

*St. Mark Catholic Preschool  
Policies Handbook*

*1602 Thousand Oaks  
San Antonio, Texas 78232  
(210) 494-9282*

*MSGR. KEVIN RYAN  
PASTOR/FACILITY OWNER*

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO SAVE THIS BOOK.  
YOU WILL NEED IT ALL YEAR.**

# PHILOSOPHY

St. Mark Catholic Preschool provides a nurturing environment in a caring and positive atmosphere to create a warm and happy place for children to learn. As we bridge the gap from home to school, we guide children to a continued good self-image while building social skills in a school setting.

Each child will be respected as an individual with his or her own timetable and learning style. Through listening, questioning and making choices, the child will learn to enjoy the process of learning and find joy in his or her own achievements.

St. Mark fosters an “open door” policy and welcomes parents to visit the classroom and the office. Sign in and obtain a Visitors Pass from the School Office before going to classroom.

# CHAPEL

The Chapel program is designed to help children feel a sense of awe and thanks for the wonders of God’s world, to nurture within each a prayerful relationship with God, and to provide opportunities to experience the love of God for themselves and to share that love with others. This program is based on Catholic theology and is in keeping with the educational goals of St. Mark Catholic Preschool.

*“Jesus took the children in his arms,  
placed his hands on each of them,  
and blessed them.”*

Mark 10:16

# **ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL**

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Children ages eighteen months, two, three, four, and five as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year attending are eligible for enrollment in St. Mark Catholic Preschool. Eighteen month and two year olds do not need to be potty trained, their classrooms have a separate area used for diaper changing with a hand washing sink (*requirement of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.*)

## **ADMISSION POLICIES**

St. Mark Catholic Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. St. Mark does not discriminate against any child due to ethnic background, religion, sex, national origin or color.

Upon receipt of completed enrollment forms, and appropriate fees, a child will be enrolled in the program depending on a vacancy in the age-level appropriate class. Pre-registration is held each January or February for children already in the program and their siblings. Registration for parishioners and open registration follow immediately.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SCHOOL**

A child's enrollment may be terminated by the director(s) at any time due to the failure of either the parents or the child to cooperate with the policies of the school.

A minimum of two weeks notice must be given to the director before voluntary parental withdrawal from the program. The remainder of the month's tuition will be forfeited. A child withdrawn from the school during the last month of a semester will be charged full tuition.

## **POLICY CHANGES**

Any changes to St Mark Preschool Policies or procedures will be sent home in writing in a timely manner.

# **FINANCES**

## **TUITION**

Tuition is based on a nine month schedule. There will be a late charge of \$20.00 for tuition not paid within five days of the due date. Accounts that are in arrears two months will be reviewed. Persistent failure to pay tuition when due, will be cause for relinquishing the child's place to a new enrollee.

Families with more than one child enrolled will receive \$10.00 off monthly tuition for the second child.

## **REGISTRATION**

A yearly Registration Fee is due at the time of enrollment and is non refundable.

## **FEES**

Fees for supplies can be paid in three monthly payments from the date of your registration. In the event a child leaves the program for whatever reason, the fees will not be refunded.

## **NAP MATS**

Eighteen month and two year olds are required to have a napping mat. Due to limited space, the school will purchase mats and sell them to parents each year. These mats will be used for your children to rest at our facility.

# **THE SCHOOL DAY**

## **ORIENTATION**

Before the first day of school, families are invited to an orientation to learn about the school, meet the teachers and become acquainted with the child's day.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

- Class times are 9:15 a.m. until 1:45 p.m. Monday thru Fridays and
- 9:15 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. on early out days.
- Drop-off time is between 9:00 a.m. to 9:15a.m.
- Class begins promptly at 9:15 a.m.
- Pick-up time is 1:45 p.m. till 2:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.
- 11:45 a.m. till 12:00 noon on early out days.
- There will be an overtime charge of \$20.00, per child, for pick-up later than 12:15 p.m. or 2:15 p..m.
- Your child will be released only to his/her parent or a person authorized on the Pick-Up Form.
- In case of an emergency, a phone call or note that will be verified by a return call from the school will allow a child to go home with someone else.
- When dropping off or picking up a child, a staff member must be made aware of the child's arrival or departure.
- Children are not to be released from the car to come into school without an adult.
- Children are not to wait outside to be picked up by a parent without a St. Mark Catholic Preschool staff member present.

## **CLOTHING**

Children should be dressed in simple, washable clothing that they can easily handle for toilet trips and for outdoor play. Tennis shoes are suggested as footwear for the children. Children are not permitted to wear boots.

All preschool children need a complete change of seasonal clothing to be kept in the classroom. Each item, including socks and underpants, should be sent to the class in a plastic baggie labeled with your child's name.

