights of others through:

1. Talking with the student;
2. Offering the student choices;
3. Separation of the student from the group;
4. Parent and/or principal involvement

Any form of corporal punishment is not permitted on the premises of the Center by anyone, including parents (WAC 388-150-130).

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trip and transportation policies are as follows ~ we will transport or permit supervised off-site travel of the child to participate in field trips or engage in other off-site activities only with written parental consent. Field trip forms will list the location, date and time of the event, as well as require parental signatures and emergency information, and authorization for medical treatment. Seatbelts and proper car seats or booster seats must be provided for each student as mandated by state law. See School Handbook for further information.

**An open-door policy exists in the PreK and Educare Programs, and parents are welcome to visit at any time during the day.**

## **DISASTER PLAN /EMERGENCY ACTION GUIDE**

Educare will follow the same Crisis Plan as St. Mary Catholic School. Emergency procedures and recommendations in this document will be used as a guideline in the event of a local disaster. Read the following carefully.

### **CLASSES WILL NOT BE DISMISSED, AND CHILDREN WILL REMAIN UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL AUTHORITIES.**

When the situation indicates departure of students is feasible, they will be released to parents or persons authorized to pick up the student. The emergency card filled out at registration contains this information. It is your responsibility to update the card if the person(s) authorized to assume custody of your child changes. Legal documentation of custody agreement must be provided to the office if there are any no contact orders.

St. Mary has formulated the following plan in the event of a disaster, such as, but not limited to the following:

- Earthquake
- Fire
- Bomb threat (peacetime)
- Chemical accident/Hazardous materials
- Explosion or threat of explosion
- Volcanic eruptions
- Other similar occurrences that might make a building uninhabitable
- Gunfire or acts of violence in the area

**A complete copy of this Crisis Plan is available in the Educare Office or in the school office.**

## DAILY SCHEDULE

### Pre-K 3 (3-4 year old):

7:50 – 9:00	Arrive, Wash Hands, Free Play/Centers, Small Group Project with Teacher
9:00 – 9:30	Clean-up and Carpet Time
9:30 – 10:10	Wash Hands, Group Snack Time and Centers (when done)
10:10 – 10:35	Clean-up, Story Time and Religion
10:35 – 11:00	Outside Play, Wash Hands, Prayer and Dismissal

### Pre-K 4 (4-5 year old):

7:50 – 8:15	Arrive, Wash Hands and Entry Task
8:15 – 8:45	Morning Meeting & Mini Lesson
8:45 – 9:30	Centers and Small Group Activities
9:45 – 10:05	Wash Hands, Snack & Social Time
10:05 – 10:35	Outside Play/Gross Motor
10:35 – 10:50	Wash Hands, Story/Celebrations/Religion
10:50 -11:00	Ending Prayer and Dismissal

### TK (4yr 9mo-6yr old):

7:50 – 8:15	Arrival, Wash Hands and Entry Task
8:15-8:45	Circle Time, Morning Message, Calendar
8:45-9:30	Literacy/Writing Centers and Small Groups
9:35-9:55	Wash Hands, Snack & Social Time
10:00-11:00	Free Choice Play Centers
11:00-12:00	Lunch/ Recess/Outside Time
12:00-12:15	Wash hands, Quiet Rest Time/Story
12:15-1:00	Math Centers and Small group
1:05-1:30	Religion
1:30-2:15	Science/Weather, or Social Studies/Geography
2:15-2:30	Wash hands, Snack & Social Time
2:30-2:45	Closing Circle
2:45	Dismissal

## **Educare:**

### **Morning Educare**

7:00 – 7:45	Wash Hands, Table Games, or Free Play with Balls
7:45 – 7:50	Cleanup
7:50	Dismissal to class

### **PreK Educare (11:00 – 2:45)**

11:00 – 11:15	Combine into PK3 room, Wash up for lunch
11:15 – 11:50	Lunch
11:50 – 12:05	Wash Hands, Story Time/Show and Tell
12:05 – 12:15	Get ready for Rest Time, use Bathroom
12:15 – 1:30	Rest/Quiet time
1:30 – 2:15	Wash up, Preschool enrichment activity
2:15 – 2:30	Clean-up/Wash up for Snack
2:30 – 2:45	Snack Time
2:45 – 3:00	Prepare for Outside Play/use Bathroom
3:00 – 4:00	Outside Play
4:00 – 4:30	Wash Hands, Explore Centers
4:30 – 5:45	Free Play
5:45 – 6:00	Clean-up, Wash Hands & Dismissal

### **School Age Educare (2:45 – 6:00)**

2:45 – 3:00	Check-in & Wash-up for Snack
3:00 – 3:15	Snack
3:15 – 4:00	Outside Play
4:00 – 4:30	Wash Hands, Homework Time/Reading
4:30 – 5:45	Free Play
5:45 – 6:00	Clean-up, Wash Hands & Dismissal