**Welcome**

**St. Jude Preschool**

**2023 – 2024 Handbook**

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**St. Jude School**

**930 Ashland Terrace**

**Chattanooga, TN 37415**

**(423) 877-6022**

**www.mysjs.com**



**Mission Statement**

Guided by God, St. Jude School strives to provide academic excellence in an environment that embraces the Catholic values of spirituality and service.

**Admission Policies**

 A child must be three or four years old by August 15th and independently toilet trained.

 A child must be developmentally appropriate for preschool.

**Program Description and Purpose**

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of three and four year old's. We provide experiences that enrich and enhance your child’s cognitive, language, social, emotional and physical development. Within the Preschool’s daily schedule, children have the opportunity to create, explore their environment, interact with classmates and teachers, and learn concepts through first hand experiences. Children develop a positive self-concept and confidence through a balance of self and teacher-directed activities. We want each child to reach his or her fullest potential in a relaxed, supportive, and nurturing environment.

**Philosophy**

St. Jude Preschool is dedicated to developing spirit, mind, and body through programs that stress Catholic values, develop leadership in youth, promote healthy lifestyles, and assist in community development.

**Hours of Operation**

Children can be dropped off as early as 7:30 and no later than 8:30. The academic day begins at 8:30 so all children need to be in class by 8:30. The preschool day ends at 2:30 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. On Wednesday, the Preschool dismisses early with elementary school. Preschool pick up on Wednesday is at 1:30 pm. We offer an after-school program, available at an additional charge that is open until 6:00 pm.

**Goals and Objectives**

The goals of the St. Jude Preschool are to provide an environment that will educate the whole child. We will focus on the following objectives:

 To develop a love for God through instruction of the Catholic faith

 To increase vocabulary by hearing new words in games, stories and unit study

 To be able to speak before a group and relate an experience

 To learn to listen and follow instructions

 To practice good health habits and to be courteous

 To gain bodily strength, skills and coordination through movement activities and outdoor play

 To develop an appreciation for music through singing, finger plays, listening to and making up songs and the use of rhythm instruments

 To develop an appreciation for creative activities through the use of clay, crayons, finger paints, temperas, paste, scissors and paper

 To become aware of surroundings—to gain information through study and experiences

 To gain the proper concept of numbers by counting games, children, days, months, years, sticks, toys, blocks, etc.

 To desire to learn to read, to enjoy good books, to listen to stories, to handle books correctly

 To discover that school is an interesting and exciting place where children can express themselves and learn to enjoy group experiences.

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**Behavior Modification**

On occasion when a child is experiencing difficulties, teachers use the following steps to help children make better choices:

 Open-ended questions to help the child discover the rule

 Redirecting the child with an open ended choice

 Redirecting the child with a limited choice

 Excluding the child from the group with an age-appropriate time out

*Specific Behavior Activities*

*Biting*

When a child bites another child, necessary treatment will be administered based on the severity of the bite. Both sets of parents will be notified, and the event will be documented in the child’s file (the one who did the biting).

If there is a second occurrence of the same child biting someone, the child’s parents will be called to come pick up their child for the rest of the day.

After a third occurrence, the parents will be called to come pick up the child and they will have to remain out of school for one week, not to exceed 4 days.

*Physical Contact*

1. ANY physical contact due to anger towards a teacher or another student and the child will be sent home for the day. If it happens 2 days in a row or 3 times in the same week, the child will have to stay out for a week.

2. After 2 removals from the classroom for disruptive behavior in one day, the child will be sent home. This includes loud screaming and refusal to listen to teachers and do what is asked, running away from teachers or refusal to stay in the classroom, turning over chairs, standing on chairs, hiding under tables, knocking items off shelves and throwing on the floor. Unfortunately, these behaviors are becoming more and more common and it is not fair to the teachers or the other children in the classroom who are trying to learn and do what is asked of them.

3. After the child has been sent home 2 times, a mandatory conference will be held with the teacher, director and school psychologist to determine next steps. Parents may be asked to find a more appropriate setting for their child if the above steps are unsuccessful.