Do not bring any personal belongings from home to school. Absolutely no electronic devices are allowed to be brought to school and/or worn by children.

## **SNACKS**

Each child is to bring his or her own nutritious snack and drink from home each day. Please join us in being committed to good nutrition, this will benefit your children physically as well as teach them the principles of healthy eating. Foods need to be ready to serve, cut in appropriate sizes and ready to eat. Avoid foods that require heating and refrigeration. Please send water for the children to drink.

A few samples we recommend for your child's snack or lunch:

Raisins, pretzels, fresh fruit yogurt/ drinks – water and 100% juice. Please no candy, cookies, puddings or high sugar/fat products.

## **BACKPACKS**

Each child needs to have a back pack, for their lunch box, snack and school papers.

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES/BEACH DAY ACTIVITIES**

If you would like to send a special treat for your child and his/her classmates on his/her birthday, please notify the teacher. This treat must be store bought, to comply with the State Regulations.

St. Mark employees are not allowed to apply sunscreen or bug spray on your children, please apply prior to dropping them off.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Positive guidance and redirection are used to promote self-discipline and acceptable behavior. Discipline and guidance shall be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs and development. Positive methods, which encourage self-esteem, are used. There will be no cruel, harsh, or unusual treatment.

In accordance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, teachers have been required to be oriented in recognizing the symptoms of child abuse, neglect and sexual molestation. Texas law requires reporting such abuse to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Our teachers accept their responsibility to report any such cases. Abuse hotline 1-800-252-5400

## **HEALTH CHECK, ACCIDENTS, ALLERGY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Each child must have completed *immunization forms* and a statement from the doctor to the effect that he or she is healthy and is able to participate in school activities for each school year found in your St Mark Administration Forms.

No medications may be administered unless the following procedures are followed: a medication authorization form must be completed and kept in the school office. All medications must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name and with administration directions to include dosage and frequency indications. Prescribed medication must also include the date and name of the prescribing physician. Please note that St. Mark Preschool will only administer medications for allergic reactions or respiratory maintenance, NO other medications will be given.

If your child has an allergy that needs to be recorded with the school, state law 746.3817 and 746.3819 requires an allergy emergency plan. The health care provider and parent must sign and date the plan. A copy must be kept in the child's file.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

In case of a medical emergency we will:

1. Arrange for the care of the other children
2. Immediately notify the director(s)
3. Contact the parents or emergency contact person
4. When necessary, the director will contact the child's doctor
5. Never leave any child unattended

Any injury of a child at St. Mark's Catholic Preschool which required treatment by medical personnel must be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services no later than 24 hours (2 business days) after injury.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

This is to acknowledge that St. Mark's Catholic Preschool has provided me with the "Parent's Guide to Day Care" Information line, 1-800-862-5252, and web site: [http:// www.dfps.state.tx.us/child\\_care/other\\_child\\_care\\_information/parent-d.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/other_child_care_information/parent-d.asp)

## **GUIDELINES FOR SENDING A CHILD HOME:**

1. If a child has a fever of 100 degrees orally.
2. If a child has a temperature of 99 degrees and has one or more of the following:
  - a. Diarrhea
  - b. Allergy/Asthma attack
  - c. Vomiting
  - d. Nasal Discharge that is greenish/yellow in color
3. Chicken Pox
4. Pink eye
5. Streptococcal Infection/Strept throat
6. Scarlet Fever
7. Body Lice
8. Ringworms
9. Pinworms
10. Impetigo

## **GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL:**

1. A child sent home with fever may return 24 hours after the fever has diminished.
2. A child sent home because of any one of the following communicable diseases may return when:
  - Chicken Pox: sores dry up or crust and no new blisters appear
  - Diarrhea: symptoms are gone for 24 hours
  - Allergy/Asthma attacks: clear or normal breathing
  - Vomiting: clear for 24 hours
  - Pink Eye: after medical treatment and doctor's release
  - Streptococcal Infections: after antibiotic treatment and doctor's release
  - Scarlet Fever: after antibiotic treatment and doctor's release
  - Body Lice and Head Lice: after treatment and when no bugs OR nits remain in the hair
  - Ringworm, Pinworm or Impetigo: after treatment and doctor's release
  - Nasal Discharge: discharge is clear

The parents will be notified immediately if their child becomes ill or has an accident at school.

The NATIONAL PEDICULOSIS association recommends the No Nit Policy as the public health standard intended to keep children lice free, nit free, and in school.

St. Mark will follow the No Nit Policy recommended by the National Pediculosis Association. This policy calls for the exclusion of a child from the school setting until all head lice and nits have been removed.

Parents must sign a form authorizing the Directors or staff to obtain medical aid in the event of a serious injury or illness.

