Little Saints Preschool
at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School

Preschool Parent Handbook
2025/2026

41 East First Street Waconia, MN 55387

HOURS: Monday-Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Friday 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER: 952-442-4500

Revised 8/5/25

Table of Contents

Mission....2
Accident, Illness, Injury....3
Admissions....4
Classroom Age Groups....4
Arrival and Pick Up....5
Attendance....7
Birthdays....7
Bomb Threats/Fire Drill/Tornado Drill and Lockdown....7
Building Code for Facility Containing Preschool....8
Calendar, Menus, and Class Schedules....9
Preschool Chain of Command....9
Closing of School Because of Weather Conditions....9
Clothing....10
Communication....11
Conferences....12
Confidentiality of Records....13
Discipline....13
Family Concerns....15
Field Trips....15
Goals and Objectives of Preschool Program....15
Assessment....16
Grievance Policy....16
Hazardous Objects and Spills....16
Health Procedures....17
Illness of Child....17
Individual Health Care Plan/Action Plan....18
Insurance....20
Location....20
Medications....21
Nap Policy....21
Non-Discrimination Policy....22
Outdoor Activity Areas....23
Pets....23
Portfolio Assessment....23
Safety Precautions....23
Smoke Free Facility....25
Snacks, Lunch and Beverages....25
Sunscreen Policy....26
Supervision....26
Teacher to Child Ratios....26
Toilet Training Policy....26
Transportation....28
Tuition....28
Volunteering....29
Handling and Disposal of Bodily Fluids....30
Drinking Water and Reusable Water Bottles/Cups Policy....30
Wellness....31

General Policies and Procedures for Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School

MISSION

Vision Statement of St. Joseph Catholic Community
"To know, love and serve the Lord."
Know *and celebrate our Catholic Faith*
Love *God and our neighbor*
Serve *as disciples of Jesus*

Mission Statement of **Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School**
Our mission is to inspire and empower all learners to become the person God intends by integrating Catholic Virtues, Prayers, and Service with 21st Century Learning.

Philosophy
The community of St. Joseph Catholic STEM School believes in integrating Catholic virtues, prayers, liturgies, celebrations and service with our Core Values of Living Faith, Embracing Family, Inspiring Learning, Celebrating Service and Achieving Excellence. We combine these with 21st Century Learning strategies & philosophies, Christian behavior expectations and state-aligned curriculum standards that prepare our students to be lifelong learners and contributing members in their families, churches, and communities. Our students are supported on their journey to God's ideal by the prayerful communication and collaboration of our Pastor, our staff, our parents, our parish, our Archdiocese, and the communal Catholic church.

Preschool fulfills this by providing children and families with a team of licensed, experienced teachers who work in conjunction to foster growth and a Catholic education allowing each student to thrive. Our belief at Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is that early childhood should be a time of emotional safety, learning, and exploring through play while being part of a community. Our program includes opportunities for exploration and discovery of God's creation. Parents and families are invited and welcome to visit Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School at any time during our hours of operation. Parents may request and review a copy of the preschool's child care program plan at any time, either a hard copy or electronic version.

Accident, Illness, Injury

All preschool teachers, preschool assistants/aides, and administrators are trained in First Aid/CPR and AED. When an accident occurs, it is reported to school administration. The teacher, nurse and/or any witnesses, must fill out an incident report regarding the accident. If serious accidents occur, parents are contacted to make necessary decisions and supervisors will call 911. In case of unexpected illness or accident, the child will be escorted to the school nurse's office. The preschool teacher, preschool assistant/aide, administrator, office personnel or school nurse will notify parents immediately. Parents will be expected to pick up the child and sign them out with the nurse or an office staff person.

A first aid kit is fully stocked and maintained for each individual preschool classroom. Staff members wear gloves when any contamination with blood or any potentially infectious bodily fluid may occur. There is always a stocked first aid kit available in the classroom and a first aid kit is also brought when the class travels outside the classroom. For example, to the playground and Mass.

A child with any of the following conditions or behaviors is a sick child and must be excluded from a center not licensed to operate a sick care program. If the child becomes sick while at the center, the child must be isolated from other children in care and the parent called immediately. A sick child must be supervised at all times. The license holder must exclude a child:

- With a reportable illness or condition as specified in part 4605.704 that the commissioner of health determines to be contagious, and a physician then determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others.
- With chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over.
- Who has vomited since admission that day.
- Who has had three or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day.
- Who has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
- Who has a bacterial infection such as streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy.
- Who has unexplained lethargy.
- Who has lice, ringworm, or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others.
- Who has a 100 degree Fahrenheit axillary or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given.
- Who has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
- Who has significant respiratory distress.
- Who is not able to participate in child care program activities with reasonable comfort.
- Who requires more care than the program staff can provide without

compromising the health and safety of other children in care.

Admissions

General Admission

St. Joseph Catholic STEM School, mindful of our mission to inspire and empower all learners, admits students of any race, color, ethnicity, financial status, gender, disability status, or religion. While we do not discriminate against students with special accommodations, a full range of services may not always be available to them.

Because St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is a parish school, admissions priority may be given to children from registered and active families of St. Joseph Catholic Community. We may admit new students at any time during the school year. Prior to such admission, St. Joseph Catholic STEM School and the parents must reach an agreement on all tuition obligations and expectations concerning the completion of the school year.

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School preschool program offers both full and part-time programming in a warm and supportive faith-based environment.

Grades Preschool - 8th Transfer Period is Rolling - Apply Anytime!

Classroom Age Groups

- Our toddler classroom is dedicated to learners age 2 before September 1 of the current school year.
- Our preschool classrooms are dedicated to learners age 3 and 4 before September 1 of the current school year.
- PreK is either 3 hours or all day M-F 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- Morning class: 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Lunch is 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Rest/Quiet time: 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Afternoon class: 12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to serve up to MNDHS licensing children at any given time in the preschool space.

Arrival and Pick Up

Drop-off Procedures
The Second Street Entrance (south side) is used as the preschool entrance for parents to enter the school.

Upon entering through the Second Street Entrance, parents can open their mobile attendance application and sign in their child. Ring the doorbell on the wall, and a preschool staff will meet you in the foyer and walk the learners back to class.