 **FEES AND Payment**

Tuition payments are due based on the schedule you set up on your FACTS tuition management account. Tuition will be charged monthly beginning in July and concluding in April. Monthly tuition rates are as follows:

3 Days $360

5 Days $600

There is an additional $125/student fee. Preschool families, like those in our older grades, use the FACTS Tuition Management system for tuition and incidental payments. We must be notified one month in advance of a child leaving the program to be able to schedule discontinuation of tuition payments. Please contact the school’s financial manager if you need to discuss late payments or an adjustment in your FACTS account.

**Records**

Before your child can attend Preschool, we must have the following information on file. Much of this is included in your enrollment process. Everything must be submitted prior to the first day of school.

 Confirmation of TN Childcare Approval Requirements

 Emergency Information and Contact List

 Medication Authorization and Permission to Treat Form

 Updated TN Immunization Form

 Birth Certificate

 Baptismal Certificate — if applicable

**“Potty Training”**

All students entering the preschool program must be 100% toilet trained, including being able to clean themselves independently and wash their hands. We understand that “accidents” do happen, and we will contact the parents if the child has an “accident.” However, an accident should rarely occur.

If the student is not trained upon entering the preschool, you will be asked to keep the child at home until he/she is trained. Your student’s placement will be held if you continue tuition payments.

***An addendum to this policy is in effect beginning on August 11, 2021:***

1. *If a child has 2 accidents in one day, a parent will be called to come pick up the child for the rest of the day.*
2. *If this happens two days in a row, you will be asked to keep the child home for ONE WEEK to try to address the issue and work on achieving being "fully potty trained".*

*If accidents continue more than two days in a row upon returning, you will be asked to disenroll your child until you can guarantee that they are fully potty trained. As a reminder from the handbook statement, if you have to disenroll you can continue to pay tuition to keep your spot in hopes of returning. However, if you choose not to continue to pay tuition, there will be no guarantee that there will be a spot available when and if your child is ready to return and no refunds will be given for what has already been paid.*

**Rest/Nap Time**

Children staying full days are required to have a rest/nap time. Full day students will be given an approved mat from the school. It will be yours to keep at the end of the year. You may also send a stuffed animal for your child to sleep with.

**Illness**

If a child is ill during the day, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately by phone. Sick children cannot be cared for at the preschool.

 The following is a list that includes signs of illness that would require that we contact a parent:

 Fever

 Skin rash

  Diarrhea or vomiting

 Evidence of lice

 Headache in combination with stiff neck

 Difficult or rapid breathing

 Severe coughing

It is our policy that children who have been ill with fever or vomiting should be free of either, without the use of medication, for 24 hours BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. St. Jude Preschool reserves the right to require a written statement from a doctor before the child can be readmitted to the program. Please follow this rule for the health and wellbeing of all the children.

**Notification of Communicable Diseases**

Parents are to notify the school immediately of any of the following illnesses: chickenpox, mumps, impetigo, measles, mononucleosis, head lice, meningitis, poison ivy, hand, foot and mouth disease and whooping cough. All information will be kept confidential except as needed to protect other students. A note explaining treatments must be provided to the Preschool upon the students’ return to school. In the case of head lice, a student may return to school after treatment. The treatment box top or a note from a child’s private provider stating that the student has been treated must be presented to the Clinic before being allowed to return to the classroom.

**Medication**

Prescription medication administered to a child must have prior written parent authorization. Prescription medication will only be administered on the written order of the child’s physician and must be in the original container with the child’s name, the name of the drug and directions for its administration and storage on the label. St. Jude Preschool will keep a written record of the administration of any medication that includes the time and date of each administration, the dosage, the name of the staff member administering the medication and the name of the child. St. Jude Preschool will store all medications under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety. All unused medication will be returned to the parent. For liquid medications, please put the medicine and a measuring spoon in a sealed plastic bag.

 **Contacting the PRESCHOOL**

If you need to contact us during the school day, please call the school office at 877-6022 and the secretary will connect you. Preschool Director, Mrs. Mroz can be reached at mrozm@mysjs.com.