## **VISION/HEARING SCREENING**

Visual acuity and hearing sensitivity screening are required by the State for four year olds enrolled in school. Space is provided for this information on your child's Health Form.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills will be conducted each month to assure the safety of the children and familiarize the children and staff with the routine. An emergency evacuation will be practiced four times a year.

## **INSURANCE**

St. Mark Catholic Preschool carries an insurance policy that is secondary to your medical coverage.

## **EMERGENCY PLANS**

Posted in the school office and in every classroom and clearly state:  
In case of an emergency that would require St. Mark Catholic Preschool to relocate, we are prepared to travel to the west side of Kohl's parking lot (w>Loop 1604 N. San Antonio, Texas 78232. We have employees on school staff and employees on church staff. All employees of preschool and church would use their vehicles to transport up to four children. Our emergency files and attendance sheets would accompany us. Upon reaching our evacuation point, all teachers and other staff would begin to contact the parents of our preschool children by phone. It is extremely important that you inform the office of any new telephone numbers.

## **PARENT COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

### **PARENT-TEACHER-CHILD COMMITTEE (PTC)**

This group is comprised of all parents having a child in school, the directors, and the staff. Active members provide an invaluable support system to the school and each other.

### **VOLUNTEER PARENTS**

Parents may volunteer to be room parents. They will be responsible for planning holiday parties.

## **STATE REQUIREMENTS**

A copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Minimum Standards and current Licensing Inspections may be viewed in the School Office. The phone number for Licensing Staff is 210 –337-3162.

## **CONFERENCES & PARENTAL CONCERNS**

Scheduled parent/teacher conferences will be held during the year. This time is used to evaluate the child's development. If a parent desires a conference with the teacher and/or directors at a time other than those scheduled, both are available upon request.

Please direct any further concerns to the directors of the school, by calling the school office (210) 494-9282.

Parents will be notified of any special problems or occurrences that might affect their child via telephone call or written notice.

## **PARENT/CHILD OPEN HOUSE**

This event is held once each year and is scheduled in the evening to give every opportunity for both parents to attend.

It is a time for the child to introduce the parents and siblings to the teachers and classmates and show off his/her accomplishments. It will also serve to further acquaint parents with the school, the staff and the curriculum.

### **\*\*Additional resource information from DFPS\*\***

Senate Bill 61/Child Safety/Booster Seat Requirements-

This law changes the age in which children must be in a child safety or booster seat to include children under the age of eight, unless the child is taller than 4'9". Therefore, all children attending St. Mark's must be in a car seat. Beginning June 1, 2010 law enforcement will issue citations.

Senate Bill 95/ Consumer Product Safety Recall:

Unsafe children's products, according to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2007, children's products were recalled an average of four

times per week, yet recall information is not effectively reaching consumers. When a recall occurs, the commission alerts the media; however no further action is required to ensure that use of the product is discontinued. This means that dangerous children's products can unknowingly end up in homes, childcare facilities, or anywhere children's products are used. The Texas Legislature enacted a new law during the 81<sup>st</sup> regular session that requires child care providers to regularly check the CPSC recall list and ensure there are no unsafe children's products in the center or home.

What are "children's products?"- Any product designed or intended to be used by a child younger than 13 years of age or used by a caregiver during the care of a child under 13 years. This does not include: clothing or items meant to be swallowed such as medication, drugs or food.

How do I know if a "children's product" is unsafe?- A children's product is considered to be unsafe if it has been recalled by the CPSC. View a list of current recalls and notices on the CPSC internet website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). You may sign up to receive email notification from the CPSC by going to <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>. There are several types of notifications that you may sign up for. Licensing recommends that you sign up for recalls involving infant/child products (listname: child). You may also want to sign up for recall involving products used for sports and recreation (list name: recreation), particularly if you serve school-age children. Remember: the CPSC recalls may be accessed at [www.spsc.gov](http://www.spsc.gov) or [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

## **GANG FREE ZONE:**

House Bill#2086/ Gang Free Zone- as a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81<sup>st</sup> legislature regular session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code will be amended to include Section 42.064 requiring that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your child care operation or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone? A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where certain gang related activity is prohibited include, but are not limited to, public schools, playgrounds, video arcade facilities, and day care centers. The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. For example, certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 300 feet of a video arcade facility is a violation of the new law, whereas certain

gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 1000 feet of a school or day care center is a violation of the law.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends? The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care program. Maps may be produced for the purposes of prosecution and may be updated by the local municipal or county engineer. Parents may contact the local municipality to attempt to obtain a copy of the map if they choose to do so.

Why are gang-free zones needed? Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the goal of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center? Child care providers are required to inform parents or guardians of children attending their center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your program is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements? The law is already in effect and providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately.

We will continue to work with TDFPS and our parents, to ensure the protection, health, safety and well-being of our children.

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