In order to assure our children's safety, all drivers and pedestrians are expected to comply with the following procedures. Inform everyone who drives your children to these procedures. Traffic safety rules are for the benefit of the children, not the convenience of the drivers. Our three goals are the following:

1) Students are always supervised.
2) Cross the streets only at the corners.
3) Follow directions of school crossing guards.

Drivers must pull into a parking place before letting children into or out of the car. Avoid blocking traffic or causing traffic to back up behind you. Do not stop or line up in an intersection. Pedestrians must use sidewalks or other marked paths.

Morning Drop-off
1) *All-day* care opens at 7:00 a.m. for early arrivals.
2) Early arrivals begin their day in one classroom until numbers allow for the learners to begin filling in their set classrooms.
3) School-day and half-day classes open at 8:00 a.m.

Afternoon Pickup PreK-8: Depending on the time of year and weather, the class may be out at the playground or in the classroom.

Indoors: Parents/guardians may enter through the Second Street Entrance, open the mobile attendance application, check their learner out, and ring the bell. Preschool staff will bring the learner out.

Outdoors: Parents may park along the curb near the playground, open the mobile attendance application, check their learner out, and Preschool staff will bring the child over.

1) Half-day care pick up is scheduled for 11:30 a.m.
2) School-day care pick up is scheduled for 2:30 p.m.
3) All-day care ends at 5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, Friday at 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: Visitors to the office may park opposite the school on Second Street.

Parents and guardians: Make sure that you notify the **school via Procare** before 1:30 p.m. when there are changes regarding your child's normal routine. Email messages or voicemails left on teacher machines may not be received until after the school day has ended.

Authorized Pick-Up Policy
(*In accordance with MN Rule 3*)

For the safety of all children, only individuals authorized by the parent or legal guardian may pick up a child from our program. This policy is strictly enforced in compliance with Minnesota Rule 3: 9503.0045, Subp. 1, which requires written consent for individuals permitted to remove a child from care.

Policy Guidelines:

- **Authorized List**: At enrollment, parents/guardians must provide a list of individuals who are authorized to pick up their child. This list must include each individual's full name and phone number.

- **Identification Requirement**: Any authorized individual picking up a child for the first time (or unfamiliar to staff) will be required to present **valid photo identification** (e.g., driver's license, state ID).

- **Updates to Authorization**: Changes to the authorized pick-up list **must be made in writing** by the parent or guardian. Verbal permissions will not be accepted.

- **Emergency Pick-Up**: In an emergency situation, a parent or guardian may call the center to authorize a new individual for pick-up. The individual must bring a valid photo ID, and the parent/guardian must follow up with a written confirmation as soon as possible.

- **Unauthorized Individuals**: Children will **not be released** to any individual who is not on the authorized pick-up list, even if the child recognizes the person or expresses willingness to leave with them.

- **Court Orders**: If there are **custody agreements or court orders** that impact who may or may not pick up your child, a **current, official copy** must be provided to the school and Principal to be kept on file.

Your child's safety is our top priority. Thank you for helping us maintain a secure environment by following our authorized pick-up procedures.

Attendance

If a child will not be attending preschool classes on a given day, parents can report through Procare for PreK.

If a child is discovered missing during class time, the teacher will do the following:

1) Notify school administration.
2) Administration and others will search the school building and, if necessary, search the school grounds.
3) Teacher or office personnel will notify parents of the child's absence.
4) Contact police or other emergency agencies for assistance.

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School preschool staff take attendance upon arrival and pick-up, as well as throughout the day during the time that a child is at school. We do a name to face check whenever there is a transition to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. During the arrival and pick-up procedures staff ensures that all students are accounted for.

Birthdays

Students often enjoy bringing a "treat" to school on their birthday. In alignment with our wellness policy (pg. 31), we encourage sharing non-food treats, such as a book, an art project, or colorful pencils/pens. If you choose to bring food, please ensure it is store-bought for public health reasons. Additionally, please consult with your child's teacher regarding any specific allergies in the classroom before sending food treats.

Invitations may be distributed at school only if every class member is invited to the event. Otherwise, invitations should be mailed rather than distributed at school.

Bomb Threat/Fire Drill/Tornado Drill and Lock Down

St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is mandated to exercise fire drills, lock downs and tornado drills during the school year. In addition, Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School has one fire drill per month. These drills take place to ensure that if an actual situation were to occur our children will know the proper safety procedures. In the event of a bomb threat students will be evacuated from the building and the police will be called. The preschool teacher and staff log all drills.

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School's designated shelter

The Emergency Preparedness Plan (EEP) at Little Saints Preschool, located at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School, provides staff with a clear, step-by-step process to ensure the safe evacuation of students during any crisis. This plan is integrated into the daily operations and management of the school.

Emergency and fire drill maps are prominently displayed in each classroom. Teachers are responsible for leading their classes to safety and must take attendance sheets and an emergency binder with them. Once everyone has arrived at the designated assembly point, attendance will be taken. A card will be displayed to indicate whether all students have exited the building: a green card signifies that everyone is accounted for, while a red card indicates that there are still students inside.

Preschool students actively participate in practicing these safety procedures to prepare them for real-life situations. The preschool has comprehensive Emergency Response Plans outlined in the 'Child Care Emergency Plan.'

Building Code for Facility Containing Preschool

Our facility adheres to all aspects of the Minnesota State Building Code. A detailed floor plan is available for the preschool classroom and adjacent hallways, including emergency exits and tornado shelter areas. A telephone is accessible in the classroom, allowing teachers to make calls both within and outside the building. We ensure a minimum of 35 square feet of space per child, and there are no hot surfaces in the classrooms or hallways. Electrical outlets are covered when not in use, and we maintain a minimum room temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

One fire extinguisher is located in the hallway near the preschool classroom, while two are positioned within the classroom. Bathroom facilities are available in the classroom and are cleaned and sanitized daily by custodial staff. Toilets, sinks, faucets, and hand-drying devices are designed for children's height, with sturdy and washable steps provided as needed. The water temperature does not exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit, and staff members monitor hand washing. A First Aid kit is readily accessible in the classroom, and all preschool personnel are trained in First Aid/AED and CPR.