**Clothing**

Please dress your child for play. We paint, glue, color, build, climb—and our playground can be very dusty. Durable clothing in which children can move freely and study shoes or sneakers are best. Open-toed shoes are not allowed.

**Extra clothing**

Please send a change of clothes, including underwear, socks and shoes in a gallon Ziploc bag. Remember to change out the clothes during the cold weather and clearly label everything.

**Personal Belongings**

St. Jude will provide a red tote bag to collect a child’s papers, etc., Each child has a hook or cubby where they will hang coats, hats, and tote bags. Please label all clothing to help us help your child. We encourage the children to put on their own coats, mittens, hats, etc.

 **Snow Days**

In the event of inclement weather, we follow St. Jude Elementary School closing. The Elementary school makes its own decision whether to close or delay. They do not follow the Hamilton County schedule. This policy includes late openings or early dismissals. School closings and/or delays will be available on the local media or by checking FACTS.

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**Birthdays**

Every child loves to celebrate his/her birthday and your child is welcome to have a treat at school on or near their birthday. If your child has a summer birthday, you may pick a day in May or September and arrange it with the teacher. Please notify the teachers in advance so that they can adjust the schedule if needed to allow time for the birthday treat.

**Communication**

Please read the weekly communication emailed from our principal. Preschool is ALWAYS INVITED to be out of uniform/in theme whenever the rest of school has such planned. Your teachers will keep you informed of activities going on in each classroom and notify you of any upcoming in-house field trips, holiday, programs, etc. Preschool uses Class Dojo, email and monthly newsletters to keep you informed. We will also use the Parent Bulletin Board for calendar reminders, current pictures and other items of interest. Please check the entrance door weekly for any reminders and new information.

**LUNCHES**

Lunch service is provided in the cafeteria. A menu is sent home each month and is posted on the school website. Students may also order milk, juice, or water through their homeroom in the morning.

Lunches will be served daily in the cafeteria except on half days. Each time your child buys a milk, or ice cream, his/her account will be entered and the amount of the purchased item will be deducted from the account.

It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure that all student accounts are current at the end of the school year. All student records, including report cards will be held for any student who had an account that is in arrears. School nutrition funds are used solely for the purpose of providing school lunch.

The United State Department of Agriculture requires that students allergic to any food that is served in the cafeteria must have a written statement from a physician that will be kept with the child’s permanent record

**It is our goal that your student will have mastered the following Kindergarten Readiness Skills by the end of the year.**

**ACADEMICS**

 **Know the alphabet (not just sing the song)**

 **Know the difference between capital and lowercase letters**

 **Recognize letters in random order**

 **Have some understanding of letter sounds**

 **Write first name (not all capitals)**

 **Count and recognize #s 1 – 10 (up to 20 is better)**

 **Count and match numerals with a set of objects**

 **Recognize colors, possibly even recognize color words**

 **Recognize basic shapes**

 **Use scissors appropriately**

 **Hold pencils and crayons with a proper grip**

**PERSONAL CARE**

 **Take care of personal hygiene: using restroom independently, washing hands, etc.**

 **Proper bathroom etiquette**

 **Be responsible for personal belongings (putting and taking off coat, hanging up bags, coats and lunchboxes)**

**SOCIAL SKILLS**

 **Take turns and share**

 **Raise hand to speak (not shout out of turn)**

 **Stay in seats when needed**

 **Keep hands to themselves**

 **Walk in line**

 **Be able to sit still and focus for at least 15 minutes**



**You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”**

***Matthew 5:14-16***

Why has St. Jude been a success for over 60 years?  A large part of its success can be attributed to wonderful parents throughout the years.  From its foundation in 1960, to today, parents have shared their time and talents with St. Jude School so that it may shine brighter to glorify God. Are you hiding your light under a basket?  St. Jude needs your gifts.

Do you share with those outside our community the good things that happen in our school and church? St. Jude needs you to help spread its light. Together we can help St. Jude be stronger and shine brighter than ever to be a "city set on a hill".

***Encourage family and friends to come see how St. Jude can enrich their lives.***