Program staff conduct daily safety checks of all classroom areas before children arrive, inspecting for potential hazards that could harm preschoolers or staff, such as wet floors, uncovered electrical outlets, or cluttered toys/materials. If hazards are identified, staff will either address them directly or notify custodial staff to resolve the issue prior to the arrival of the preschoolers.

Calendar, Menus, and Class Schedules

A monthly preschool event calendar is distributed and posted on the parent board located outside/inside the classroom. Additionally, snack menus for the month are displayed on the parent bulletin board. Copies of the snack menus are available upon request. These menus are filed and reviewed by the School Nurse to ensure the health and safety of our preschoolers.

Preschool Chain of Command
For attendance call/email your teacher

1) Your child's Teacher
2) Principal
3) Head of School
4) Pastor

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School staff consists of Minnesota licensed teachers and assistant teachers, and aides. If the preschool teacher is unable to teach, one of the head teachers will be her substitute. The children will have the same lead teacher for their entire preschool year.

Closing of School Because of Weather Conditions

We encourage parents to use their discretion when transporting children during inclement weather. If you decide to keep your child home due to such conditions, we will fully respect your judgment.

School Closing Policy
Several factors influence school closures, including but not limited to:

- Snow events
- Road conditions
- Temperatures
- Wind chill factors

In general, Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School will align its closing announcements with those of Waconia Public Schools, primarily due to transportation considerations. However, there may be circumstances in which Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School decides to hold school based on the factors mentioned above, particularly when parent transportation options allow for attendance despite unsafe public busing conditions caused by cold bus stops or long rides.

The guidelines for cold weather closures include sustained temperatures below -25 degrees Fahrenheit and/or wind chill factors near -40 degrees Fahrenheit.

School administration communicates with the Pastor, as well as local district and transportation officials, to assess conditions when determining weather-related school closures.

Clothing

PreK Uniform Policy

Uniforms can be purchased through our premier vendor Donald's Uniforms (www.donaldsuniform.com), Target or any other retailer as long as it aligns with St. Joseph colors.

***Optional Uniform Insignia Pullovers:** Red (Gr. PreK-4) ¼ zip are available for purchase from Donald's Uniforms (www.donaldsuniform.com). Store locations are in Eden Prairie and St. Paul.

General Uniform Appearance PreK

- All uniforms should be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- All uniform clothing should be appropriately sized.
- Pants and shorts are to be worn at the waist, above the hips.
- Socks must be worn at all times.
- Shorts may be worn during September, October, April, May, and June.
- Refrain from wearing shorts on Mass days.
- Skorts, jumpers, and shorts should be no more than 3 inches above the knee.
- A plain white t-shirt or cami may be worn under uniform shirts with the following limitations: no lace or embellishments may be worn; no t-shirt or cami may be visible below the sleeves or the hem of the polo shirt.
- Any neat, clean-soled shoes are acceptable. No high heels, boots, sandals, blinking, or wheeled shoes..
- Hair should be clean and well groomed; no extensions or unnatural hair dyes.
- No scarves, face/body paint or glitter, body piercing other than ears.
- Make-up & jewelry should be age and school appropriate and should not create a distraction.
- Jackets should be kept in lockers.

Non-Uniform Attire PreK

- On non-uniform days, clothing should reflect Christian values with respect to graphics, lettering, and physical fit. Students dressed inappropriately, as determined by school personnel, will be required to change into suitable attire.
- Students should not wear ripped or torn clothing or clothing with inappropriate language.
- A shirt must be worn over all tank tops.
- On Spirit Wear Days uniform pants, skorts, or shorts (in season) must be worn.

Preschool Uniform Policy for 3 and 4 year olds (Toddlers, no uniform policy)

Shirts:

- **ANY** Sleeved red or white shirt (Polo, T-Shirt, etc.). No graphics. Small logos (Nike, Adidas, etc.) are ok
- **ANY** St. Joseph Spirit Wear shirt
- **Optional:** Uniform Insignia Pullover (Purchase from Premier Custom Apparel)

Bottoms:

- Any black bottom. **Examples include:** leggings, active wear, skirts (at the knee) jeggings, sweatpants, uniform twill pant skirts, etc.
- During the winter months, leggings or long socks are required underneath the skort/jumper.
- Black shorts/capri's may only be worn during the summer months (April – October).

Jumpers (optional):

- Black Uniform Jumpers can be purchased through any uniform supplier
- Uniform jumpers are optional
- During the winter months, leggings or long socks are required underneath the jumper.
- A red or white polo should be worn underneath the jumper
- Jumpers should be no shorter than 3 inches from the knee

On Spirit Wear/Non-Uniform days any black pant, skorts, or shorts (in season) must be worn.

Communication

We believe that maintaining open and thorough communication between home and school is essential. You can reach the preschool teacher by Procare or email at any time to leave a message or ask questions. However, if you need to relay an urgent message to the preschool teacher, please call the school office, as teachers do not check their voicemails or emails during the school day—only during their preparation time. **Ph: 952-442-4500**

Effective public relations are enhanced by sending quality notices and communications home. The school provides regular updates to parents and guardians through both printed materials and electronic communication. We kindly ask that parents and guardians read all important messages from the school. All notices sent to parents and guardians should be clear, accurate, and of high quality.

Conferences

Conferences provide an excellent opportunity to discuss student progress. The school sets the conference schedule, and if a parent or guardian cannot attend their assigned time, the teacher will work with them to reschedule within one week.

Conferences/Learning Assessments:
Conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. If additional conference time is needed, a mutually convenient meeting can be arranged between staff and parents. During these conferences, parents are informed about their children's intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development and receive written reports.

Children are assessed on their skills and objectives by their primary lead and assistant teachers, both individually and in small groups. Teachers receive training in assessment methods through program orientation, mentorship, and classes provided by Eager to Learn.

NOTE: Preschool screening occurs outside the program through the child's district or county.

Data Privacy:
Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School collects and uses information about all enrolled children to plan their educational programs in compliance with Department of Human Services requirements.

- Federal and state laws grant parents and guardians the right to inspect and review all official records, files, and data related to their child. Access to this information by third parties is strictly limited and managed in accordance with data privacy laws. Currently, the only individuals who may access a child's file include the public health nurse, the DHS licensing agent, and accreditation officials.
- All assessment information will be kept confidential and stored in a locked office. Parents, teachers, directors, and state licensing agents may review this information. No information will be shared without parental consent, and any changes in regulations regarding access to files and family rights will be communicated.
- Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School utilizes the Development Continuum Assessment from The Creative Curriculum. Ongoing observations during classroom play and activities are our primary methods for gathering insights about each child. To retain and apply what we learn, we document our observations on each child's

continuum and collect samples of their work over time for their portfolios. In addition to sharing this information with parents during conferences, teachers use assessment results to guide lesson planning, enhance the curriculum, improve instructional practices, target professional development for staff, and adjust program resources.

The staff at Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School encourages and supports parents in making primary decisions about their children's education.

Confidentiality of Records

Children's records will only be shared with the child, their parent or guardian, the child's legal representative, the child's teacher, and the administration and kindergarten teachers and Little Saints teachers at Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School, unless the parent has provided written consent for disclosure to others.

Discipline

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School adopts a constructive approach to managing children's behavior. All behavior guidance strategies are customized to suit the developmental levels of the children served by the program. These policies and procedures aim to ensure the safety of all children and staff, with the goal of minimizing or eliminating suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary practices.

Children are continuously learning about appropriate behavior, experimenting with various actions while seeking guidance and limits. Our methods emphasize recognizing and encouraging positive behavior as often as possible.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, staff members take the following steps to ensure the safety of all children and staff:

1) **Teacher Presence:** The teacher may stand nearby, make eye contact, or gently touch the child's shoulder to indicate that their behavior is unacceptable.
2) **Redirection:** The teacher guides the child to a new activity to prevent conflict, which may involve separating the child from the toy or situation.
3) **Problem-Solving with the Child:** The teacher assists the child in resolving problems, generating alternative solutions, modeling

appropriate words instead of physical reactions, and allowing the child to express their feelings while acknowledging the feelings of others.

4) **Natural and Logical Consequences:** The teacher encourages the child to help remedy the situation. For instance, if a child intentionally knocks over another's toy blocks, they may be asked to help pick them up. All consequences for inappropriate behavior are immediate and directly related to the observed actions.
5) **Separation from the Group:** A child will only be separated from the group after less intrusive methods have been attempted and proven ineffective. Separation will occur only if the child's behavior threatens the well-being of themselves or others in the group. Exclusionary measures will not be considered until all possible interventions have been exhausted and there is consensus that seclusion is in the child's best interest.

   When separation is necessary, the child must:

   - Remain in an unenclosed area of the classroom where they can be continuously seen and heard by a staff member.
   - Be allowed to return to the group once they have controlled the behavior that led to their separation, rejoining as soon as the problematic behavior has ceased.

Separation Report

All instances of separation from the group are recorded in the Daily Log and must include the following details:

- The child's name
- The name of the staff member involved
- The time and date of the separation
- Documentation showing that less intrusive methods were attempted to guide the child's behavior
- A description of how the child's behavior continued to pose a threat to their own well-being or that of other children in care

If a child is separated from the group three or more times in a single day, the child's parent will be notified, and this communication will be noted in the Daily Separation Log.
If a child is separated five or more times in one week, or eight or more times within a two-week period, the procedures outlined under "Persistent Inappropriate Behavior" will be implemented.

Family Concerns

Please inform us if your child is experiencing special circumstances such as the death of a loved one, family members undergoing drug or alcohol treatment, separation or divorce, or any other events that may impact your child. If there is a change in the custodial parent, please notify the school as soon as possible.

We maintain an updated list of various family and child services, including preschool screening. If you need a referral or assistance in reaching out to a service, please let us know. We are committed to ensuring that our children and families receive the necessary and best possible support.

Field Trips

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School organizes field trips beyond the school building and grounds. Community members may also be invited into our classroom to share their talents with us. All guests are required to have current liability insurance and undergo a background check. Parent permission will be obtained for all field trips.

Goals and Objectives of Preschool Program

Spiritual Development
Children will grow in their understanding that each individual is unique and loved by God. Values such as mutual care, respect, and sensitivity towards others will be nurtured through prayer, song, role modeling, scripture stories, mass (depending on the child's age), and the celebration of holidays.

Cognitive Development
Our preschool program provides an environment that fosters growth in areas such as art, music, dramatic play, and both large and fine motor skills, as well as cognitive, language, and sensory skills. As children learn these skills, they enhance their ability to focus on group activities, engage in discussions, and explore various forms of communication with peers and adults through language and body movements. This is achieved through a curriculum that balances creativity and structure, encouraging children to think critically, ask questions, expand their communication skills, and strengthen both fine and gross motor abilities.

Emotional and Social Development
We offer developmentally appropriate experiences that promote responsibility and healthy relationships. Our aim is to enhance each child's self-worth and independence while cultivating social skills and deepening their respect for themselves and others. Children are guided in acquiring and developing the abilities to make choices and solve problems.

Assessment

Formal individual assessments will be conducted twice a year. The first assessment will take place in September or October and will be discussed during the fall conferences in October. The second assessment will occur in February or March, with results shared during the spring conferences in March.

Children will be assessed one-on-one with the teacher, as well as informally in a group setting, using age-appropriate manipulatives. The assessments will be spread over several days to minimize the duration of formal testing in any single sitting, creating a more child-friendly assessment environment.

Informal assessments will be conducted daily through observations made in the child's natural learning environment during child-driven activities. These observations may be documented and included in the child's portfolio, or a note/email may be sent home to provide parents and families with an overview of their child's progress.

All teaching staff receive training in age-specific assessment methods relevant to the classroom and curriculum they will be implementing.

If a child enrolls in preschool after the scheduled assessment dates, arrangements will be made to ensure that they are screened within three months of entering the program.

Grievance Policy

Parents who have concerns about the school or its personnel should first address these issues with the individual most directly involved, such as the principal or teacher. If a resolution is not reached, the next step is to contact the Head of School, followed by the Pastor. The complaint and grievance procedure is clearly outlined in the St. Joseph Family Handbook. Please note that the School Board is not involved in this procedure.

Hazardous Objects and Spills

Sharp objects, medicines, plastic bags, poisonous plants and chemicals, including household and art supplies are stored in locked cabinets or placed out of reach. All necessary cleanups will be handled by properly licensed agencies.

Health Procedures

Before your child can enter the preschool program, a Physical and Immunization Record is required. State regulations mandate that each child has a health statement on file, which includes an updated immunization record and the signature of their healthcare provider. Children who have not had a physical exam in the past year must complete one prior to starting preschool.

At the beginning of the school year, parents must complete a Child Health Information Sheet. This document provides the school staff with necessary information regarding how to respond in case of an accident or illness, including emergency contacts.

In the event of illness or injury, the child will be monitored and may be temporarily separated from their classmates until arrangements for transportation can be made. Parents will be contacted directly by the teacher, teacher's assistant, administrator, nurse, or office staff. If the teacher believes it is in the best interest of the child and their classmates, the child may be taken to the nurse's office.

If a serious situation arises, we will make every effort to contact parents immediately and will call **911**, if necessary.

Each child's health file is regularly updated, and returning families are required to provide updated health information. If there are any changes to the information previously provided, parents should notify the program about any health or emergency updates.

All health and related files are kept confidential in a locked cabinet in the office. Staff members have immediate access to these files when necessary for the following reasons:

- Accident or injury situations
- Requests for information by the child's parents or legal guardian
- Requests for information by regulatory authorities

If your child is overdue for any required routine health services, please provide documentation of an upcoming appointment before they start preschool. It is important for us to maintain current health records for every enrolled child.

Illness of Child

A child will be excluded from Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School when these conditions exist:

- A reportable illness or condition, as specified in Part 4605.7040, that the commissioner of health determines to be contagious, and a physician has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk of others.

- Chickenpox, until the child is no longer infectious, or lesions are crusted over.
- Vomited since admission that day.
- Has had abnormally loose stools since admissions that day.
- Has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
- Has bacterial infection (i.e., streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo) and has not completed antimicrobial therapy.
- Has unexplained lethargy.
- Has lice, ringworm, or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others.
- 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever-reducing medication is given.
- Has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
- Has significant respiratory distress.
- Is not able to participate in the classroom/program activities with reasonable comfort.
- Requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of children in a class.

**** The child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. ****

Parents must inform the school within 24 hours when a child is diagnosed of having a contagious disease or lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, or chicken pox. The school will notify the parents of exposed children the same day a parent notifies the school of a child's illness or condition as listed above.

Individual Health Care Plan/Action Plan

If children enrolled in the program are required special care due to allergies, asthma, seizures, and other chronic conditions the staff will implement the Action Plan (provided by the parents/child's physician). The staff will notify the school nurse of the special needs and obtain the needed documentation from the family/child's physician to develop an Individual Health Care Plan for the child that may require special care.

Allergies

- Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is a peanut-aware environment and makes every effort to avoid including peanut butter and whole peanuts/tree nuts in any food or beverage products provided for the program. However, since our facilities are shared with other groups and the public, and some students bring their

own bag lunches from home, we cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment.
- Staff members will remove any food items brought from home that may contain peanut butter or whole peanuts/tree nuts. However, because original packaging is not always available for inspection, we cannot ensure that all items from home are free from tree nut exposure.
- If a student has a life-threatening food allergy, the classroom lead teacher will inform all families of classmates about the allergy. The lead teacher and site director will verify the safety of all purchased food items by checking labels before buying.
- The teaching team will participate in any additional training or informational sessions related to a child's care, such as EpiPen usage, upon parental request.
- Areas used by children with allergies to dust mites or components of furnishings will be maintained according to the recommendations of the program's Health Consultant.

Student Allergies

Parents/Guardians will notify the preschool of student allergies via the following forms:

- Health Care Summary (Student File Packet)
- Emergency Card (Student File Packet)
- Individual Child Care Program Plan- Allergies (ICCPP-Allergies)
- A student's allergy information will be reviewed at least annually or following any changes made to the allergy-related plan by the preschool. All who are responsible for carrying out the individual child care program plan will be updated following any changes by the site director.
- All staff persons will sign the ICCPP when they are notified of the change.

A child's allergy information will always be available for staff.

- **On-Site:** child's file; posted in the classroom (classroom/extended care/playground copies of emergency cards) and carried off-site during field trips (classroom emergency cards taken with off-site/first aid bag).
- A child's allergy information is also posted/available to the staff person in the area where food is prepared and served to the child.
- The lead teacher will notify the child's parent/guardian immediately in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. (As a licensed program, Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School must call emergency medical services when epinephrine is administered to a child in our care.)

- Teachers will ensure that the ICCPP and Allergy information is updated at least annually and revised as needed.
- Staff will acknowledge through documentation and date that they reviewed all updates and current information on a child's allergy record. Staff will ensure that the child's allergy information is always available on-site and in the emergency bag for field trips or outside the playground. Food Allergy information will be posted in the school kitchen or snack prep area for staff to review. All Food Allergy information will be kept updated.

Insurance

The preschool program is covered by St. Joseph Catholic STEM School (Catholic Mutual) general liability insurance policy.

Location

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is located at **41 East First Street Waconia, MN 55387.** Please use the main entrance, **Door #4.**

Maintenance of areas, equipment, and furniture used by children

The information listed below is also indicated on the 'Cleaning and Sanitization Frequency Table' that is hanging in the classroom. This table is carried out daily by the teaching and maintenance staff.

- **Cleaned/Sanitized/Disinfected before each use:** food preparation surfaces and all tables.
- **Cleaned/Sanitized/Disinfected after each use:** food preparation surfaces, eating utensils/dishes, all tables, countertops, any toys mouthed by children.
- **Cleaned/Sanitized/Disinfected at the end of each day:** Countertops, food preparation surfaces, hand-washing sinks/faucets, countertops, all tables, floors, any toys mouthed by children, hats, doors/cabinet handles, carpets, large area rugs, small rugs, drinking fountains, and phone receivers.
- **Cleaned/Sanitized/Disinfected Weekly:** Small rugs, cloth toys, dress-up clothes, and activity centers.
- **Cleaned/Sanitized/Disinfected Monthly:** Refrigerator, carpets and large area rugs. *Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or a surface that may be sanitized. All staff follows the Cleaning and Sanitization Chart and its guidelines in these situations*

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School facility meets all requirements as set forth by Minnesota Rule 9503.0140. It is cleaned daily by the school maintenance staff. Rugs are permanently attached or of the

non-skid variety.

Furniture and equipment are durable, in good repair, structurally sound, and stable. Tables, chairs, and other furniture are appropriate to the age and size of the children who use them. Toys are disinfected or wiped clean as needed. Toys and game pieces are inspected frequently for sharp edges or points and small pieces that could pose a choking hazard.

Medications

If it is necessary to administer medication at school, written permission must be provided by the child's parent or guardian. All medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter, must remain in their original containers and have clear labels displaying the child's first and last name.

The administration of medications must be documented, including the child's name, the name of the medication, the date, time, dosage, and the signature of the individual who administered the medication. All medications will be stored out of the reach and sight of children. If a child has allergies to bee stings or certain foods that could trigger a life-threatening reaction, parents should communicate this condition both verbally and in writing. All medications are securely stored in a locked cabinet, out-of-reach of all children.

Nap Policy

Quiet/Rest Time

- Children who attend all day have 30 minutes of quiet/rest time following lunch. This is a time for non-napping children to rest their bodies before starting afternoon programming. (Parents may request a nap for their child.)
- Children in quiet/rest time will have the option of choosing a restful activity on a carpet square or mat, engaged in a quiet/rest activity.
- Quiet/rest activities vary daily and may include reading books, listening to stories, using a "quiet-time bag" with small manipulatives, puzzles, games, or watching an educational movie.
- Lights/partial lights are on as quiet/rest time rooms are not dark and children are seated, not lying down if not sleeping after the 30 minutes.
- If a child lays down and falls asleep/wants to nap during this time they will be provided a cot to lay on. If the child falls asleep, they will be allowed to sleep past the allocated 30 minutes until they wake up on their own.
- A child who is not asleep will not be required to remain on a cot longer than 30 minutes.

- A floor mat map is followed to place children's mat/cot in quiet areas, physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child.
- Cots are placed clear of aisles, allowing unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment.
- Cots must be placed directly on the floor and are never stacked when in use.
- If bedding is used, separated bedding is used for each child and is washed weekly and when soiled or wet.
- Blankets, if used, are washed weekly and when soiled or wet.

Nap time for toddlers and napping preschoolers

- Toddlers and Napping Preschoolers who attend Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School all day have nap time for 2 hours following lunchtime. Children may sleep longer than 2 hours, if requested by the parents.
- A floor cot map is followed to place children's cots in quiet areas, physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child.
- Cots are placed clear of aisles, allowing unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment.
- Cots must be placed directly on the floor and are never stacked when in use. If bedding is used, separated bedding is used for each child and is washed weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets, if used, are washed or dry-cleaned weekly and when soiled/wet.
- A light source (lamp or overhead) will be always on in a classroom, regardless of rest/nap times.
- Children who have completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes **WILL NOT** be required to remain on a cot or in a crib or bed.
- Children are welcome to bring special blankets, stuffed animals, pacifiers, or other comfort items from home.
- Separate bedding for each child is provided by the parent and washed weekly by the parent or more often when soiled or wet.
- Soiled or wet blankets and clothing are bagged and sent home to the parents.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, creed, color, or national origin.

Provisions for enrollment can be made for special needs of children.

Outdoor Activity Areas

The playground areas are supervised at all times when children are present in accordance with Minnesota Rule 9503.0155. The play area is free of litter, rubbish, toxic materials, and water hazards. Supervisors have direct contact with the school office as well as school administration when necessary. Announcements made inside the school can also be heard on the playground.

Pets

Pets are **not** allowed at school except for special pet days.

Portfolio Assessment

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School staff uses portfolios of each individual child's work examples throughout the year to ensure that they are meeting the goals and the objectives of the preschool curriculum. (Handwriting, anecdotal notes, pictures, etc.)

Safety Precautions

Poisoning: All medications are kept out of reach of children, and custodial supply areas are secured with locks. Cleaning supplies, sprays, and deodorizers in the classroom will be stored out of children's reach or kept in a locked area or custodial closet when necessary. Children are never present during the application of pesticides and herbicides.

Aspiration or Choking: Continuous supervision of children is mandatory. Preschool staff will monitor snack types to prevent choking hazards. All staff members have been trained in the Heimlich maneuver.

Burns: The preschool room is inspected daily for potential burn hazards. Supervision is required at all times, and the facility is inspected annually by the Fire Marshal.

Injury/Accidents: Ongoing supervision is crucial to prevent injuries. Teaching appropriate play behavior and social interactions is an essential developmental skill emphasized in our preschool program. Safety remains a top priority, with sharp objects, medications, plastic bags, and toxic plants and chemicals securely stored out of children's reach.

Suffocation: Each day, teachers check the play area to ensure that toys and other play items do not pose a risk of trapping a child or hindering their ability to breathe freely.

Contamination: If a surface is contaminated with body fluids, staff will promptly notify custodial personnel to clean the area with detergent, followed

by rinsing with water. If custodial staff are unavailable, the teaching staff will address the situation immediately.

Recording Accidents, Injuries, and Incidents: The classroom teacher maintains a log of all accidents, injuries, and incidents. Parents are always informed of any accidents or injuries. The administrative supervisor reviews the log multiple times throughout the school year with the preschool staff.

Traffic and Pedestrian Accidents: Safety is a primary concern. Maintenance staff will ensure that traffic patterns, carpets, and snow/ice removal are properly managed to prevent injuries. A designated drop-off and pick-up system will ensure a safe entrance to the school. The drop-off and pick-up area is a no-cell-phone zone. We discourage idling vehicles in the parking area unless necessary due to extreme heat or cold to maintain appropriate interior temperatures.

Air Pollution: Program staff are committed to protecting children and adults from exposure to high levels of air pollution due to smog or heavy traffic. If necessary, outdoor and physical activities may be limited during smog or air pollution alerts.

Water Play Safety: The water in the sensory table is drained at the end of each preschool class, and fresh water is added before the next class.

Outdoor Safety: A teacher-to-child ratio of 1:10 is maintained during outdoor play. Program staff ensure that children are dressed appropriately for cold weather in winter, providing hats, mittens, and other items as needed. If a child is not dressed safely for the weather, they will wait inside with administrative staff. Staff also protect children from sun exposure and high temperatures, ensuring appropriate clothing is worn. With written permission from a parent or guardian, staff may apply sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher). When public health authorities recommend insect repellents, staff will prepare to apply them before outdoor activities, with written parental permission. Only repellents containing no DEET may be used and applied no more than once per day.

Indoor Safety: To ensure the safety of children in our preschool program, staff usage- and developmentally-appropriate equipment during indoor activities. All indoor activities are supervised with a 1:10 staff-to-child ratio, and equipment meets national safety standards.

Hand Washing: To maintain the safety of children, staff monitor hand washing and water temperature. Staff and children wash their hands several times throughout the day, specifically:

- Upon arrival
- After using the bathroom or assisting someone
- After blowing or wiping a nose
- After coughing into a hand
- After touching any mucus, blood, or vomit
- Before preparing a snack

- Before eating snack or lunch
- After handling raw food that needs cooking
- After playing in shared water
- After handling pets or other animals
- After touching sand, dirt, or potentially contaminated surfaces
- After administering first aid or medication
- After handling garbage or cleaning

The proper handwashing procedure is taught to children and followed by staff. This includes vigorously rubbing hands for at least 20 seconds, covering the back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and beneath fingernails with liquid soap. Hands are then rinsed thoroughly and dried with a paper towel. A towel is used to turn off the faucet to avoid contact with just-washed hands.

Smoke Free Facility

Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School is located in an entirely smoke free facility, as well as the grounds: 'Smoking is **NOT** permitted.'

Snacks, Lunch and Beverages

Snack & Lunch Policy

Each day, a snack with beverages is provided. Some classrooms may be peanut-free, meaning no snacks will contain peanut products. Examples of snacks served include: fruit, pretzels, raisins, cereal, vegetables, pudding, crackers, cheese, popcorn, and yogurt. Beverages consist of milk or water.

Our policy is to only serve snacks provided by Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School, unless a doctor's note indicates a food allergy related to the snack of the day. If your child has a prescribed diet or food allergy, this should be noted in their records. However, it is also recommended that parents verbally inform staff about their child's individual needs. If your child is on a special diet, you may choose to provide their snack or lunch.

Lunch Policy

If a child is bringing their own lunch or snack from home, it must comply with USDA food guidelines. Foods should be nutritious, balanced, and appropriate for a preschool-age child. Staff are not permitted to heat or prepare food brought from home, and all food must be ready to eat. Please avoid sending any foods that are choking hazards or not recommended for young children.

Snack Safety Guidelines

Staff will not offer children hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, or chunks of raw carrots or meat that are larger than what can be swallowed whole.

Supervision & Hygiene

Snacks are enjoyed at a table under the supervision of teachers and assistant teachers. During snack time, teachers sit with the preschool students and engage in conversation. They promote and model appropriate interactions that preschoolers can have with their peers at the snack table.

Children wash their hands with soap and water before and after snack time. Tables are cleaned with soap and/or disinfectant and water after each use.

Storage & Safety

All food and beverages are stored properly and refrigerated if necessary until serving. Food and beverages are kept in their original packaging with expiration dates clearly visible. Staff will not serve food or beverages that are past their expiration date or have not been stored properly to ensure the health and safety of our preschoolers.

Copies of the snack menu are available upon request. Snack menus are kept on file and reviewed by the School Nurse to ensure compliance with health and safety guidelines.

Sunscreen Policy

All parents must provide sunscreen for their child. Sunscreen must be labeled with the child's name and **must not be in aerosol form**. Children are required to arrive at school **with sunscreen already applied** each morning. Staff will reapply sunscreen as needed for outdoor play, using only the sunscreen provided by the child's parent or guardian.

Supervision

Teaching staff primarily supervise children through visual observation. While there may be brief instances of supervision by sound, teachers frequently check on children who are out of sight. For example, when children are using the bathroom or playing on the playground, teachers continually circulate to keep as many children in view as possible.

Teacher to Child Ratio

The state requires a 1:10 child-teacher ratio for 3-5 year-olds and Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School keeps a 1:10 ratio within these rooms at all times. For toddler classrooms, the state requires a 1:7 ratio.

Toilet Training Policy

Little Saints, like most preschool settings, requires that children 3 years and older are fully toilet-trained when entering the preschool. To be considered

fully toilet-trained, a child must wear underwear and not have frequent accidents.

NOTE: A child wearing a pull-up is not considered fully toilet trained; however, children are allowed to wear a diaper or pull-up at naptime and still be considered fully toilet trained. Children should come to school in underwear unless instructed differently by your teacher.

- **Adjustment Period When Transitioning to a New School Year/ New Program:** It is not uncommon for a fully toilet-trained child to have a setback or toileting challenge when they are in a new environment or adjusting to a transition, such as a new classroom or school. Little Saints Preschool is aware of this and will assist children through this transition period by giving reminders and lots of opportunities to use the bathroom throughout the day.

- **Why is it important for children to be toilet trained in the preschool classroom?**
    - There are DCYF State Licensing standards for changing and exposing wet or soiled diapers/pull-ups.
    - The preschool classrooms are not equipped with diaper changing tables and do not meet the licensing requirements for changing.
    - When a teacher is busy helping a child with soiled clothing and clean-up, all other students miss the teacher and classroom learning time, reducing direct supervision and engagement to one available adult in the classroom.
- **Parent-Support Period:** Should a child continue to have frequent and /or patterned accidents following the adjustment period, Little Saints policy requires parents to come to school to support their child following subsequent accidents. This allows the child more transition time to regain full toilet training while remaining in the classroom.

- **Play at Home Period:** If the child is unable to regain consistent toilet training after the adjustment period, the child will be required to “play at home” with parents until that consistency is achieved.
    - Half tuition may be paid to ensure the child’s spot is reserved for 4 weeks until the child returns.
    - Parents may remove their child from class and not pay tuition to reserve a spot if they are willing to risk the spot not being available when their child is ready to return.

We understand that even toilet-trained children will have accidents. By definition, "accidents" are unusual incidents that should happen infrequently. This policy does not apply to toileting accidents that are unusual for the child and happen infrequently.

Diapering (Infant/Toddler Program Only)
Children in diapers or pull-ups will be checked approximately two times per 2 ½ hours and are given attention in between times as needed. Staff will check for wet and soiled diapers or training pants before nap and when a child wakes up from a nap. Diaper changing tables are used exclusively by one designated class/in each room with diapered children. The program health consultant carefully oversees our diapering procedures. Only disposable diapers are accepted at our school.

Transportation

Transportation to and from preschool is the responsibility of the parents of the students. Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School does not transport children during class time. Car-pooling is a possibility. If your child is in a carpool, please leave a list of your car pool members with the teacher. Children should be dropped off and picked up as close to the starting and ending class times as possible. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than those already authorized, parents need to send a note with their child stating this. If an unauthorized person, an incapacitated driver or someone suspected of abuse attempts to pick up a child, the teacher will notify the office immediately. We will **NOT** let the child leave the building. The staff or administration will immediately call the police to handle the situation.

Tuition

Rates are usually adjusted in the Winter and go into effect for the following school year. Tuition does not cover the full cost of educating each child. Parish contributions and fundraising of which all families participate helps subsidize the cost of education.

Classroom Supply Fee
A one time fee of $50 will be included with your first fall tuition payment.

Payment Plans
Signed tuition contracts agreeing to one of the payment plan options must be on file for your family the first year you enroll your student and will stay in place until graduation unless otherwise communicated to the office.

Tuition Refund

All tuition must be paid through each trimester registered, regardless of whether the child withdraws from the school during the trimester.

1) **Withdrawal after June 1** – families are responsible for 1/3 of tuition.
2) **Withdrawal after the start of the second trimester** – families are responsible for 2/3 of tuition.
3) **Withdrawal after the start of the third trimester** – families are responsible for full tuition.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Administration reserves the right to grant exceptions to this policy.

For current tuition information, call the school office at **952-442-4500**. Rates are usually adjusted in the spring and go into effect for the following school year. Tuition does not cover the full cost of education.

Volunteering

Parent and guardian volunteers play a vital role in assisting teachers both during school hours and at home, as determined by the school administration. At Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School, we have many volunteer opportunities to offer families who would like to offer their time, talent, and treasure to our beloved school and community. Be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities throughout the year. These opportunities, big or small, always make an impact for our school and community and a way to foster and develop relationships as well. Thank you for your consideration!

All volunteers (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles)in the classroom or on field trips, **must be VIRTUS compliant.** The VIRTUS process includes a background check, code of conduct video and an online training. These are good for three years. For more information, please contact Mara Dehning by **email: mdehning@stjosephwaconia.org**. Please do this well in advance of a particular event because the background check process does fluctuate according to how many submissions there are. If you are not VIRTUS compliant, you will not be permitted to volunteer.

Volunteers are required to sign in at the St. Joseph Catholic STEM School office upon arrival and sign out when leaving. Occasional volunteers must coordinate their participation with the classroom teacher, while regular or scheduled volunteers need approval from the principal.

Handling and Disposal of Bodily Fluids

Surfaces that come in contact with potentially infectious bodily fluids, including blood, vomit, must be cleaned and disinfected according to Minnesota Rules, part 9503.0005, subpart 11;

Sharp items used for a child with special care needs, must be disposed of in a "sharps container." The sharps container must be stored out of reach of children.

The handling and disposal of bodily fluids policies and procedures are also provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment (parent handbook) in the Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School program and are available upon request. Additionally, the following bodily disposal supplies are available in the preschool; disposable gloves, disposal bags, and eye protection.

Drinking Water and Reusable Water Bottles/Cups Policy

Drinking water is easily accessible at Little Saints Preschool at St. Joseph Catholic STEM School throughout the day, both in the classroom and outdoors when children are outside for more than 20 minutes. Water is provided via a water fountain (where available) or a pitcher and cups. Fountains are cleaned and sanitized every day. To support healthy hydration and promote self-help skills, children are allowed to bring personal water bottles to school.

Guidelines for Water Bottle Use:

- All water bottles must be **labeled clearly with the child's first and last name**.
- Water bottles will be kept in a designated area accessible to children throughout the day.
- Staff will ensure bottles are used only by the individual child to whom they belong.
- Only **water** may be placed in water bottles—no juice, milk, or other beverages are allowed.
- Water bottles must be taken home **daily** to be washed and sanitized by parents or guardians.
- Staff will not clean or sanitize bottles at school due to sanitation and health regulations.

If a child forgets their water bottle, drinking water will always be made available to them in disposable or sanitized cups, as required by MN Rule 3.

When reusable cups are utilized, each cup is labeled with the child's name. After use, cups are placed in a designated area for washing and sanitizing before they are reused. Water pitchers, dispensers, and cups are cleaned and sanitized daily to uphold hygiene standards.

Wellness

The purpose of this plan is to assure a school environment that promotes and ensures student health and well-being by supporting health related learning, healthy eating, and physical activity. Little Saints Preschool of St. Joseph Catholic STEM School recognizes that nutrition and physical education are important components of a student's education. The link between learning and nutrition is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their academic potential, physical and mental growth, and wellbeing. Little Saints Preschool of St. Joseph Catholic STEM School wants to help students establish and maintain lifelong, healthy eating patterns and physical activity.

- All students will have an opportunity to be physically active.
- Outside recess will be provided daily, weather permitting.
- Nutritious foods will be provided for lunch and at the school store.
- The school will provide a clean environment and adequate time in which to eat.
- Nutrition and health will be taught in all grades.
- Teachers will provide classroom opportunities to enhance healthy habits.